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FDA Foods Coalition Launched To Advocate For Redesigned FDA

Coalition Includes Dairy, Food, Consumer, And Environmental Groups; Will Work With Agency

Washington—Dairy, food, consumer, environmental organizations and state and local regulators on Thursday launched the FDA Foods Coalition to advocate for a modernized, effective foods program at the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

The Coalition will educate policymakers, media and the public about improving the governance of the FDA Human Foods Program.

The Coalition supports FDA's proposed redesign of the Human Foods Program and looks forward to working with Commissioner Robert Califf and new Deputy Commissioner for Human Foods Jim Jones to implement these changes and facilitate greater transparency, accountability and meaningful stakeholder engagement.

Many of the organizations in the coalition began working together following FDA's delayed response to the infant formula crisis and called on Califf to

appoint a leader empowered to address the fundamental problems plaguing the agency's foods program. In response, Califf ordered an external review of the program by the Reagan-Udall Foundation for the FDA, which concluded that the agency's culture, organizational structure, and governance model undermine its effectiveness.

Earlier this year, Califf announced plans to adopt many of those recommendations and recently appointed Jim Jones as deputy commissioner of its Human Foods Program. Jones officially joined FDA in September.

"Industry needs a strong, unified, and modernized FDA to facilitate innovation, growth, and the production of safe, nutritious foods that are accessible and affordable for all consumers," said Roberta Wagner, senior vice president of regulatory and scientific affairs at the International Dairy Foods Association

(IDFA) and co-chair of the FDA Foods Coalition. "The coalition will continue to advocate that FDA shift away from its traditional reactionary model to a modernized, prevention-oriented oversight model that aligns with industry's immense efforts to ensure continual improvement and prevent problems from occurring, as exemplified by industry's ongoing implementation of the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA).

"Industry values FDA's oversight role in assuring companies produce safe food every day for American consumers, and we look forward to supporting the agency's Human Foods Program through this coalition," Wagner added.

"Consumers depend on the FDA to be effectively organized and governed to prevent food safety risks and ensure our food is safe," said Brian Ronholm, director of food policy at Consumer Reports and co-chair of the FDA Foods Coalition. "Commissioner Califf has proposed a redesign

• See **FDA Foods Coalition**, p. 4

EU Agreement Aims To Strengthen, Improve Existing System For Protecting GIs

Brussels, Belgium—European Council and European Parliament negotiators on Tuesday reached a provisional deal aimed at strengthening geographical indications (GIs) and other quality schemes for agricultural products, wine and spirit drinks and improving their uptake across the European Union (EU).

The European Commission welcomed the agreement, stating that the new regulation will increase the uptake of geographical indications across the EU and will provide a higher level of protection, especially online.

This will help to further develop the EU's high food quality and standards, and ensure that the EU's cultural, gastronomic and local heritage is preserved and certified as authentic within the European Union and around the world.

According to the Commission, the new regulation will strengthen and improve the existing GI system by:

Introducing a single legal framework and a shortened, simplified registration procedure: different rules on GI procedures and protection are merged for the three sectors (food, wine and spirits), resulting in a single simplified GI registration procedure for EU and non-EU applicants. This simpler

• See **New GI Regulation**, p. 11

USDA To Provide \$2.3 Billion To Boost US Ag Exports; NMPF USDEC Praise Investment

Des Moines, IA—The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) is providing \$2.3 billion to help US producers maintain and develop markets for their commodities and use United States commodities to bolster international food aid, US Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack announced earlier this week.

USDA will use \$1.3 billion for the Regional Agricultural Promotion Program and support for specialty crop industries to diversify export markets; and \$1 billion to help address global hunger, Vilsack noted.

• See **Boosting Ag Exports**, p. 5

Consumers All In For Spooky Season, Halloween Cheese Niches Created

Madison—It's no longer just kids, costumes and candy.

As the population returns to pre-pandemic norms, consumers in the US are slated to spend roughly \$12 billion this "Spooky Season," according to the National Retail Federation's (NRF) annual survey conducted by Prosper Insights & Analytics.

This number is up by about \$2 billion from 2022, the survey found. Also, a record number of people – 73 percent – will participate in Halloween-related activities this year, up from 69 percent in 2022.

Like previous years, top ways consumers are planning to celebrate include handing out candy, decorating their home or yard, and dressing in costumes.

However, 32 percent of consumers also plan to throw or

attend a party, with a sizeable number featuring seasonal cheese boards.

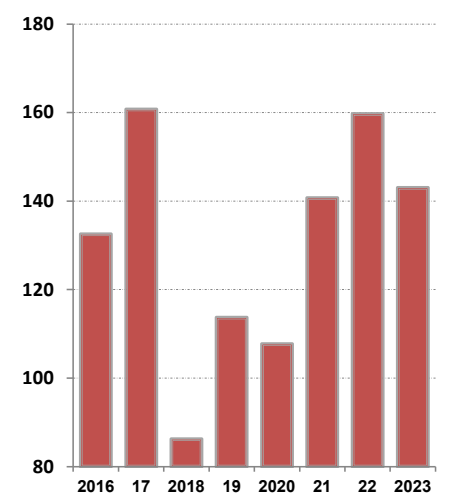
"More Americans than ever will be reaching into their wallets and spending a record amount of money to celebrate Halloween this year," NRF president and CEO Matthew Shay said. "Retailers are prepared with the inventory to help customers and their families take part in this."

The International Dairy Deli Bakery Association (IDDBA) has kept an eye on these trends, noting that enthusiasm and participation surrounding the Halloween holiday has been building steadily for years prior to the arrival of COVID.

"The way Halloween is celebrated has definitely changed,"

• See **Halloween Cheese**, p. 10

Manufacturers' Stocks of Lactose Total
End of Aug; million lbs





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2810 Crossroads Drive, Suite 3000
Madison, WI 53718-7972
(608) 246-8430 • Fax (608) 246-8431
<http://www.cheesereporter.com>

DICK GROVES
Publisher/Editor

e-mail: dgroves@cheesereporter.com
608-316-3791

MOIRA CROWLEY
Specialty Cheese Editor
e-mail: mcrowley@cheesereporter.com
608-316-3793

KEVIN THOME
Advertising & Marketing Director
e-mail: kthome@cheesereporter.com
608-316-3792

BETTY MERKES
Classifieds/Circulation Manager
e-mail: info@cheesereporter.com
608-316-3790

REGULAR CONTRIBUTORS:
Jen PinoGallagher, Bob Cropp, Brandis Wasvick,
Ty Rohloff, Dan Strongin, John Umhoefer
You can e-mail our contributors at:
contributors@cheesereporter.com

Cheese Reporter is the official publication of the following associations:

California Cheese & Butter Association
Lisa Waters,
1011 Pebble Beach Dr, Clayton, CA 94517

Central Wisconsin Cheesemakers' and Buttermakers' Association
Peggy Noeldner
pnoeldner@nasonvilledairy.com

Cheese Importers Association of America
204 E St. NE, Washington, DC 20002

Eastern Wisconsin Cheesemakers' and Buttermakers' Association
Barb Henning, Henning's Cheese
21812 Ucker Road, Kiel, WI 53042

International Dairy-Deli-Bakery Association
8317 Elderberry Road, Madison, WI 53717

Missouri Butter & Cheese Institute
Terry S. Long, 19107 Factory Creek Road,
Jamestown, MO 65046

Nebraska Cheese Association
Ed Price, Fremont, NE 68025

New York State Cheese Manufacturer's Assn
Kathryn Boor, 11 Stocking Hall,
Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853

North Central Cheese Industries Assn
Prafulla Salunke, SDSU, Box 2104,
Brookings, SD 57007

North Dakota Cheese Makers' Assn
Chuck Knetter, Medina, ND 58467

Ohio Swiss Cheese Association
Lois Miller, P.O. Box 445,
Sugar Creek, OH 44681

South Dakota State Dairy Association
Howard Bonnemann, SDSU, Box 2104,
Brookings, SD 57007

Southwestern Wisconsin Cheese Makers' Association
Melissa Meinke, Dairy Connection,
2312 Vondron Road, Madison, WI 53718

Wisconsin Association for Food Protection
Bob Wills
PO Box 620705, Middleton WI 53562

Wisconsin Cheese Makers' Association
John Umhoefer, 5117 W. Terrace Dr.,
Suite 402, Madison, WI 53718

Wisconsin Dairy Products Association
Amy Winters, 8383 Greenway Blvd.,
Middleton, WI 53562

EDITORIAL COMMENT



DICK GROVES

Publisher / Editor
Cheese Reporter
e: dgroves@cheesereporter.com

US Milk Production Appears To Be Stagnating

US milk production is on track to set yet another record this year, but this year's milk production increase will be smaller than some recent increases. And that may, or may not, have some significant repercussions for dairy processors.

Let's face it, milk production increases are pretty much taken for granted these days. The last time milk production declined was in 2009, when output of 189.2 billion pounds was down 776 million pounds from 2008.

By 2022, milk production had increased every year since 2010, reaching a record 226.5 billion pounds. Although it increased every year during that period, there were some years in which the growth was pretty small. For example, milk production in 2013 was only 618 million pounds higher than it was in 2012, and 2019 milk production was only 873 million pounds higher than 2018 production.

Most recently, 2022 milk production was just 169 million pounds higher than 2021 output.

And there were also some years in which milk production growth was pretty impressive. For example, 2014 milk production was almost 4.8 billion pounds higher than 2013 output, and 2020 milk production was almost 4.9 billion pounds higher than 2019 output.

Here in 2023, milk production started out well above last year's output; specifically, first-quarter production was up 1.0 percent, or 550 million pounds, from 2022's first quarter. This would seem to imply that 2023 milk production would top 2022's output by more than 2 billion pounds.

But at this point, the first quarter is looking more like the exception than the rule, when it comes to milk production. During the second quarter, milk production was up just 0.3 percent, or 195 million pounds, from the second quarter of 2022.

And then in the third quarter, milk production declined 0.7 percent, or 372 million pounds, from 2022's third quarter, meaning that milk production through the first three quarters of 2023 is running just 373 million pounds above 2022's output.

And it's losing momentum. Milk production was positive in the first half of the year but negative in the third quarter, and milk cow numbers for the entire US in September were down 30,000 head from June. Also, milk per cow for the entire US has been slightly above a year earlier in two of the past four months (September and June), but down from a year earlier in two months (July and August).

Interestingly, in its most recent supply-demand estimates (which were released a week before the latest "Milk Production" report), USDA forecast that US milk production this year would total 227.6 billion pounds, up 100 million pounds from last month's forecast and up 1.1 billion pounds from 2022's output.

Well, that just doesn't seem very realistic at this point in time. If fourth-quarter milk production just matches output during 2022's fourth quarter, milk production for all of 2023 will end up around 226.8 billion pounds, or 800 million pounds below USDA's latest forecast.

In USDA's defense, its latest production forecasts were made before some earlier production statistics were revised, and revised down. These revisions actually came in two forms.

First, the August milk production estimate for both the 24 reporting states and for the US as a whole were revised down, by 73 million pounds and 119 million pounds, respectively. Thus, August milk production for the 24 reporting states went from being down 0.3 percent to being down 0.7 percent from August 2022, while production for the

If fourth-quarter milk production just matches output during 2022's fourth quarter, milk production for all of 2023 will end up around 226.8 billion pounds, or 800 million pounds below USDA's latest forecast.

entire US went from being down 0.2 percent to being down 0.8 percent from a year earlier.

Second, there were revisions to the milk production estimates for the entire US for every month from April through August. The second-quarter milk production estimate was revised down by 39 million pounds, so output during that quarter was only up 0.3 percent from a year earlier, rather than up 0.4 percent as originally estimated. And July's milk production estimate was revised down by 40 million pounds.

In other words, USDA's latest milk production forecast was based on earlier estimates that were a bit on the high side.

What all of this adds up to is that US milk production here in 2023 could end up very close to where it was in 2022, meaning that milk production will have basically held steady for two consecutive years.

Does that mean it's time for dairy processors to panic? Will they be facing chronic milk shortages now or in the next year or two?

That seems unlikely, for at least three reasons. First, one of the few things that have been consistent in the dairy business over the past decade or so is the decline in fluid milk sales. Every year, less milk is being bottled, meaning there's more milk available for other uses.

Second, while milk production isn't increasing very much, the milk that is being produced contains more solids. Just to cite one example: in August, the average fat test in the US was 4.00 percent, up from 3.93 percent in August 2022.

And third, the US is exporting less this year than in 2022, meaning more milk is being used, or stored, domestically.

Milk production might be stagnant right now, but history tells us it will bounce back, and sooner rather than later.

USDA Buys Natural American, Process Cheese; Seeks Cheese, Yogurt

Washington—The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) on Monday announced the awarding of contracts to seven companies for a total of 61,932,000 pounds of natural American cheese.

The cheese is being purchased in support of child nutrition and other related domestic food distribution programs. Deliveries are to be made calendar year 2024.

USDA is specifically buying 53,203,200 pounds of natural American cheese in 500-pound barrels, 3,801,600 pounds of shredded Cheddar, 3,417,600 pounds of reduced-fat shredded Cheddar, and 1,509,600 pounds of 40-pound Cheddar blocks.

Awards are as follows:

Associated Milk Producers, Inc.: 32,517,600 pounds of 500-pound barrels.

Bongards Creameries: 15,463,200 pounds of 500-pound barrels and 163,200 pounds of 40-pound Cheddar blocks.

Cedar Valley Cheese: 422,400 pounds of shredded Cheddar.

Dairy Farmers of America: 115,200 pounds of shredded Cheddar.

Great Lakes Cheese: 307,200 pounds of reduced-fat shredded Cheddar.

Land O'Lakes: 5,222,400 pounds of 500-pound barrels.

Masters Gallery Foods: 3,110,400 pounds of reduced-fat shredded Cheddar; 3,264,000 pounds of shredded Cheddar; and 1,346,400 pounds of 40-pound Cheddar blocks.

Last Friday, USDA announced the awarding of contracts to three companies for a total of 38,550,600 pounds of process cheese for delivery during calendar year 2024. The process cheese products are being purchased in support of child nutrition and other related domestic food distribution programs.

USDA is specifically buying 20,778,120 pounds of blended American skim cheese, 7,579,440 pounds of process cheese sliced loaves, 7,405,200 pounds of blended American generic skim sliced loaves, 653,400 pounds of blended American skim regular sliced loaves, and 479,160 pounds of process American loaves.

Awards are as follows:

Associated Milk Producers, Inc.: 1,350,360 pounds of regular process 6/5-pound loaves.

Bongards Creameries: 479,160 pounds of process 6/5-pound loaves; 7,579,440 pounds of process 6/5-pound loaves, generic; 653,400 pounds of blended American skim yellow regular sliced 6/5-pound loaves; 20,778,120 pounds of blended American skim 12/2-pound loaves; and

7,405,200 pounds of blended American skim sliced 6/5-pound generic loaves.

Great Lakes Cheese: 304,920 pounds of regular process 6/5-pound loaves.

On Tuesday, USDA issued a solicitation inviting offers to sell a total of 924,727 pounds of low moisture part skim Mozzarella String cheese for use in domestic food distribution programs. Deliveries are to be made between Jan. 1 and Mar. 31, 2024. Bids are due by 1:00 p.m. Central time on Nov. 7.

Also on Tuesday, USDA issued an invitation inviting offers to sell 118,800 pounds of sliced kosher process white cheese, 6/5-pound

loaves, for use in domestic food distribution programs. Deliveries are to be made in January 2024.

Bids are due by 1:00 p.m. Central time on Tuesday, Nov. 7.

Products offered in response to the String cheese and kosher cheese solicitations must be manufactured in a plant approved by USDA Dairy Programs.

Finally, USDA is inviting offers to sell a total of 656,706 pounds of high protein yogurt for use in domestic food distribution programs. Deliveries are to be made between Jan. 1 and Mar. 31, 2024.

USDA is specifically seeking to purchase 146,004 pounds of high protein blueberry yogurt, 24/4-ounce cups; 345,222 pounds of high protein strawberry yogurt, 24/4-ounce cups; 97,368 pounds of high protein vanilla yogurt,

24/4-ounce cups; and 68,112 pounds of high protein vanilla yogurt, 6/32-ounce tubs.

Bids are due by 1:00 p.m. Central time on Monday, Nov. 6.

For all of these solicitations, offers must be submitted electronically via the WBSCM. Offerors are cautioned to bid only quantities they can reasonably expect to produce and deliver. Purchases will be made on an f.o.b. destination basis to cities listed on the solicitations. Destination quantities listed are estimates and subject to adjustment based on offerings, changes in recipient needs, market conditions, and program operations.

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

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FDA Foods Coalition

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that will allow the Human Foods Program to carry out its critical mission and make the agency more accountable and transparent. Our coalition supports these changes and believes the implementation of them is critically important to all of the FDA's food system stakeholders."

In addition to IDFA and Consumer Reports, the Coalition includes the American Frozen Food Institute, Association of Food and Drug Officials, Center for Science in the Public Interest, Consumer Brands Association, Consumer Federation of America, Environmental Defense Fund, Environmental Working Group, International Fresh Produce Association, Peanut and Tree Nut Processors Association, STOP Foodborne Illness, and Western Growers.

The Coalition will continue its outreach to other stakeholders that align with this mission.

The FDA Foods Coalition will work with the agency to ensure that FDA's Human Foods Program:

- Communicates, embraces and promotes a clear and compelling vision, and value statement.

- Institutes an organizational structure with a single leader with a clear articulation of roles, responsibilities, and accountability and a culture that is well-equipped to sustain leadership transitions.

- Establishes, through the new deputy commissioner position, a management system that fully integrates the Human Foods Program on policy, resource management, and field operations, and leads a program-wide transformation that prioritizes the shift to a

public health prevention culture in both headquarters and field operations.

- Develops and nurtures a culture where regulatory decision-making is focused on consumer safety and public health, rooted in scientific evidence and FDA's legal framework, and occurs in a timely and predictable way.

- Prioritizes meaningful stakeholder engagement and collaboration in regulatory priority setting and decision making based on science-driven and effective risk management principles, maximum transparency, and data sharing.

- Establishes a stronger, more cooperative relationship with state, local, and tribal governments, including fulfilling the FSMA vision of a National Integrated Food Safety System.

- Formulates an appropriations strategy that considers stakeholder input and includes a well-defined, prioritized agenda and clarity and transparency on how program funding would be allocated.

- Has authority and resources to ensure that the agency's Enterprise Modernization initiative meets the operational and data management needs of the Human Foods Program.

"FDA needs substantial additional resources to strengthen and improve its human food safety and nutrition programs. Maximizing the value of such an investment will require stakeholders and the FDA to address the organizational, cultural, and policy challenges that confront food safety," said Steven Grossman, executive director of the Alliance for a Stronger FDA.

"The FDA Foods Coalition is uniquely positioned to achieve

this and is a natural complement to the Alliance's efforts to increase funding," Grossman added.

Background On FDA Redesign

In July of 2022, Califf commissioned an external evaluation of FDA's Human Foods Program.

The external evaluation, conducted by an expert panel facilitated by the Reagan-Udall Foundation, was asked to assess the processes and procedures, resourcing, and organizational structure for the Foods Program.

The panel released its findings in December 2022. The report addressed culture, structure/leadership, resources, and authorities to provide recommendations that would equip FDA to fulfill its regulatory responsibilities, strengthen its relationships with state and local governments, and secure the US food supply for the future.

Less than two months later, in late January 2023, Califf announced a new, transformative vision for the FDA Human Foods, and also announced a transformative vision for the Office of Regulatory Affairs (ORA, FDA's field-based operations) to support the FDA organization as a whole.

In August, FDA announced the selection of Jim Jones to serve as the agency's first deputy commissioner for human foods.

This new executive position will lead the charge in setting and advancing priorities for the proposed unified Human Foods Program. Program areas would include food safety, chemical safety and innovative food products, including those from new agricultural technologies, as well as nutrition.

FROM OUR ARCHIVES

50 YEARS AGO

Oct. 26, 1973: Mayville, WI—Roy Baron de Groot, food and wine editor for *Esquire* magazine, has teamed up with Purity Cheese Company here as a special consumer consultant. He will be chiefly concerned with various facets of product development and Purity's consumer information program.

Washington—The Nixon administration this week promised Americans substantial relief from rising food prices and more meat on the table next year, but at the same time projected a slight increase in unemployment and continued high interest rates.

25 YEARS AGO

Oct. 30, 1998: Madison—"I don't think any of us know what impact" pending changes in Codex cheese standards will have on the US cheese industry," said CDR director Rusty Bishop at a special workshop here. The "Impact of Codex on Cheesemaking" course drew a sell-out crowd of 137 people from across the US.

Washington—In separate letters to US Ag Secretary Dan Glickman, milk processors and Vermont's two US senators have traded charges over alleged mismanagement of the Fluid Milk Processor Education Program. Controversy stems from USDA's Office of Inspector General, which found "serious problems" with MilkPEP's board management structure.

10 YEARS AGO

Oct. 25, 2013: Rochester, MN—Doug Rolland of RELCO, Inc. and Virgil Metzger, Kraft Foods, received Honorary Memberships by the North Central Cheese Industries Association for their significant contributions and service to the cheese industry.

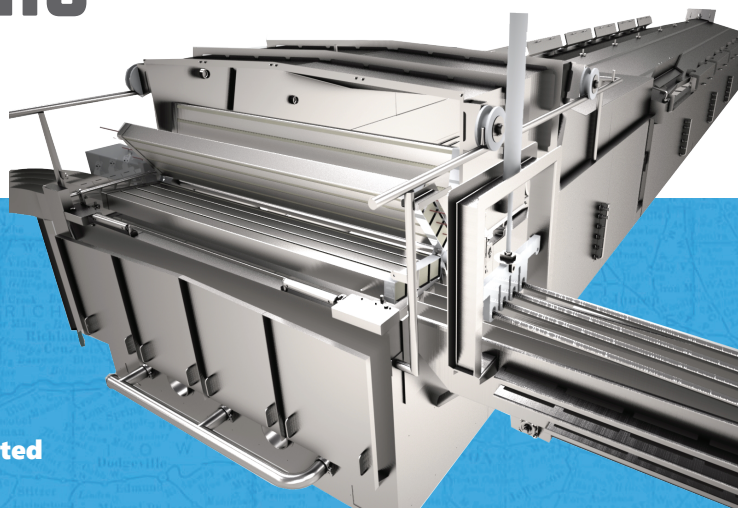
Nantwich, England—River's Edge Chevre of Logden, OR, won Best USA Cheese at the 116th International Cheese Awards here this week for its Humbug Mountain entry. Sartori Company of Plymouth, WI, won Supreme Cheese with Additives, and Vermont's Grafton Village Cheese earned the award for Best Ewe's Milk

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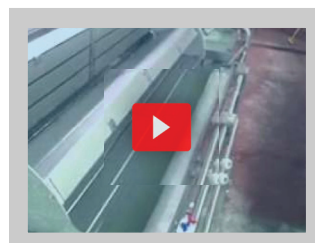
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Tetra Pak, Lund University Launch New Research Hub

Lausanne, Switzerland—Tetra Pak and Lund University recently announced the launch of Biotech Heights, a new research hub that will explore food and materials production using bioprocessing to create useful products from living cells or cell components.

Biotech Heights will establish an open innovation environment, in which all participants will have access to laboratories and equipment for both commercial and academic purposes. Also, participants will be able to work with several faculties at the university to address both the technical and non-technical challenges facing producers, brands, and manufacturers operating in this space.

This, combined with Tetra Pak's experience supporting food and beverage brands with product development, will make Biotech Heights a space to nurture and test ideas, and collaborate to share knowledge on best practices and consumer trends, Tetra Pak and Lund University noted.

"Today's food systems are not fit for purpose, and collaboration across business and academia is crucial to provide new solutions to food systems transformation," said Charles Brand, executive vice president for processing solutions and equipment at Tetra Pak. "Tetra Pak and Lund University share a common goal of developing technology that contributes towards a more sustainable future, and we look forward to taking our decades-long partnership to the next level. With Biotech Heights, we can provide a safe space for customers and collaboration partners to trial solutions to the multifaceted challenge of scalability."

The hub will deepen the longstanding partnership between Tetra Pak and Lund University, combining Tetra Pak's global food processing and packaging expertise with the research capabilities of Lund University, enriching the region's existing reputation as a center for food innovations.

"Lund University's research mission in this area revolves around the exploration and advancement of scalable biotechnology, which we see as a transformative tool to building a more sustainable society. However, none of this is possible without collaborating with key industry partners like Tetra Pak. By bringing together experts from academia and industry with infrastructure from diverse fields, we can foster state-of-the-art advancements and drive positive change on a much larger scale," commented Annika Olsson, dean at Lund University Faculty of Engineering.

Boosting Ag Exports

(Continued from p. 1)

The new \$1.3 billion investment in a Regional Agricultural Promotion Program, or RAPP, will enable exporters to break into new markets and increase market share in growth markets. Further, an investment in providing targeted technical assistance to the specialty crops industry will help it enter and expand markets that often impose onerous non-tariff barriers on their products, USDA said.

Five years ago, in reaction to the trade war with China, USDA developed the Agricultural Trade Promotion Program (ATP) to help exporters diversify their markets. The funds from ATP will expire next year and with that, many exporters are already curtailing their activities, according to USDA.

Without being on the ground in markets, it is nearly impossible to build the trust and relationships needed to create opportunities, USDA said. The RAPP will address this critical loss and ensure continuity of the relationships key to market development.

Regarding international food aid, USDA will purchase commodities and work with the US Agency for International Development (USAID), the lead federal agency on international emergency food aid programs, to ensure they reach those most in need around the world. The \$1 billion donation will bolster ongoing efforts to address global hunger, as well as support US agriculture through the purchase of surplus commodities, USDA noted.

Vilsack made the announcement as part of the World Food

Prize's Borlaug Dialogue that is held in Des Moines, IA, each October and brings together world leaders and experts to address global food security issues. This announcement comes on the heels of the 90th anniversary of the CCC, which was incorporated on Oct. 17, 1933, in response to the Great Depression and the Dust Bowl's devastation on producers and their operations.

"The Commodity Credit Corporation continues to address the needs of American producers as significant and unpredictable challenges arise, including impacts to international commodities markets and global food insecurity in the wake of ongoing conflict and a changing climate," Vilsack said.

"The Commodity Credit Corporation and USDA's market development and aid programs are critically important at this time, and with this additional support we can strengthen US agriculture's presence in existing markets, open up new market opportunities, and build on our relationships and connections to ensure that high-quality American agriculture and food products reach where they are needed in the world," Vilsack added.

Two months ago, US Sens. Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), chairwoman of the Senate Agriculture Committee, and John Boozman (R-AR), the committee's top Republican, urged Vilsack to consider using his authorities with regard to the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) Charter Act to support the creation of new and better market opportunities for farmers by addressing two key needs: trade promotion, and in-kind international food assistance.

Stabenow and Boozman applauded Vilsack's announcement this week that USDA will provide \$2.3 billion to invest in trade promotion and in-kind international food assistance.

"As we continue our work writing a strong, bipartisan farm bill, American farmers and producers have been clear about the need to strengthen trade opportunities, increase revenue streams, and help producers grow and thrive in a global economy," Stabenow and Boozman said in a joint statement. "As we also face rising global food insecurity, it is also clear that our country must do everything we can to address humanitarian needs abroad while supporting American farmers."

While Vilsack's announcement "is welcome, it does not replace the need for a farm bill. We look forward to continuing our work to deliver a strong, bipartisan farm bill that meets the needs of farmers and the American people," Stabenow and Boozman added.

Vilsack's announcement was also welcomed by the US Dairy Export Council (USDEC) and National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF).

"The US dairy community is grateful for the USDA's decision to invest in supporting the cultivation of enhanced international market opportunities for America's dairy farmers and cooperatives," said Jim Mulhern, NMPF's president and CEO.

"Now more than ever, the US dairy industry relies on exports. If distributed to those sectors that are presently underfunded such as dairy, the new export promotion funding will put us in a better position to compete globally and grow our consumer base," Mulhern continued.

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Koch Separation Solutions, RELCO Acquired, Company Rebranded

Boca Raton, FL—Sun Capital Partners, Inc., a private investment firm, on Tuesday announced its affiliate has completed the acquisition of Koch Separation Solutions (KSS), a subsidiary of Koch Industries, Inc.

Koch Separation Solutions is now officially assuming its new name and brand, Kovalus Separation Solutions. Kovalus continues its operations, now as a standalone business, under the existing management team. RELCO was a part of KSS, and they will be known as RELCO, A Kovalus Company.

Kovalus was founded in 1963 and is headquartered in Wilmington, MA, with over 700 employees across several global offices and four manufacturing sites.

The company provides membrane filtration, ion exchange evaporators, dryers, and proprietary cheesemaking technologies to the dairy, food, beverage, industrial and other markets.

“We are excited about this opportunity and our new company name, which represents our legacy of offering cutting-edge separation technologies, as well as our vision to create value for our customers,” said Manny Singh, CEO of Kovalus, who will continue to lead the management team.

“This acquisition marks a key milestone in the journey of Kovalus as we look towards our future as a global leader delivering optimized, quality separation

solutions,” Singh continued. “I am thrilled to work with the Sun Capital team as they share our commitment to innovation and operational excellence.”

“We are thrilled to finalize this acquisition and look forward to collaborating with the KSS team to support the business as a strong standalone enterprise,”

said Jeremy Stone, senior managing director, Sun Capital. “Sun Capital has a long

history of successfully partnering with outstanding management teams in industrial businesses across multiple sectors.

“We’re confident that we can apply that experience and our deep, in-house operational resources to help management execute its business plan, accelerate growth, and further the company’s ability to help customers increase productivity while meeting sustainability goals,” Stone added.

The acquisition of Kovalus by Sun Capital’s affiliate paves the way for Kovalus to strengthen its market presence and improve its economies of scale.

The company’s vision is to transform the global landscape of separations and become a preferred partner to its customers by driving value creation and sustainability across the food and beverage, dairy, life science, and industrial markets.

For more information on Kovalus Separation Solutions, visit www.kovalus.com.



OBITUARIES

Andrea Neu, Wisconsin Dairy Advocate, Dies

Verona, WI—Andrea Neu, 85, long-time Wisconsin dairy products advocate, passed away Wednesday, Oct. 18, 2023 at Agrace HospiceCare here.

A native of Green Bay, WI, Neu graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Madison with a bachelor’s degree in journalism, communications, marketing, and food science.

She dedicated her entire 40-year career to marketing and promoting Wisconsin dairy products, serving as vice president of marketing and senior vice president of corporate communications at the Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board (WMMB).

After retiring from WMMB, now Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin (DFW), Neu launched Image Maker, a consulting firm specializing in brand development for the specialty food market.

She also worked with the Dairy Business Innovation Center (DBIC), promoting more than 100 small artisan dairy producers throughout Wisconsin.

Neu also served on the board of directors of the International Dairy Deli Bakery Association (IDDBA) for several years, during which she served as the organization’s first female president.

Neu also received the IDDBA Chairman’s Award in 2015.

Tom Leitzke Of WDATCP Passes

Tom Leitzke, 72, passed away unexpectedly on Thursday, Oct. 19, 2023, at UW Health Madison.

Leitzke began his career in food safety as food inspector for the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection’s (DATCP) Division of Food Safety.

Leitzke later served as a DATCP bureau director, responsible for overseeing food and dairy safety throughout Wisconsin until his retirement in 2011.

PERSONNEL

Organic Valley has named SHAWNA NELSON as the cooperative’s new executive vice president of membership, succeeding TRAVIS FORGUES, who begins his transition to Hidden Springs Creamery on Nov. 3. Nelson joined Organic Valley in 2005 as a human resource intern, moving on to various roles in marketing, sales analysis, recruitment, employee relations, field operations, and dairy pool management. Nelson will be responsible for the cooperative’s farmer-member touch-points, and all farmer pools within the organization.

Golden State Foods (GSF) has promoted BRYAN BARTEE to group vice president, operations, for the company’s KanPak dairy products facility in Arkansas City, KS. Bartee directed aseptic dairy product operations as senior director of operations.

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Long Known For Cooking Oil, Wesson Launches Plant 'Butter'

Memphis, TN—Wesson, which has been known for its cooking oil for over 100 years, is introducing Wesson Plant Butter at select retailers in the northeastern US.

Canola oil is the primary oil in Wesson Plant Butters. Wesson Plant Butter (Original) contains the following ingredients: water, canola oil, palm and palm kernel oils, salt, vegetable monoglycerides, soy lecithin, natural flavors, lactic acid (acidulant), vitamin A palmitate, beta-carotene and vitamin D2.

The new product launch builds on the momentum of the recent Wesson brand refresh completed by Richardson International Ltd., which acquired the brand in 2019.

“Wesson is an iconic, trusted brand that consumers turn to for unrivaled quality,” said Brian Olson, vice president, food and ingredients, at Richardson International.

“Our vision is to give consumers more of what they love, through product innovation,” Olson continued. “This diversification in our business allows us to tap into a category that’s growing 26 percent per year, while addressing consumers’ shift toward healthier lifestyles with a high-quality plant butter that’s unique in the marketplace.”

“The Wesson Plant Butter rollout begins in the Northeast where consumer demand and Wesson brand loyalty are high,” said Irman Webb, director of US retail sales, Wesson. “Wesson Plant Butters have performed exceptionally well in consumer taste tests and the initial response from retailers has been strong. We continue to confirm new distribution outlets.”

For more information, visit www.purewesson.com.

Richardson International Limited said it is Canada’s largest agribusiness and is recognized as a global leader in agriculture and food processing. Based in Winnipeg, Manitoba, the company is a worldwide handler and merchandiser of all major Canadian-grown grains and oilseeds and a vertically integrated processor and manufacturer of oats and canola-based products.

Over the past two decades, Richardson said it has also become a significant player in the global food business, producing a variety of food products and ingredients for the retail, foodservice, and industrial markets. For more information about Richardson International, a subsidiary of James Richardson & Sons Limited, visit www.richardson.ca.

Ornua Unveils Development To Boost Production At Kerrygold Butter Plant

Mitchelstown, Ireland—Ornua, the owner of Kerrygold, on Wednesday unveiled a new 40-million-euro (US\$42.1 million) development at Kerrygold Park, its flagship butter production facility in Mitchelstown, Co. Cork, and global home of Ireland’s most successful food export.

Ornua said the major investment will underpin Kerrygold’s plans to become Ireland’s first 2-billion-euro food brand and support the rapidly growing global demand for Kerrygold, including in the US, where it is the number two butter brand.

Kerrygold Park is home to a world leading butter production facility, with cutting-edge processing technology and infrastructure, including two state-of-the-art butter churns and 10 packing lines for a range of over 50 different product formats available across over 60 markets globally, Ornua noted. The investment in the facility has seen Kerrygold Park’s total cream processing capacity grow significantly, enabling increased production of up to 80,000 tons (176.4 million pounds) of butter per year.

As a result of the investment in Kerrygold Park, which has received funding support through Enterprise Ireland, Ornua has also expanded its direct employment at the facility by 20 percent. The 30 new jobs bring Ornua’s total Kerrygold Park workforce to 180.

The opening of Kerrygold Park’s new development will support Ornua in meeting the demand for a global consumer brand which Ornua said continues to grow at an exceptional rate. The announcement follows

the recent launch of a new global advertising campaign which is expected to reach more than 150 million consumers around the world in the next year.

The investment also enables Ornua to strengthen the routes to high-value markets it creates for Irish dairy through the Kerrygold brand, while responding to ever-evolving consumer needs through enhanced product innovation, Ornua said. The company continues to diversify its offering and invest in growing the Kerrygold brand at home in the Irish market, where it has launched a new 100-gram Kerrygold Butter Stick.

“For the past 60 years, Kerrygold has proudly brought the unique taste of Irish grass-fed dairy to the world on behalf of Ornua’s member cooperatives and the 14,000 dairy farming families they represent,” said Aidan O’Driscoll, Ornua Cooperative chair. “We are collectively proud of the success the brand has achieved internationally, including in major markets such as the US where Kerrygold is the second largest butter brand.

“We are also passionate about growing the brand’s global status further and focused on safeguarding the value it returns to the Irish dairy sector through the premiumization of Irish dairy,” O’Driscoll continued.

“Enterprise Ireland is committed to supporting companies like Ornua to increase their level of innovation, improve their competitiveness and expand their global footprint, with the ultimate goal of delivering export growth for Ireland,” said Jenny Melia, executive director of

Enterprise Ireland, the government organization responsible for the development and growth of Irish enterprises in world markets. “The opening of Kerrygold Park today reflects highly on the entire Irish dairy sector – pooling together innovation with best-in-class facilities.

“Enterprise Ireland has supported this development under the 2021 Capital Investment Scheme which aims to build the resilience of the Irish dairy and meat sectors by focusing on increasing the value added and directing new products into global markets,” Melia added. “This state-of-the-art facility is certainly doing that and is a lighthouse to other Irish food companies looking to innovate and grow exports.”

“Today’s announcement represents a very significant milestone in the long and successful Kerrygold story, and indeed, the story of Irish dairy,” said Charlie McConalogue, Ireland’s agriculture minister.

The strategic investment at Kerrygold Park “will help to ensure Kerrygold has the world-leading processing capabilities needed to continue to grow the brand and generate value for the community of Irish dairy farming families which it represents,” McConalogue added.

“The global growth of the Kerrygold brand demonstrates the vitality of Ireland’s agri-food sector and dairy industry ecosystem,” said Simon Coveney, Ireland’s minister for enterprise, trade and employment.

Ornua’s investment in growing Kerrygold Park “will further strengthen routes to high-value markets for Irish dairy, while directly supporting incomes that form part of our vital rural economy.”

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UW-River Falls Celebrates Completion Of New Dairy Plant, Teaching Hub

River Falls, WI—It was a celebration for organizers, stakeholders, and individuals who contributed \$9 million and spearheaded a massive renovation to the University of River Falls' old Falcon Creamery and the establishment of the Wuethrich Family - Grassland Dairy Center of Excellence.

The renovation project, which was started over a decade ago, was unveiled to a large audience attending ribbon-cutting ceremonies held on the university campus last Friday.

"I can't remember a day when I didn't think about this project," said Michelle Farner, UWRF dairy plant manager, and whose completed vision now marvelled those touring the new facility. "It's complete and wonderful. We have so many people we are thankful for."

The goals of this 6,000 square foot renovation project were to:

- Enlarge the cheese manufacturing area and include dedicated space for raw milk processing and separation, increase HTST capacity, add additional cheese vats and processed cheese cookers for improved pilot plant capabilities;
- Modernize the dairy plant equipment and processes to help provide more effective teaching and outreach programming; and
- Introduce additional product and processing safety and security features by integrating separation of raw product handling and whey processing.

"There are a lot of opportunities in the dairy industry," Farner said. "The intent of the Center for Excellence is to teach all aspects of the dairy industry - production, food safety, management and marketing - this will attract students

from all over campus and those looking to enter a field in dairy."

Wuethrich Family - Grassland Dairy Center Of Excellence

The dairy industry and other agriculture businesses were key financial supporters, ensuring that the remodeled dairy plant was completed similarly to their own processing operations with equipment used in their everyday procedures.

Over 70 dairy-related organizations, other companies, and nearly 25 individuals contributed over half of the project's \$9 million cost, with the state of Wisconsin paying the remainder.

After a donation of \$1 million, the dairy plant was renamed for the Wuethrich Family Foundation and Grassland Dairy Products, Inc.

"We are honored to have our names associated with this facility, which is in fact, the dairy center for excellence," said Trevor Wuethrich, president of Grassland Dairy, during the ceremony.

Wuethrich said that their donation and the donations of industry partners is an investment in the future.

"As the demand for qualified, trained dairy processing and product development personnel continues to grow, we are going to look right here at UW-River Falls to train and mentor those kids."

The Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association (WCMA) was a driver of the renovation.

John Umhoefer, executive director of the WCMA, said he believes the Wuethrich Family - Grassland Dairy Center of Excellence is the new jewel of the Wisconsin university system.

"It's going to be a priceless resource for new product devel-

opment in the dairy industry," Umhoefer said. "It's going to be a training venue, not just for the students, but for cheese makers, butter makers, all the licensed facilities around the state."

Umhoefer said 50 percent of all United States specialty cheese is made in Wisconsin. He believes the new River Falls plant will help drive continued specialty cheese innovation.

"This facility is going to be the second place in the state where people can experiment at the vat to make those special cheeses," Umhoefer continued. "And frankly, I think this is going to be the place with the biggest focus of that. I think the focus here is going to be training and making specialty products in those vats."

Makenzie Skibbie is a student worker at the dairy plant, and has interned at nearby dairy operations. She is expected to graduate in 2025.

Skibbie said it was her hope that students come and see the operation and find the dairy industry offering plenty of career opportunities.

"It's exciting to come to work here. If you look at what it replaced. This is a real dairy plant," Skibbie said. "The way it's laid out, the equipment we now can work on, the space is far better than what was here. It's a real a pleasure to work at."

Industry Praise

The renovation of the dairy plant is complete with new or refurbished equipment providing a technological leap forward from when the plant was first established in 1982.

Nearby Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery has worked with UWRF for many years on internship programs and using UWRF short courses as continuing education support for its workers.

"What's fun is that Michelle really listened to the needs of the industry," said Paul Bauer, CEO and general manager of Ellsworth Creamery. "Her knowledge of today's dairy industry and the fact she listened to us makes this a state-of-the-art facility."

The plant serves as a hub for students and dairy industry employees to engage in hands-on, modern techniques for making dairy products.

"Michelle and her crew are very intuned with the needs of the industry for mass production, artisan production, and of course, specialty ice cream production," Bauer said.

"As the demand for qualified, trained dairy processing and product development personnel continues to grow, we are going to look right here at UW-River Falls to train and mentor those kids."

— Trevor Wuethrich,
Grassland Dairy

Gary Gosda is plant manager at Schuman Cheese's Lake Country Dairy, located less than two hours from the UWRF campus in Turtle Lake, WI. He is delighted by the affordability of short trips to run trials and having employees attend short courses, as well as the pool of workers that will be much closer to his operations.

"Lake Country Dairy has a lot of River Falls graduates," Gosda said. "We are excited to see the new capabilities - they are exactly what we needed around here. We'll be able to utilize this place to hopefully run some trials and explore new products."

And the pool of trained students is very important to Lake Country Dairy, Gosda said.

"The students here are going to be in the vat, learning from Michelle and her staff and then when they come to us, they'll have that understanding of GMPs, food safety, and process for making cheese - fully exposed to everything right here. It's invaluable experience," Gosda said.

Greenwood, WI, is home to Grassland Dairy. Its population is roughly 1,000 people. Dallas Wuethrich said it is hard to find people who want to make a career out of dairy. He hopes the new plant named after his family will change some minds.

"There are so many opportunities here in dairy production that we've recognized. We need to get the word out, promote this industry," Wuethrich said. "This is remarkable what they've done



Ribbon-cutting ceremonies were held last week for the opening of the Wuethrich Family-Grassland Dairy Center Of Excellence. From left to right: Julie Stucky and Dale Gallenberg, representing the University of Wisconsin-River Falls (UWRF); Paul Bauer, Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery; Jim Mildbrand, Central Wisconsin Cheese Makers and Butter Makers Association; Maria Gallo, UWRF; Tayt, Trevor, and Dallas Wuethrich, Grassland Dairy; Gary Onan, UWRF; John Umhoefer, Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association; Katie Ujdak, Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation; and Michelle Farner, UWRF.

Photo courtesy of our friends at Dairy Connection, Inc.

• See **Celebration at UWRF**, p. 9

Celebration at UWRF

Continued from p. 8

here. A facility like this, with the great lab and equipment, is a great way to do that.”

He said a town as small as Greenwood can't afford losing kids to other universities.

“We were losing some students to other research facilities like South Dakota State, Minnesota, Iowa, even San Luis Obispo,” Wuethrich continued. “We need to provide the same training as those other places and keep them here.”

For Bill Mullins, Mullins Cheese, the investment in the UWRF project was all about the pool of young candidates the program is going to churn out.

“When we started our involvement in this project it really had to do with the students that would come out of it,” Mullins said. “It was about the young people that are going to drive our business and our industry some day.”

Mullins said his company also has had a lot of good luck employing UWRF students.

“We've had a lot of success here. And, we feel, that is going to grow. The more qualified and better trained person raises the pool for a brighter future for the entire industry.”

For industry suppliers like Complete Filtration Resources and DR Tech, donating time and resources to the project is part of the transition to the next generation of plant and operations managers and other personnel.

“There is a transition we are seeing in the industry right now,” said Travis White, president of Complete Filtration Resources. “When you now go to shows and conferences, you see a younger group of people - the next generation of people - getting involved in the industry.”

White credits places like the UWRF project, where people can see the operation in its environment - as key factors for the youth movement.

“The knowledge these students are getting here is fully transferable to most dairy operations. I think this, and other places like this, will bring more youth to the industry, and that is certainly good for our long-term business,” White said.

Tom Quimby is owner/partner of DR Tech. His company received special thanks from Farner.

“I have to say this would not be where it is today without the donors and contributors,” Farner said. “We wouldn't be here without DR Tech, M4 Controls, and NEO Electrical. They have really stepped up the last three months. They have been here by my side, walking through this, and we had a mad rush over the last three months.”

Part of it for Quimby and his team was in giving back to the dairy community.

“This industry has been so good to us, and now you can see what it will do to support our customers and other dairy operations,”

Quimby said. “We are proud to have helped build this operation, and we hope our efforts create a lasting memory in the student as they continue forward and work for the companies we love to support.”

For Farner, the feeling is relief.

“We have had to ask donors to step up in ways we probably shouldn't have had to ask, but they were there. They saw the diamond in the rough, and I am extremely grateful for that,” she said. “It certainly evolved into an amazing facility. I am extremely proud of how it turned out. I've met a lot of people and even surprised myself at how good I got at groveling for support. But I will remain forever humbled by their response.”

Is the pressure now on Farner to pump out products and students and fulfill the needs of the industry?

“Nah, after 11 years of trying to get here, that should be the easy part,” Farner said.



↑ Eric Mertens and his team at Loos Machine provided this cheese cooker as well as a cheese cutter to University of River Falls' Wuethrich Family - Grassland Dairy Center of Excellence.

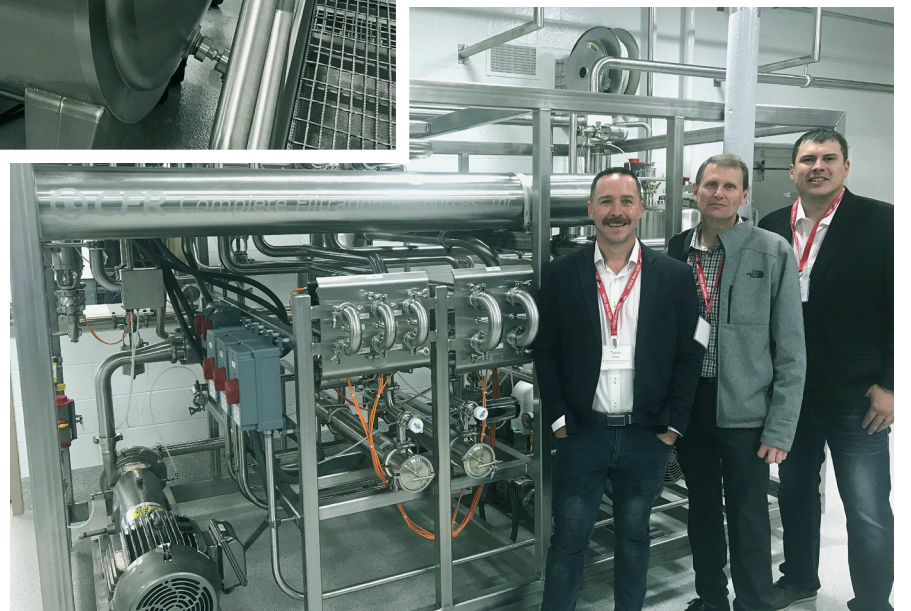
Advanced Process Technologies, Inc., (APT) provided this mini Advanced Cheese Vat (ACV) to the UWRF Wuethrich Family - Grassland Dairy Center Of Excellence. →



↑ Kert Henning, of Hennings Cheese, supported the project and was in attendance with his son, UWRF alum, Joshua Henning (not shown). With Henning in the photo are Mathew Bartkowiak and Steven Funk of Nelson-Jameson, Inc. Nelson-Jameson holds the naming rights to the UWRF laboratory area.



Kert Henning of Hennings Cheese, with Tom Quimby of DR Tech, who piped and installed the facility, as well as contributed a batch pasteurizer. DR Tech provided last-minute help to guarantee the project was done in time for the ribbon-cutting ceremony.



Supplying membrane filtration equipment to the UWRF renovation project was Complete Filtration Resources. Here, Travis White, Kent Mews, and Matthew Schnabel from Complete Filtration Resources.

Other Supporters: AGC Heat Transfer, Agropur, Ampco Pumps, AMPI, Anderson-Negele, AgSource Labs, BMO Harris, Central Wisconsin Cheesemakers and Buttermakers Assn, Chr. Hansen, Compeer Financial, Dairy Connection, Dairy Farmers of America, Eastern Wisconsin Cheesemakers and Buttermakers Assn, Eau Galle Cheese, Enerquip, Foremost Farms USA, FOSS North America, Fristam Pumps, Great Lakes Cheese, Hilmar Cheese, Hydrite, Kelley Supply, Klondike Cheese, LaGrander's Hillside Dairy, Land O' Lakes, Lynn Dairy, Lynn Proteins, Marathon Cheese, Milk Specialties Global, Nasonville Dairy, NW-Wisconsin Managers/Fieldman Assn, Organic Valley, Page & Pedersen, Pentair Sudmo, Phoenix Stainless, Prairie Farms Dairy, Revela Foods/Welcome Dairy, Sani-Matric, Saputo Cheese, Sargento Foods, Sartori Cheese, Specialty Cheese Company, Taylor Cheese, Valley Queen Charitable Foundations, Winona Foods, Whitehall Specialties.

Halloween Cheese

Continued from p 1

said IDDBA education coordinator Miles Allen. “These changes had really begun pre-pandemic.”

“Trick or treats grew in popularity and were often part of community and neighborhood parties, he said. “There’s a ton more, like office costume contests and Halloween’s version of Friendsgiving that were growing momentum.”

“We can’t talk about the last few seasons by avoiding the pandemic impacts,” Allen said. “We look forward to that ‘season,’ which is ever so close, that takes us beyond those impacts.”

“Consumers now look for ways to celebrate outside of holidays, true. But no doubt, holidays have become even bigger events. The best celebrations always have the best party foods,” Allen continued. “Stores even hosted community Halloween events for kids. All of these were perfect opportunities for our deli and bakeries to surprise and delight.”

The perfect example is a Halloween cheese board, Allen said, with the art of charcuterie taking hold pre-2020.

“During the pandemic, consumers became DIY experts. Consumers took the idea of the charcuterie board and created butter boards, chili boards, taco boards and so much more,” he said. Consumers shared their creations with family and friends and of course on social media, and just like that – board popularity went from trend to “here to stay.”

The term “foodie” has taken on a bigger meaning. Specialty cheese, often the key component of boards, has been a catalyst, Allen said.

Consumers can stop by their favorite retail store and find what pairings work best, he continued. They can get a little history of the cheese, too. It makes them the expert.

Manufacturers and retailers have answered heightened consumer demand by packaging specialty cheese and board components for easy “grab and go.”

“The beauty is that consumers take it home and make it their own, keeping the spirit of creativity alive,” Allen continued.

Halloween Cheese Boards Show Imagination, Appeal To Every Age; Spooky Packaging Sells Cheese

The fall Halloween selling season gives consumers the opportunity to create the perfect cheese board that not only tastes good, but appeals to all ages.

“The flavors, aromas, textures and taste of specialty cheese make it perfect for creating fun boards that guests will love,” Allen said. “Natural fall tie-ins like new crop apples, honey and cocoa will warm guests’ hearts with the feeling of fall and the upcoming holiday seasons.”

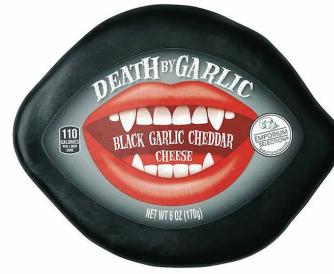
Suggestions for the 2023 Halloween season, per IDDBA’s Allen, include:

- Blood Orange Artigiano from BelGioioso Cheese with red hots, caramel/honey candies, marshmallows

- Carr Valley’s Cocoa Cardona with white chocolate, nougat, peanut butter

- Roth’s Canela or Marieka Gouda Clove with mead, apple cider

“These are only a few ideas; add your creativity,” Allen said. “NO tricks – your board will be the treat of the party.”



Cheese manufacturers and marketers also have an opportunity to boost consumer attention with Halloween-centric packaging and promotion.

Worldwide grocery retailer ALDI is again stocking its popular Emporium Halloween Collection, first launched in 2019, with Death by Garlic Black Cheddar, Scary Pumpkin Spice Wen, and Freaky Franken Sage Derby.

Online retailer *igourmet.com* has curated an “Extremely Scary Cheese Collection” that’s described as “playing Fear Factor with your food,” and is geared towards adventurous eaters.

The international lineup includes an Appenzeller-esque cheese from Switzerland called Red Witch; St. Mang Limburger; The Rattlesnake by Deer Creek Cheddar with habanero peppers; and Queso Cabrales DPO from the dark and humid caves in the mountains of Northern Spain.

Face Rock Creamery of Bandon, OR, has a Vampire Slayer Garlic Cheddar, and Foodie City Network is selling a limited-edition Frankfully Frightening Gouda jazzed up with basil pesto to create a naturally green color.

Yogurt maker Chobani this year launched a line of Halloween Flip four-packs decorated with spooky, interactive packaging. Consumers can scan the QR code on the packaging with any smartphone and step into the world of Halloween-themed Chobani Flip.

Kids can also knock on doors to find tricks and a treat, take a selfie with a mask inspired by Chobani’s Flip Halloween characters, and unlock a treat which may include phone screen-savers, coloring pages, button pins, key chains, stickers, hats, totes and even a mini fridge. The promotion runs through Nov. 1.

“This Halloween packaging is the first of several seasonal packaging takeovers Chobani is planning for its various Greek Yogurt platforms,” the company noted.

More fluid milk companies are likewise dressing up their products for Halloween. Prairie Farms Dairy and Hiland Dairy both offer Halloween flavored milks including Peanut Butter Chocolate and SpookTacular Egnog.

True Moo has also launched a Limited Edition Orange Scream Milk for Halloween, and Producers Dairy has created Halloween Double Chocolate Milk.

Smaller, artisan concerns have likewise embraced consumers’ excitement for all things Halloween. Vermont’s Big Picture Farm, an artisan farmstead confectionery, is selling collections of its flavored and original sea salt caramels in seasonal gift boxes.

“They’re the perfect fall pairings – goats dressed up in Halloween costumes dancing on pumpkins, and goats howling with the full moon. Tied up in a sweet orange bow, and it doesn’t get better than that,” Big Picture said.

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USDA Publishes Final Rule For Organic Livestock Production

Washington—US Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack on Wednesday previewed the Organic Livestock and Poultry Standards (OLPS) final rule, which establishes consistent standards for organic livestock and poultry production.

The final rule outlines more consistent standards for six key areas, including outdoor space requirements, indoor and outdoor living conditions, preventative health care practices, physical alterations and euthanasia, poultry stocking densities, and transport, handling and slaughter.

In partnership with USDA-accredited certifiers, USDA's National Organic Program will oversee the implementation of and enforce compliance with these new, more consistent standards to support the growth of the organic market.

"The organic sector and organic consumers have been clamoring for stricter animal welfare standards for 20 years now, and the OTA and its members have spearheaded that fight," commented Tom Chapman, CEO of the OTA.

"These new standards not only create a more level playing field for organic producers, but they ensure consumers that the organic meat, poultry, dairy and eggs they choose have been raised with plenty of access to the real outdoors, and in humane conditions," Chapman continued. "Having clear, consistent and enforceable standards is paramount for the organic sector to not only maintain consumer trust but to ensure that farms and businesses of all sizes have a fair shot at competing in the marketplace by meeting a minimum set of requirements."

"This update to the organic standards could not come soon enough," said Adam Warthesen, senior director of government and industry affairs for Organic Valley.

"The new standards are a definite improvement over the current reality which has created competitive harm among farmers and not met consumers' expectations for what it means to be an organic egg from an organic chicken," Warthesen added.

"We celebrate a final rule that will strengthen organic animal welfare standards, better align organic producers and certifiers, and meet consumer expectations for organic livestock products," said Carolyn Gahn, senior director, mission and advocacy for Applegate Farms.

New GI Regulation

(Continued from p. 1)

legal framework, with shorter registration times, is expected to increase the attractiveness of the schemes for producers, especially in countries with fewer GIs;

Increasing protection of GIs as ingredients and online: the new rules will increase the protection of GIs used as an ingredient in a processed product and of GI products sold online. The new regulation will also protect GI names in the domain name system, obliging EU member countries to block from their territory domain names that may be infringing a GI name;

Recognizing sustainable practices: producers will be able to valorize their actions regarding environmental, economic or social sustainability, including animal welfare. The text agreed upon by co-legislators lists a non-exhaustive list of sustainability practices as an incentive.

This will contribute to better protecting natural resources and rural economies, securing local plant varieties and animal breeds, conserving the landscape of the production area and improving animal welfare. A producers' group may decide to make some sustainable practices mandatory for their products. In this case, they should be included in the product specifications. On a voluntary basis, producers can also draw up a sustainability report that will be published by the European Commission.

Empowering producers' groups: the new measures will establish a voluntary system of recognized GI producer groups, to be set up by EU member countries. To increase the attractiveness of the system,

such groups will be empowered to manage, enforce and develop their GIs to strengthen their position in the value chain.

The enforcement of GIs remains the responsibility of EU member countries. It includes controlling the proper use of registered terms and combatting fraudulent production, sale and use of GIs.

The European Commission remains responsible for the registration, amendment and cancellation of all registrations.

The political agreement reached by the European Parliament, Council and Commission is now subject to formal approval by the co-legislators.

Geographical indications identify products having qualities, characteristics or reputation due to natural and human factors linked to their place of origin. They are an intellectual property right designed to promote fair competition among producers by preventing bad-faith uses of a name and fraudulent and deceptive practices.

The names of agri-food products and wines are protected as

•Protected Designation of Origin (PDO), which is reserved for the names of products with the strongest link between their characteristics and their geographical origin. Raw materials and production steps all take place in the specific geographical area, and the final product is determined by these local ingredients and producers' know-how.

•Protected Geographical Indication (PGI), which also links a product to a geographical area, through its quality, characteristics and/or reputation. PGI registration requires at least one of the production, processing or prepa-

ration processes to take place in the specific region. However, the ingredients do not need to come from that region.

•Geographical Indication (GI) applies to spirit drinks distilled or manufactured in the specific geographical area.

Only foodstuffs and agricultural products are required to have the PDO/PGI symbols on their packaging. EU symbols are optional for wines and spirit drinks.

As of Oct. 1, 2023, 3,552 names were registered, including 1,634 food and agricultural foodstuff names, 1,656 wine names and 262 spirit drinks. That includes approximately 250 different cheeses.

The most recent study on EU GIs found that the sales value of a product with a protected name is on average double that for similar products without a certification.

"Geographical indications represent one of our great EU agri-food success stories," commented Janusz Wojciechowski, the EU's agriculture commissioner. "They preserve our unique heritage and traditions, and they support rural job creation: the value of a product with a protected name is on average double that for similar products without a certification."

"Geographical indications showcase the very best of our rich European gastronomic tradition. The deal we reached today will help increase the uptake of GIs throughout Europe, it will strengthen their protection, especially online, and it will contribute to upholding the excellent reputation that European products have on global markets," said Luis Planas Puchades, acting minister for agriculture, fisheries and food of Spain.

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Spots Open For Penn State Ice Cream 101: Introduction To Frozen Desserts

State College, PA—Penn State University has opened online registration for its Ice Cream 101: Introduction to Frozen Desserts short course here Jan. 26-28, 2024.

The three-day course will be held at the The Penn State Hotel & Conference Center, and on campus.

Registration for PSU's 132nd Ice Cream Short Course Jan. 7-13, 2024, has already reached capacity. A wait-list is available online, which will automatically add students' names to the email invitation list for the next Ice Cream Short Course set for Jan. 11-19, 2025.

The two-and-a-half-day course includes a combination of both lecture and hands-on exercises. It's designed for anyone interested

in ice cream with the basics of ice cream composition, formulation, and processing. Past and present Penn State faculty directors from PSU's Ice Cream Short Course will serve as principle instructors. The course focuses on the small-scale manufacturing of frozen desserts.

Ice cream aficionados, entrepreneurs, and small-business owners with little or no ice cream manufacturing experience are welcome to attend.

The course will also help participants who have made ice cream with a purchased mix to develop a better understanding of what factors determine the preferred qualities of ice cream.

Special attention will be paid to understanding issues critical to

CDR Advanced Cheesemaking Course May 7-9 Focuses On American Styles

Madison—The Center for Dairy Research (CDR) will highlight American style cheeses in the 2024 edition of its Advanced Cheesemaking Short Course here May 7-9 at the CDR Training Center.

The advanced course will focus on Colby, Monterey Jack, Colby Jack, Pepper Jack, Cheese Curds, and Processed Cheese. Completion of CDR's Cheesemaking Fundamentals Short Course or pre-approved work experience is required prior to registration.

Content that was previously part of CDR's Advanced Cheese Technology Short Course has been revamped to enhance knowledge and skills with classroom lectures by CDR content experts.

Instructors include Dean Sommer, Mark Johnson, Rodrigo Ibanez, John Jaeggi, John Lucey, Ben Ullerup Mathers, and Brandon Prochaska, along with others.

The three-day course also includes hands-on labs and activities, sensory experiences, and critical thinking exercises.

Students will learn how to describe and demonstrate American style cheesemaking steps, and master the foundational science related to cheesemaking.

Instructors will cover the functionality and end-user applications of American style cheeses,

and show how to identify defects, causes and solutions commonly found in these cheese varieties.

Students will learn the impact of different key processing steps on overall quality, and identify the unique steps and qualities in manufacturing a wide range of American style cheeses.

Likewise, teachers will demonstrate the similarities and differences between commodity and artisan American cheese varieties.

The first two days of the workshop will run from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. The course will adjourn at 3 p.m. on May 9. Certificates will be printed and issued in-person on the final day of the course.

Registration closes two weeks before course start date. Cost to attend is \$1,325 per person. To sign up online, visit www.cdr.wisc.edu/american-style.

Looking Ahead For 2024

A preliminary educational lineup for 2024 is available online, with registration for courses and sign-up opening soon for others.

An online, self-paced Butter-making Fundamentals course will be held, alongside CDR's in-person Comprehensive Buttermaking Course June 4-6, 2024.

For more details, visit www.cdr.wisc.edu/education.

PLANNING GUIDE

ADPI Dairy Purchasing & Management Risk Seminar: Nov. 1-2, Convene Willis Tower, Chicago. For details, visit www.adpi.org.

NDB, NMPF, UDIA Joint Annual Meeting: Nov. 13-15, Rosen Shingle Creek Hotel, Orlando, FL. Registration available at www.nmpf.org.

Winter Fancy Food Show: Jan. 21-23, 2024, Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas, NV. Visit www.specialtyfood.com.

Dairy Forum 2024: Jan. 21-24, J.W. Marriott Phoenix Desert Ridge, www.idfa.org/dairy-forum.

World Championship Cheese Contest: March 5-7, Monona Terrace Convention Center, Madison. Visit www.worldchampioncheese.org for updates.

ADPI Global Ingredients Summit: March 11-13, 2024, Peppermill Resort, Reno. Visit www.adpi.org.

Cheese Expo: April 16-18, 2024, Baird Center, Milwaukee, WI. Registration now available online at www.cheeseexpo.org.

ADPI/ABI Joint Annual Conference: April 28-30, Sheraton Grand Chicago Riverwalk, Chicago, IL. Visit adpi.org/events for updates.

building and maintaining product quality.

The registration fee is \$1,000 per person if registered by Nov. 13.

For registrations received on or after Nov. 13, the fee is \$1,075. Cost covers tuition, instruction materials, continental breakfast, beverage breaks, lunches, welcome reception, and a certificate of attendance.

Registration is limited and fills quickly, so students are encouraged to sign up early.

For more details and online registration, visit www.foodscience.psu.edu/events.

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- I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including multiple damages and civil penalties).

Cornell Dairy Lab Analyst Training Course Is Jan. 9-11

Ithaca, NY—Cornell University Extension will host a live Dairy Lab Analyst Training Course here Jan. 9-11, 2024 on campus.

The three-day program is open to those involved with regulatory operations and others allied with the dairy industry.

It features a combination of applications on basic bacteriological and chemical methods used in Grade A milk laboratories.

These include cultural procedures, plating, detection of inhibitory substances, abnormal milk testing, phosphatase testing and other procedures important to quality control in laboratories.

Items of discussion also include good laboratory practices, coliforms, simplified count methods, Appendix N, Charm and Idexx.

The techniques and methods taught are those required by the National Conference on Interstate Milk Shipments (NCIMS)/FDA Grade A Milk Program.

The early registration deadline is Dec. 13. Cost to attend is \$725 for New York State residents and \$880 for out of state registrants.

For sign-up, more information and preliminary 2024 course calendar, visit www.cals.cornell.edu/dairy-lab-analyst-training.



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Dairy Product Stocks in Cold Storage

TOTAL STOCKS AS REPORTED BY USDA (in 1000s of pounds unless indicated)

	Stocks in All Warehouses			September 30, 2023 as a % of		Public Warehouse Stocks
	Sept 30 2022	Aug 31 2023	Sept 30 2023	Sept 30 2022	Aug 31 2023	Sept 30 2023
Butter	267,356	291,750	275,447	103	94	255,021
Cheese						
American	843,112	852,876	850,513	101	100	
Swiss	23,115	22,594	22,378	97	99	
Other	603,565	619,902	599,394	99	97	
Total	1,469,792	1,495,372	1,472,285	100	98	1,138,563

DAIRY FUTURES PRICES

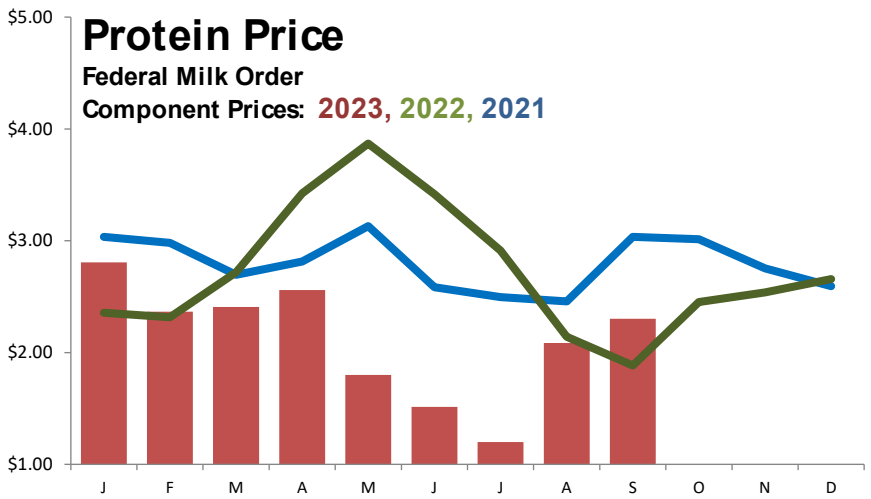
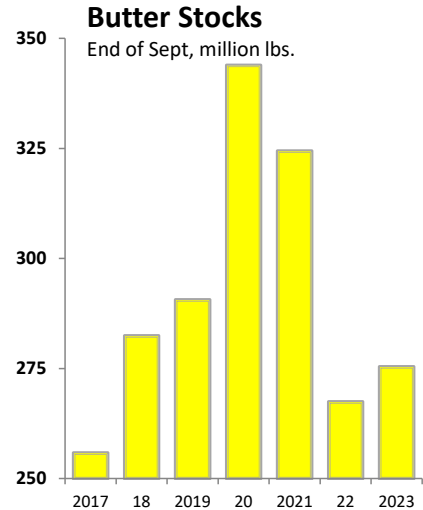
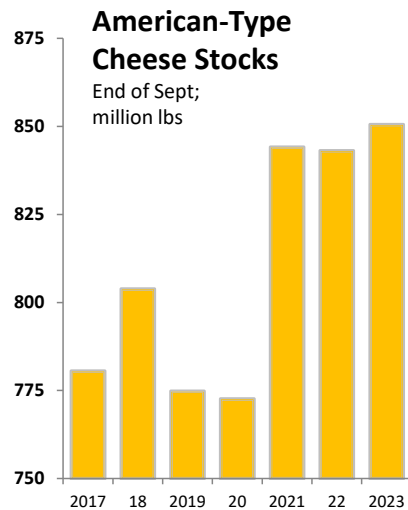
SETTLING PRICE

*Cash Settled

Date	Month	Class III	Class IV	Dry Whey	NDM	Block Cheese	Cheese*	Butter*
10-20	Oct 23	16.88	21.59	31.500	115.750	1.7950	1.7470	327.975
10-23	Oct 23	16.86	21.59	31.500	115.750	1.7950	1.7430	327.975
10-24	Oct 23	16.88	21.65	31.750	116.250	1.7950	1.7370	327.975
10-25	Oct 23	16.89	21.65	31.750	116.300	1.7950	1.7410	327.475
10-19	Oct 23	16.84	21.65	31.750	116.250	1.7950	1.7410	326.000
10-20	Nov 23	18.12	21.36	38.000	120.000	1.8470	1.8380	311.750
10-23	Nov 23	17.83	21.50	38.000	120.000	1.8430	1.8190	313.200
10-24	Nov 23	17.67	21.50	36.450	119.000	1.7870	1.8200	312.000
10-25	Nov 23	17.55	21.07	36.050	118.950	1.7770	1.7950	305.325
10-19	Nov 23	17.55	20.60	36.900	118.500	1.8250	1.7940	297.500
10-20	Dec 23	18.09	20.16	42.000	123.500	1.8660	1.8280	279.850
10-23	Dec 23	17.89	20.30	42.000	123.500	1.8500	1.8150	282.000
10-24	Dec 23	17.56	20.18	39.750	121.000	1.8500	1.8050	283.000
10-25	Dec 23	17.38	20.03	39.700	120.850	1.8400	1.7810	275.500
10-19	Dec 23	17.42	19.99	39.000	119.700	1.8280	1.7780	268.200
10-20	Jan 24	18.15	19.18	46.000	125.500	1.8700	1.8300	251.500
10-23	Jan 24	17.89	19.22	46.000	125.500	1.8680	1.8200	253.500
10-24	Jan 24	17.85	19.14	44.500	123.000	1.8300	1.8350	252.275
10-25	Jan 24	17.72	18.94	42.775	121.250	1.8280	1.8000	250.000
10-19	Jan 24	17.72	18.90	42.750	121.250	1.8280	1.8000	247.000
10-20	Feb 24	18.40	19.33	45.750	127.500	1.8870	1.8640	249.475
10-23	Feb 24	18.35	19.33	45.750	127.500	1.8870	1.8510	249.475
10-24	Feb 24	18.17	19.25	45.000	125.000	1.8490	1.8620	250.025
10-25	Feb 24	18.11	19.02	45.000	122.725	1.8490	1.8310	248.000
10-19	Feb 24	18.08	19.02	45.000	123.400	1.8490	1.8300	247.000
10-20	Mar 24	18.57	19.51	45.750	129.050	1.8970	1.8850	248.575
10-23	Mar 24	18.59	19.45	45.750	129.050	1.8970	1.8700	248.575
10-24	Mar 24	18.45	19.44	45.000	127.000	1.8970	1.8820	248.575
10-25	Mar 24	18.35	19.15	44.100	124.775	1.8930	1.8690	247.750
10-19	Mar 24	18.34	19.15	44.050	125.600	1.8930	1.8680	246.500
10-20	April 24	18.59	19.55	44.000	131.000	1.9090	1.8990	246.500
10-23	April 24	18.59	19.45	44.000	131.000	1.9090	1.8960	246.500
10-24	April 24	18.50	19.45	45.000	129.000	1.9090	1.8750	247.000
10-25	April 24	18.50	19.34	45.000	127.250	1.9090	1.8700	246.250
10-19	April 24	18.43	19.30	44.750	127.250	1.9090	1.8650	245.750
10-20	May 24	18.70	19.68	44.000	134.500	1.9170	1.8960	247.675
10-23	May 24	18.66	19.68	46.000	134.500	1.9170	1.8910	247.675
10-24	May 24	18.58	19.58	46.000	131.125	1.9170	1.8880	247.675
10-25	May 24	18.50	19.42	46.000	129.325	1.9170	1.8780	247.675
10-19	May 24	18.45	19.42	46.000	129.325	1.9170	1.8740	247.675
10-20	June 24	18.84	19.84	45.000	136.250	1.9250	1.9010	246.000
10-23	June 24	18.84	19.84	47.000	136.250	1.9250	1.9000	246.000
10-24	June 24	18.70	19.84	47.000	132.625	1.9250	1.8970	248.000
10-25	June 24	18.69	19.65	46.650	131.550	1.9250	1.8900	247.000
10-19	June 24	18.60	19.65	46.650	131.550	1.9220	1.8850	247.000
10-20	July 24	18.90	19.95	46.000	137.500	1.9550	1.9210	247.475
10-23	July 24	18.85	19.95	48.000	137.500	1.9550	1.9130	247.500
10-24	July 24	18.75	19.92	48.000	134.350	1.9550	1.9080	248.000
10-25	July 24	18.66	19.75	48.000	132.325	1.9550	1.9000	248.000
10-19	July 24	18.76	19.75	48.000	132.350	1.9430	1.8940	248.000
10-20	Aug 24	19.00	19.90	46.000	137.500	1.9600	1.9250	249.475
10-23	Aug 24	18.90	19.90	48.000	137.500	1.9600	1.9230	249.000
10-24	Aug 24	18.83	19.89	48.000	135.775	1.9600	1.9200	249.000
10-25	Aug 24	18.70	19.89	48.000	133.825	1.9600	1.9140	249.000
10-19	Aug 24	18.70	19.89	48.000	133.575	1.9530	1.9040	249.000

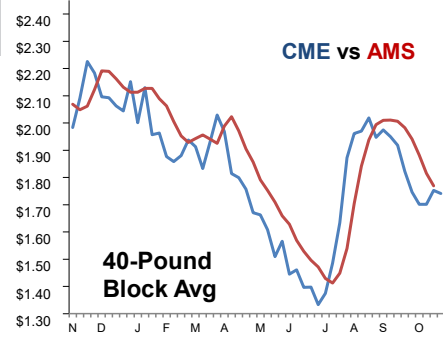
* Prior Day Open Interest

Oct. 26*	22,020	7,735	2,520	9,042	2,771	18,426	9,546
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DAIRY PRODUCT SALES

Oct. 25, 2023—AMS' National Dairy Products Sales Report. Prices included are provided each week by manufacturers. Prices collected are for the (wholesale) point of sale for natural, unaged Cheddar; boxes of butter meeting USDA standards; Extra Grade edible dry whey; and Extra Grade and USPH Grade A nonfortified NFDN.



Week Ending	Oct. 21	Oct. 14	Oct. 7	Sept. 30
40-Pound Block Cheddar Cheese Prices and Sales				
Weighted Price	Dollars/Pound			
US	1.7692	1.8155	1.8819	1.9407
Sales Volume	Pounds			
US	11,873,632	12,100,340	11,141,068	11,098,522
500-Pound Barrel Cheddar Cheese Prices, Sales & Moisture Content				
Weighted Price	Dollars/Pound			
US	1.7234	1.7088	1.7420	1.8810
Adjusted to 38% Moisture				
US	1.6417	1.6264	1.6578	1.7938
Sales Volume	Pounds			
US	13,008,680	12,658,337	13,506,678	12,644,110
Weighted Moisture Content	Percent			
US	34.91	34.86	34.85	34.99
AA Butter				
Weighted Price	Dollars/Pound			
US	3.3271	3.2740	3.0906	2.9360
Sales Volume	Pounds			
US	2,888,628	3,101,681	3,361,816	4,609,889
Extra Grade Dry Whey Prices				
Weighted Price	Dollars/Pound			
US	0.3173	0.3131	0.3055	0.3099
Sales Volume	Pounds			
US	7,088,701	5,885,493	6,056,296	5,514,895
Extra Grade or USPHS Grade A Nonfat Dry Milk				
Average Price	Dollars/Pound			
US	1.1640	1.1462	1.1415	1.1004
Sales Volume	Pounds			
US	19,281,147	16,956,771	17,596,665	26,266,180

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____ Cheese Processor

____ Cheese Packager

____ Cheese Marketer (broker, distributor, retailer)

____ Other processor (butter, cultured products)

____ Whey processor

____ Food processing/Foodservice

____ Supplier to dairy processor

JOB FUNCTION:

____ Company Management

____ Plant Management

____ Plant Personnel

____ Laboratory (QC, R&D, Tech)

____ Packaging

____ Purchasing

____ Warehouse/Distribution

____ Sales/Marketing

DAIRY PRODUCT MARKETS

AS REPORTED BY THE US DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

WHOLESALE CHEESE MARKETS

NATIONAL - OCT. 20: In the West, Class III milk demand is strong to steady, and some cheese makers say spot availability is limited. In the Midwest, contacts report similar milk availability to previous weeks and relay spot milk prices starting just above Class III. In the Northeast, milk production is increasing seasonally but contacts report stagnant spot demand for Class III milk. Cheese production is steady in the Northeast and West. Contacts in the Midwest say cheese production picked up somewhat this week, as fewer plants were closed for maintenance compared to last week. Cheese inventories are said to be comfortable in the Northeast and growing some in the Midwest. In the West, some cheese makers note inventories available for spot load purchasing are decreasing. Demand for cheese is steady from retail purchasers in the Northeast, while foodservice demand is strong. In the Midwest, cheese demand is mixed. Domestic sales of cheese to retail and food service sectors in the West are steady, but contacts say export demand is comparatively lighter.

NORTHEAST - OCT. 25: Farm level milk outputs continue to increase in the Northeast. Volumes of milk are available for Class III operations, and the market for spot milk is quiet as a result. Cheese plant managers relay labor issues are persistent, and while cheese production is increasing week over week, plants are operating below full capacity. Contacts have shared cheese inventories are comfortable and are said to be growing. Demand for Mozzarella from the foodservice sector is strong, and contacts share Cheddar demand is steady to stronger ahead of the holiday season.

MIDWEST AREA - OCT. 25: Midwestern cheese makers say milk availability has not edged much lower in recent weeks. Cheese makers are already plotting out their milk plans for Thanksgiving week, when prices are expected to fall under some pressure. Spot prices this week as of Wednesday are \$.25- to \$1.75-over Class III. For comparison, last year during week 43 spot milk prices were reported from \$1-under to \$.50-over Class. Cheese makers are in the process of locking in 2024 milk commitments. Cheese demand remains mixed from one plant to the next. Inventories range from balanced to tighter in the region. Barrel makers say their spot availability is short. Barrel market tones are firming, while blocks are holding in the mid-\$1.70s. The bullish news, according to contacts, is that the block to barrel price gap on the CME is slim, which adds a stabilizing aspect when compared to a larger price gap of \$.10 or higher.

WEST - OCT. 25: Retail and foodservice demands for varietal cheeses are mostly steady. Inventories are noted as comfortable, overall, by stakeholders. A few cheese manufacturers indicate inventories available for spot purchasing are slightly decreasing. Export demand is moderate. Recent sentiments by some stakeholders that current domestic prices are in a better place to attract more interest from international buyers has dissipated. Class III milk demand is strong to steady. However, extra spot milk loads are somewhat limited. Overall, cheese makers relay tightness in availability of extra Class III spot milk loads. This is keeping production schedules mostly steady. A few American style cheese manufacturers note current production schedules are prioritizing Cheddar.

FOREIGN -TYPE CHEESE - OCT. 25: Milk output is declining in parts of Europe and some industry sources indicate output is reaching seasonal lows. In some parts of the region stakeholders say milk output is near 2022 levels, while in others milk production is down compared to last year. Stakeholders say milk volumes are somewhat tight and current prices for loads are preventing some European cheese makers from running full production schedules. Demand for cheese is strong as holidays in some European countries are contributing to increased retail sales. Meanwhile, some contacts report softening food service sales. Export demand for cheese is steady. Cheese makers say spot inventories are tight and some are unable to fulfill requests from purchasers looking for additional loads of cheese. Cheese prices are steady to higher in Europe

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

Variety	Date:	10/25	10/18	Variety	Date:	10/25	10/18
Cheddar Curd		\$1.81	\$1.79	Mild Cheddar		\$1.80	\$1.79
Young Gouda		\$1.82	\$1.79	Mozzarella		\$1.67	\$1.67

WHOLESALE BUTTER MARKETS - OCTOBER 25

NATIONAL: Cream is tight in the West but is becoming more available in some parts of the region. Cream availability varies in the East and is available in the Central region. Contacts in the East and Central region say cream volumes have become more available recently than in prior weeks. Demand for butter is steady from domestic purchasers in the West, but contacts report moderate interest from international customers. In the East, demand for butter in retail and food service markets is unchanged from last week. Spot butter inventories are tight in the East, while stakeholders note somewhat tight bulk butter.

CENTRAL: Cream availability is loosening each week. Butter plant contacts are able to source cream from both local and western states suppliers. As cream multiples move into the low 1.20s more regularly, churning activity has, in at least some plants' cases, more than doubled since the beginning of the month. Micro-fixing activity is, naturally, lighter. Butter demand is mixed. Salted butter in the region is still somewhat snug. Market prices are falling closer in line with where countryside buying has been reported since the \$3.50+ market prices from earlier this month. Despite the price dips on the CME, market tones are not on the other side of bullish. Some contacts expect later year holiday runs are still possible.

NORTHEAST: Contacts relay that cream has become more available in the Northeast as farm level milk outputs increase and components improve. Additionally, spot loads of cream are more available than in recent weeks. The price of cream has steadied somewhat, and processors note they are supplementing contracted loads of cream with spot orders for steady processing schedules. While a large portion of retail orders has been fulfilled, both retail and foodservice demands are anticipated to be steady through the holidays.

WEST: Although some handlers note improved fat component levels in current milk output, cream is tight. Some recently looser cream volumes above contracted obligations in a few parts of the region are tighter this week. A few butter manufacturers relay limiting the purchasing of extra cream loads given current prices. Retail demand is mixed. Strong to steady demand is relayed by some stakeholders, others relay demand only recent improved from buyers limiting purchasing to immediate needs as butter prices have decreased. Some plant managers relay current inventories are in good shape for anticipated holiday demand. Amongst butter manufacturers with active churns, retail production schedules are strong to steady, while bulk production schedules are lighter.

NATIONAL - CONVENTIONAL DAIRY PRODUCTS

Total conventional dairy ads increased by 13 percent, and organic dairy ads increased by 31 percent. Conventional cheese was the most advertised dairy category. Conventional shredded cheese, sliced cheese, and block cheese in 6-8 ounce packages had weighted average advertised prices of \$2.40, \$2.44, and \$2.28, respectively. The block style cheese had the biggest decrease in price from the prior week, going 39 cents lower. Conventional ice cream was the second most advertised dairy commodity. Conventional ice cream in 48-64 ounce containers had a weighted average advertised price of \$3.75, down 11 cents from last week. Organic ice cream only appeared in the 48-64 ounce container size with a weighted average advertised price of \$6.49, which represents an organic premium of \$2.74. Comparing the current weeks' prices to those of last week, the weighted average advertised price for conventional milk in half gallon containers went up 27 cents. The conventional version had a weighted average advertised price of \$2.52.

RETAIL PRICES - CONVENTIONAL DAIRY - OCTOBER 27

Commodity	US	NE	SE	MID	SC	SW	NW
Butter 8 oz	2.61	2.67					
Butter 1#	3.50	5.08	3.61	2.77	3.07	4.02	2.80
Cheese 6-8 oz block	2.28	2.30	2.53	1.93	2.29	2.52	1.99
Cheese 6-8 oz shred	2.40	2.55	2.42	2.22	2.24	2.50	1.83
Cheese 6-8 oz sliced	2.44	2.59	2.62	2.15	2.14	2.40	
Cheese 1# block	4.25	3.99	4.29			4.49	
Cheese 1# shred	4.14		4.29			3.99	
Cheese 1# sliced							
Cheese 2# block	7.54		9.99		6.98	7.49	6.67
Cheese 2# shred	7.53	7.99	9.99	6.99	7.39	7.74	6.14
Cottage Cheese 16 oz	2.35	3.09	2.00	2.35	2.00	2.00	2.19
Cottage Cheese 24 oz	3.41	3.99	3.34	3.29	3.17		
Cream Cheese 8 oz	2.49	2.44	2.44	2.82	2.51	2.35	2.49
Ice Cream 14-16 oz	3.70	3.95	3.27	3.96	3.98	3.31	3.49
Ice Cream 48-64 oz	3.75	3.72	3.68	3.85	4.30	3.85	3.04
Milk 1/2 gallon	2.52		2.39	2.79	2.99	2.67	1.63
Milk gallon	3.68	4.12		2.66		3.82	
Flavored Milk 1/2 gal	1.86		1.91	1.93	1.49	1.59	
Flavored Milk gallon	3.10	4.09		2.67	2.99		
Sour Cream 16 oz	2.09	2.17	2.01	2.13	2.09	2.22	1.86
Sour Cream 24 oz	3.24		3.79	2.50	3.49	3.07	
Yogurt (Greek) 4-6 oz	1.10	1.14	1.02	1.17	1.00	1.14	1.09
Yogurt (Greek) 32 oz	4.99	4.69	5.24	4.99	4.99		5.19
Yogurt 4-6 oz	0.67	0.69	0.60	0.60			
Yogurt 32 oz	3.27	3.10			3.99	3.10	

ORGANIC DAIRY - RETAIL OVERVIEW

National Weighted Retail Avg Price:			
Butter 8 oz	\$5.99	Cream Cheese 8 oz:	\$3.30
Butter 1lb:	\$8.04	Ice Cream 48-64 oz	\$6.49
Cheese 6-8 oz block:	\$7.33	Milk 1/2 gallon:	\$4.00
Cheese 6-8 oz shred:	\$4.41	Milk gallon:	\$6.94
Cheese 6-8 oz sliced:		Sour Cream 16 oz:	\$3.49
Cheese 1 lb shred:	\$8.99	Yogurt 4-6 oz:	
Cheese 2 lb shred:	\$11.99	Yogurt 32 oz:	\$4.13
Cottage Cheese 16 oz:		Yogurt Greek 4 - 6 oz	\$1.33
		Yogurt Greek 32 oz	\$6.96

DRY DAIRY PRODUCTS - OCTOBER 26

DRY WHEY/WEST: Dry whey prices moved higher across all facets of the range and mostly price series in the West. Activity from spot load buyers for non-preferred brand loads is reportedly stronger. Both non-preferred and preferred brand loads commanded some higher prices. A few manufacturers indicate tight inventories. Export demand is moderate. A few stakeholders relay sentiments that recent feed tenders from Asian purchasers and preparations for large yearly celebrations in Asia could garner more demand from Asian buyers. Dry whey production schedules are steady with cheese manufacturers making ample amounts of liquid whey. Market tones for dry whey are bullish. Some stakeholders note demand for proteins, in general, has improved.

DRY WHEY/CENTRAL: Trading activity, whether in spite of or due to a busy industry conference, was somewhat hearty this week. Milk availability for Class III processing remains somewhat snug in the region. Cheese makers are paying over

Class for spot milk, despite steadier Class I fluid milk intakes and seasonal increases in milk and components. Domestic end users say they are working on contractual agreements for Q1. Feed whey markets are slowly mirroring the effects of bullish carbohydrate markets, as well. Market tones for dry whey are uncertain, but holding some bullish undertones primarily based on export interest.

LACTOSE CENTRAL/WEST: The price range for lactose expanded this week, as the bottom slid lower, and the top moved higher. Meanwhile, less movement was seen with the mostly price series for lactose as the bottom was unchanged and the top inched upwards. Demand for lactose is steady to strengthening in domestic markets. Some contacts note they continue to offer prices near the bottom of the range to purchasers in international markets in an effort to increase demand. Loads are available for spot purchasing, but contacts say inventories of lactose which meet more stringent end user specifications are tight.

WEEKLY COLD STORAGE HOLDINGS

SELECTED STORAGE CENTERS IN 1,000 POUNDS - INCLUDING GOVERNMENT

DATE	BUTTER	CHEESE
10/23/23	31,506	80,155
10/01/23	29,454	81,450
Change	2,052	1,295
Percent Change	7	2

CME CASH PRICES - OCTOBER 23 - 27, 2023

Visit www.cheesereporter.com for daily prices

	500-LB CHEDDAR	40-LB CHEDDAR	AA BUTTER	GRADE A NFDM	DRY WHEY
MONDAY October 23	\$1.7350 (+2½)	\$1.7650 (-2¼)	\$3.3750 (+1½)	\$1.2400 (+¾)	\$0.3800 (-1½)
TUESDAY October 24	\$1.7350 (NC)	\$1.7425 (-2¼)	\$3.3650 (-1)	\$1.2200 (-2)	\$0.3675 (-1¼)
WEDNESDAY October 25	\$1.7000 (-3½)	\$1.7300 (-1¼)	\$3.3000 (-6½)	\$1.2100 (-1)	\$0.3675 (NC)
THURSDAY October 26	\$1.6825 (-1¼)	\$1.7300 (NC)	\$3.2500 (-5)	\$1.1975 (-1¼)	\$0.3950 (+2¼)
FRIDAY October 27	\$1.6825 (NC)	\$1.7300 (NC)	\$3.1925 (-5¼)	\$1.1975 (NC)	\$0.4000 (+½)
Week's AVG \$ Change	\$1.7070 (+0.03100)	\$1.7395 (-0.0130)	\$3.2965 (-0.0905)	\$1.2275 (+0.0225)	\$0.3820 (+0.0075)
Last Week's AVG	\$1.6760	\$1.7525	\$3.3870	\$1.2275	\$0.3745
2022 AVG Same Week	\$1.9790	\$2.0035	\$3.1555	\$1.4220	\$0.4340

MARKET OPINION - CHEESE REPORTER

Cheese Comment: Five cars of blocks were sold Monday, the last at \$1.7650, which set the price. No blocks were sold Tuesday; the price declined on an uncovered offer of 1 car at \$1.7425. Three cars of blocks were sold Wednesday, the last at \$1.7300, which set the price. Four cars of blocks were sold Thursday, the last at \$1.7300, which left the price unchanged. There was no block market activity at all on Friday. The barrel price rose Monday on a sale at \$1.7350, fell Wednesday on an uncovered offer at \$1.7000, and dropped Thursday on a sale at \$1.6825.

Butter Comment: The price increased Monday on a sale at \$3.3750, decreased Tuesday on a sale at \$3.3650, dropped Wednesday on a sale at \$3.3000, fell Thursday on an uncovered offer at \$3.2500, and declined Friday on a sale at \$3.1925. A total of 11 truckloads of butter were traded this week at the CME.

Nonfat Dry Milk Comment: The price rose Monday on a sale at \$1.2400, fell Tuesday on a sale at \$1.2200, declined Wednesday on an uncovered offer at \$1.2100, and decreased Thursday on an uncovered offer at \$1.1975.

Dry Whey Comment: The price declined Monday on a sale at 38.0 cents, dropped Tuesday on a sale at 36.75 cents, rose Thursday on an unfilled bid at 39.50 cents, and increased Friday on a sale at 40.0 cents.

WHEY MARKETS - OCTOBER 23 - 27, 2023

RELEASE DATE - OCTOBER 26, 2023

Animal Feed Whey—Central: Milk Replacer:	.2400 (+2) - .2600 (NC)
Buttermilk Powder:	
Central & East:	1.0000 (NC) - 1.0800 (+3) West: .9600 (+5) - 1.1300 (+6)
Mostly:	1.0000 (+7) - 1.1000 (+7)
Casein: Rennet:	3.5000 (-10) - 3.9000 (-10) Acid: 3.4000 (NC) - 3.8000 (NC)
Dry Whey—Central (Edible):	
Nonhygroscopic:	.3100 (+1) - .3900 (+1) Mostly: .3200 (NC) - .3600 (+1)
Dry Whey—West (Edible):	
Nonhygroscopic:	.3100 (+½) - .4000 (+2½) Mostly: .3400 (+1) - .3800 (+1)
Dry Whey—NE:	.3100 (+1½) - .3825 (+1½)
Lactose—Central and West:	
Edible:	.1425 (-1¼) - .4600 (+6½) Mostly: .2000 (NC) - .2950 (+¼)
Nonfat Dry Milk—Central & East:	
Low/Medium Heat:	1.1600 (+1) - 1.2400 (+2) Mostly: 1.1800 (NC) - 1.2200 (+1½)
High Heat:	1.2800 (NC) - 1.3500 (NC)
Nonfat Dry Milk—Western:	
Low/Med Heat:	1.1900 (+2) - 1.2700 (NC) Mostly: 1.2000 (+1) - 1.2400 (NC)
High Heat:	1.3175 (+1¼) - 1.4450 (+½)
Whey Protein Concentrate—34% Protein:	
Central & West:	.7700 (+1) - .9900 (NC) Mostly: .8250 (+½) - .9200 (NC)
Whole Milk:	1.8500 (NC) - 2.1500 (+5)

Visit www.cheesereporter.com for historical dairy, cheese, butter, & whey prices

AVERAGE MONTHLY WPC MOSTLY PRICES: USDA

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
'10	.9271	.9307	.9130	.9102	.9238	.9432	.9444	.9555	.9662	.9845	.9950	.9950
'11	1.0233	1.0597	1.2404	1.3686	1.5043	1.5570	1.5650	1.5376	1.4900	1.4363	1.4458	1.4600
'12	1.5239	1.5271	1.5091	1.4195	1.3010	1.1977	1.1401	1.1272	1.1862	1.2283	1.2358	1.2483
'13	1.2606	1.2472	1.2150	1.2378	1.2786	1.3172	1.3518	1.3670	Govt Shutdown	1.6046	1.6908	1.6908
'14	1.7663	1.7799	1.7694	1.7682	1.7530	1.6612	1.6089	1.5549	1.4355	1.3358	1.2751	1.2326
'15	1.1727	1.0970	1.0031	.9439	.9103	.8620	.7863	.6473	.5610	.5333	.5313	.5300
'16	.5445	.5750	.5852	.6076	.6239	.6616	.6937	.7151	.7305	.7706	.7961	.8608
'17	.9318	.9905	.9681	.9425	.9138	.9013	.8919	.8486	.8231	.8063	.7757	.7490
'18	.7268	.7211	.6960	.7027	.7502	.7949	.8092	.8144	.8437	.8658	.8817	.8851
'19	.8929	.8995	.9025	.9025	.9074	.9244	.9297	.9444	.9465	.9530	.9597	.9854
'20	1.0017	1.0140	1.0148	1.0027	.9590	.9356	.8945	.8591	.8500	.8810	.9124	.9255
'21	.9696	1.0134	1.0487	1.0977	1.1328	1.1513	1.1551	1.1548	1.1450	1.1540	1.2149	1.3174
'22	1.4378	1.5904	1.7102	1.7920	1.8160	1.8269	1.8313	1.8118	1.8052	1.8085	1.8073	1.7478
'23	1.6671	1.4846	1.3440	1.2238	1.0989	.9482	.8743	.8191	.8254			

USDA Issues Memo For Child Nutrition Programs With Milk Supply Shortages

Alexandria, VA—USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), in a memorandum issued Tuesday, provided state agencies with information about existing authority related to schools and other child nutrition program operators that are experiencing inadequate milk supplies.

FNS is aware that schools in multiple states are experiencing milk supply chain challenges related to packaging issues, noted the memorandum, which was signed by Tina Namian, director, School Meals Policy Division, FNS.

FNS is encouraging state agencies to use existing authority when needed to support nutrition program operators impacted by the current milk packaging challenges.

Under current child nutrition program regulations, state agencies may allow program operators experiencing milk supply shortages to serve meals during an emergency period with an alternate form of fluid milk or without fluid milk, the memo explained. Under USDA regulations, if a school is unable to obtain a supply of any type of fluid milk on a continuing basis, the state agency may approve the service of meals

without fluid milk if the school uses an equivalent amount of canned milk or dry milk in the preparation of the meals.

Although child nutrition program operators are expected to meet the fluid milk requirements to the greatest extent possible, supply chain disruptions, including disruptions that limit milk variety or affect serving size, would be considered a temporary emergency condition for purposes of this flexibility, according to the memo.

Because this is an existing regulatory flexibility, a waiver is not required for state agencies to exercise this authority, the memo added.

The memo also reminded state agencies that administrative reviews should take into account any waivers or flexibilities that have been provided to program operators.

The memo said FNS appreciates the "exceptional efforts" of state agencies and child nutrition program operators working to meet the nutritional needs of children during this time.

State agencies were reminded to distribute the memorandum to nutrition program operators.

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