

NEWS RELEASE
For Immediate Release
Contact: Karen Nielsen
knielsen@cdr.wisc.edu
608.265.1491

Boosting Midwest Dairy: New Dairy Business Innovation Alliance to Support Entrepreneurship

Madison -- The Dairy Business Innovation Center (DBIA) has released dates for all-new industry grants to help Midwest dairy producers and processors diversify, modernize or develop new products.

Coordinated as a partnership between the Center for Dairy Research (CDR) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association (WCMA), DBIA is available to help dairy-related businesses in the five states of Wisconsin, Illinois, Minnesota, Iowa and South Dakota.

“This initiative will help support farmstead or small dairy businesses as they explore opportunities to create new value-added dairy products like specialty cheeses, in addition, by providing targeted grants to dairy businesses, it will encourage more entrepreneurial efforts,” said John Lucey, CDR Director.

DBIA will be distributing direct-to-business grants totaling \$220,000. A grant review committee established by DBIA will review applications and make subsequent awards. Grants will be awarded for projects in increments up to \$20,000. The grant application will be available on June 15 on the [DBIA website](#). The application is due August 14 and selected applicants will be notified September 4.

“We’re pleased to be guiding investments in the U.S. dairy industry that can boost sales of value-added dairy products domestically and abroad, and—ultimately—increase profitability for family farmers and our dairy processors,” said John Umhoefer, WCMA Executive Director.

DBIA is a result of the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Dairy Business Innovation Initiatives (DBII) in the 2018 Farm Bill. The initiatives support dairy businesses in the development, production, marketing and distribution of dairy products through direct technical assistance and grants to dairy businesses. In 2019, there was a national competition to select all-new innovation centers. In addition to Wisconsin’s DBIA, other centers were selected at the University of Tennessee and the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets.



Karen Nielsen, DBIA Program Coordinator | knielsen@cdr.wisc.edu | 608-265-1491

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Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, South Dakota & Wisconsin



Here in the Midwest, USDA has granted DBIA \$454,392 to provide industry training, consultative services, and direct-to-business grants over a three-year period. DBIA's goal is to support program participants in achieving three goals: on-farm diversification, the development of value-added dairy products, and an increase in the exports of dairy products.

Grants can be used a wide variety of projects, such as:

- Dairy farm diversification through value-added initiatives, such as development of dairy products or on-farm business ventures.
- Modernization, specialization or expansion of farmstead or dairy facilities to support product development or improvement.
- Increase sales of current products through improvement of product quality, packaging and marketing.
- Value chain and commodity innovation to develop specialty dairy products.
- Ensure regulatory compliance and quality control to give businesses greater access to the food industry, e.g. to supply local stores and processors.

For More Information About DBIA

WisCheeseMakers.org/DairyBusiness

turbo.cdr.wisc.edu/dairy-business-innovation-alliance/

DBIA Contact

Karen Nielsen, DBIA Program Coordinator | 608-265-1491 | knielsen@cdr.wisc.edu