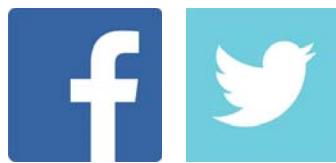


CHEESE MARKET NEWS®

The Weekly Newspaper Of The Nation's Cheese And Dairy/Deli Business



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INSIDE

♦ **Aurora Organic Dairy to build new milk processing facility in Missouri.**
For details, see page 10.

♦ **CMN celebrates U.S. Championship Cheese Contest winners.**
For details, see pages 25-47.

♦ **A new class of Wis. Master Cheesemakers graduates.**
For details, see pages 49-52.

♦ **Appel Farms begins making cheese in new plant.**
For details, see page 58.

By Rena Archwamety

WASHINGTON — As news this week broke that Wisconsin's Grassland Dairy Products canceled milk purchasing contracts with a number of dairy farmers, lawmakers and dairy industry organizations have scrambled to put more pressure on Canada's protectionist dairy trade policies and seek alternate avenues for milk processing.

On Wednesday, the U.S. Dairy Export Council (USDEC), National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF) and International Dairy Foods Association (IDFA) renewed their call for the federal government, as well as governors

in northern states, to take immediate action in response to Canada's violation of trade commitments to the United States.

The groups explain that because of Canada's new "Class 7" pricing policy, which they say is expressly designed to disadvantage U.S. exports to Canada and globally, multiple dairy companies in Wisconsin and New York have been forced to inform many of their supplying farmers that the Canadian market for their exports has dried up.

Several news outlets reported this week that Grassland sent a letter to 75 farmers informing them it could no longer accept their milk starting May 1. (See column "Canadian policy hits Wisconsin dairy farms" in this week's issue.)

Grassland says the situation has affected "several dozen" farmer suppliers.

Goedhart Westers, vice president of business development, Grassland Dairy Products, says the company was notified last week that some of its Canadian customers would be making their last pickup of ultrafiltered milk the following Thursday, and that it would

lose sales equating to about a million pounds of its total daily milk intake.

"We tried to absorb as much of that as we could in our plant, but we can't run the full extra million pounds," Westers says. "We had to make a decision, and we were forced to make a big decision in a very short period."

Westers says Canada's new dairy policy, which subsidizes domestic product, has made Grassland's ultrafiltered milk product completely cost prohibitive in the Canadian market.

"It's a very effective policy on Canada's side," he says. "We still believe it is protectionist in nature and doesn't align with current free trade agreements. But we lost the sale, and our farms lost a home for their milk. We'll keep fighting this issue together with USDEC and state and federal officials."

NMPF says situations like these are a direct consequence of Canada's National Ingredients Strategy and new Class 7 milk pricing program.

"Canada's protectionist dairy policies are having precisely the effect Canada intended: cutting off U.S. dairy exports of ultra-filtered milk to

Canada despite long-standing contracts with American companies," says Jim Mulhern, president and CEO, NMPF. "American companies have invested in new equipment and asked dairy farmers to supply the milk to meet demand in the Canadian dairy market. This export access has suddenly disappeared, not because the market is gone, but because the Canadian government has reneged on its commitments."

U.S. Rep. Mike Gallagher, R-Wis., says Canada is breaking longstanding trade agreements, and Wisconsin farmers are paying the price.

"The announcement that Grassland Dairy will be cutting its milk intake from our local farms because of new Canadian regulations preventing the sale of our dairy products in their country is not consistent with our values nor our agreements," Gallagher says. "Trade must be free but fair, and Canada must play by the rules."

Dairy plants in New York and Wisconsin have been challenged to keep up with expanding milk production in their regions for several years. One market opportunity

Turn to TRADE, page 12 ⇔



Switzerland enjoys reputation for high-quality hard cheeses

Editor's note: Passport to Cheese is Cheese Market News' feature series exploring the dairy industries of nations around the world. Each month this series takes an in-depth look at various nations/regions' dairy industries with coverage of their milk and cheese statistics and key issues affecting them. The nations' interplay with the United States also is explored. We are pleased to introduce our latest country — Switzerland.

By Rena Archwamety

MADISON, Wis. — Switzerland, known for its grassy mountains and hard cheeses, has an extensive history of cheesemaking in its Alpine regions.

According to Switzerland Cheese Marketing AG (SCM), a non-profit marketing organization serving Switzerland's cheese industry, archeological findings show that cattle were bred on the land that would become Switzerland as long ago as the Neolithic period, and the ancient Romans brought the tradition of hard cheese as far as the Alps.

"Cheesemaking has a long history in Switzerland, and there are mentions of Gruyère (in the Pays d'Enhaut region in the former country of Gruyère) around 1115," says Manuela Sonderegger, SCM spokesperson.

In the early days of the Swiss Confederation, cheese was not only

Turn to SWITZERLAND, page 8 ⇔

Executive shares strategies for minimizing recall risk

By Alyssa Mitchell

CHICAGO — With recent major multi-manufacturer recalls in the food supply chain and the implementation of the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA), Scott Hood, director of global food safety and regulatory affairs at General Mills, shared strategies for minimizing recall risks and a holistic approach to food safety protocol in a session Tuesday during the ProFood Tech conference here.

Tuesday's session, a "Henry Randolph Symposium," was established by Mérieux NutriSciences to recognize the achievements of the late "Doc" Randolph through the practical application of food safety and quality principles to improve dairy manufacturing.

Hood has been with General Mills for 18 years. Prior to that,

Turn to SAFETY, page 15 ⇔

Adjusted February cheese production rises 2.0 percent

WASHINGTON — Total U.S. cheese production, excluding cottage cheese, was 941.7 million pounds in February, 1.4 percent below February 2016 and 9.9 percent below January 2017, according to data released this week by USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). (All figures are rounded. Please see CMN's *Dairy Production* Turn to NASS, page 23 ⇔

MARKET INDICATORS

Chicago Mercantile Exchange

Cash prices for the week ended April 7, 2017

	Monday April 3	Tuesday April 4	Wednesday April 5	Thursday April 6	Friday April 7
Cheese Barrels					
Price	\$1.4950	\$1.4800	\$1.4575	\$1.4350	\$1.4350
Change	+2 1/2	-1 1/2	-2 1/4	-2 1/4	NC
Cheese 40-lb. Blocks					
Price	\$1.5300	\$1.5200	\$1.5000	\$1.4800	\$1.4600
Change	+1	-1	-2	-2	-2

Weekly average (April 3-7): Barrels: \$1.4605(+.0545); 40-lb. Blocks: \$1.4980(+.0250).

Weekly ave. one year ago (April 4-8, 2016): Barrels: \$1.4335; 40-lb. Blocks: \$1.4345.

	Grade A NDM	Grade AA Butter
Price	\$0.8000	\$2.1275
Change	NC	+2

Weekly average (April 3-7): Grade A: \$0.8020(-.0080).

	Grade AA Butter				
Price	\$2.1275	\$2.1500	\$2.1450	\$2.1200	\$2.0975
Change	+2	+2 1/4	-1/2	-2 1/2	-2 1/4

Weekly average (April 3-7): Grade AA: \$2.1280(+.0265).

Class II Cream (Major Northeast Cities): \$2.2066(+.1988)–\$2.5218(+.0913).

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Weekly Cold Storage Holdings

April 3, 2017

On hand Monday	Week Change	Change since April 1		Last Year	
		Pounds	Percent	Pounds	Change
Butter	25,236	+257	+51	+0	25,594 -358
Cheese	97,605	+178	+36	+0	95,028 +2,577

(These data, which include government stocks and are reported in thousands of pounds, are based on reports from a limited sample of cold storage centers across the country. This chart is designed to help the dairy industry see the trends in cold storage between the release of the National Agricultural Statistics Service's monthly cold storage reports.)

YEAR	CLASS III PRICE (Dollars per hundredweight, 3.5% butterfat test)											
	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
2011	13.48	17.00	19.40	16.87	16.52	19.11	21.39	21.67	19.07	18.03	19.07	18.77
2012	17.05	16.06	15.72	15.72	15.23	15.63	16.68	17.73	19.00	21.02	20.83	18.66
2013	18.14	17.25	16.93	17.59	18.52	18.02	17.38	17.91	18.14	18.22	18.83	18.95
2014	21.15	23.35	23.33	24.31	22.57	21.36	21.60	22.25	24.60	23.82	21.94	17.82
2015	16.18	15.46	15.56	15.81	16.19	16.72	16.33	16.27	15.82	15.46	15.30	14.44
2016	13.72	13.80	13.74	13.63	12.76	13.22	15.24	16.91	16.39	14.82	16.76	17.40
2017	16.77	16.88	15.81									

STAFF

Susan Quarne, Publisher
(PH 608/831-6002; FAX 608/288-9093)
email: square@cheesemarketnews.com

Kate Sander, Editorial Director
(PH 509/962-4026; FAX 608/288-9093)
email: ksander@cheesemarketnews.com

Alyssa Mitchell, Managing Editor
(PH 608/288-9090; FAX 608/288-9093)
email: amitchell@cheesemarketnews.com

Rena Archwamety, Senior Editor
(PH 608/288-9090; FAX 608/288-9093)
email: rena@cheesemarketnews.com

Stephanie Ave, Assistant Editor
(PH 608/288-9090; FAX 608/288-9093)
email: sawe@cheesemarketnews.com

REGULAR CONTRIBUTORS

Creative Business Services, FCStone, International Dairy Foods Association, Eric Meyer, National Milk Producers Federation, Rice Dairy, John Umhoefer, U.S. Dairy Export Council, WOW Logistics, Edward Zimmerman

ADVERTISING/SUBSCRIPTION ORDERS & INFO

Contact: Susan Quarne - Publisher
P.O. Box 628254, Middleton, WI 53562
PHONE 608/831-6002 • FAX 608/288-9093

WEBSITE: www.cheesemarketnews.com

SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

Cheese Market News®, Publication #0598-030, (ISSN 0891-1509), is published weekly by Quarne Publishing LLC, P.O. Box 628254, Middleton, WI 53562; Phone 608/831-6002; FAX 608/288-9093. Periodicals postage paid at Madison, WI. Circulation records are maintained by Quarne Publishing LLC, P.O. Box 628254, Middleton, WI 53562. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Cheese Market News®, Subscriber Services, P. O. Box 628254, Middleton, WI 53562; Form 3579 requested; or call direct at 608/831-6002. All rights reserved under the United States International and Pan-American Copyright Conventions. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, mechanical, photocopying, electronic recording or otherwise, without the prior written permission of Quarne Publishing LLC. Opinions expressed in articles are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of Quarne Publishing LLC dba Cheese Market News®. Cheese Market News® does not endorse the products of any advertiser and does not assume and hereby disclaims any liability to any person for any loss or damage caused by errors or omissions in the material contained herein, regardless of whether such errors result from negligence, accident or any other cause whatsoever. Copyright 2017 by Quarne Publishing LLC.

Subscriptions: \$145 for U.S., second-class delivery; \$200 for U.S. first-class delivery including Canada and \$330 International rate to all others. Printed in U.S.A.

CHEESE FUTURES for the week ending April 6, 2017

(Listings for each day by month, settling price and open interest)

	Fri., March 31	Mon., April 3	Tues., April 4	Wed., April 5	Thurs., April 6*	
MAR17	1.557	3,465	1.557	3,468	1.558	3,470
APR17	1.517	4,232	1.536	4,239	1.517	4,287
MAY17	1.580	3,859	1.592	3,864	1.543	3,910
JUN17	1.625	3,496	1.625	3,486	1.596	3,458
JUL17	1.696	3,081	1.697	3,077	1.676	3,054
AUG17	1.738	2,869	1.739	2,868	1.724	2,866
SEP17	1.747	2,563	1.750	2,533	1.739	2,513
OCT17	1.747	2,009	1.749	2,961	1.737	1,982
NOV17	1.740	2,199	1.740	2,199	1.735	2,204
DEC17	1.731	2,250	1.731	2,250	1.726	2,242
JAN18	1.721	539	1.725	539	1.724	574
FEB18	1.722	422	1.725	422	1.720	472
MAR18	1.718	261	1.718	261	1.716	299
APR18	1.715	206	1.715	206	1.710	209
MAY18	1.715	210	1.715	210	1.715	210
JUN18	1.720	197	1.720	197	1.720	197

Total Contracts Traded/
Open Interest 685/31,858 403/31,780 471/31,854 527/33,065 1,148/29,064

Daily market prices are available by visiting CME's online statistics sites at <http://www.cmegroup.com>.

*Total Contracts Traded/Open Interest reflect additional months not included in this chart.

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MARKET INDICATORS

California Minimum Prices

Released April 3, 2017

	Butterfat	SNF	Equivalent
Class 4a	\$ 2.3278/lb.	\$ 0.6681/lb.	\$ 13.96/cwt.
Class 4b	\$ 2.3278/lb.	\$ 0.6450/lb.	\$ 13.76/cwt.

CME FUTURES for the week ended April 6, 2017

Class III Milk*

	Fri., March 31	Mon., April 3	Tues., April 4	Wed., April 5	Thurs., April 6
MAR17	15.83	4,747	15.81	4,745	15.82
APR17	15.31	5,128	15.56	5,214	15.36
MAY17	15.75	4,508	15.86	4,622	15.53
JUN17	16.01	4,718	16.12	4,721	15.86
JUL17	16.59	3,277	16.67	3,296	16.40
AUG17	16.85	2,711	16.95	2,713	16.72
SEP17	16.96	2,680	17.06	2,692	16.89
OCT17	16.86	2,148	16.93	2,155	16.86
NOV17	16.78	1,937	16.82	1,937	16.79
DEC17	16.67	1,959	16.67	1,959	16.63
JAN18	16.56	592	16.56	592	16.51
FEB18	16.51	550	16.50	550	16.45
MAR18	16.39	436	16.39	436	16.31
APR18	16.35	311	16.35	311	16.30
MAY18	16.42	283	16.42	283	16.40
Total Contracts Traded/ Open Interest	1,185/36,530	1,145/36,772	1,182/36,877	841/37,433	1,950/32,650

Class IV Milk*

	Fri., March 31	Mon., April 3	Tues., April 4	Wed., April 5	Thurs., April 6
MAR17	14.41	402	14.41	402	14.32
APR17	14.15	459	14.15	459	14.15
MAY17	14.21	515	14.24	525	14.24
JUN17	14.53	512	14.53	512	14.53
JUL17	14.76	449	14.79	454	14.79
AUG17	15.04	466	15.04	466	15.04
SEP17	15.34	407	15.39	407	15.35
OCT17	15.54	391	15.54	391	15.54
NOV17	15.67	335	15.67	335	15.67
DEC17	15.65	342	15.65	342	15.65
JAN18	15.54	130	15.54	130	15.54
Total Contracts Traded/ Open Interest	334,992	235,007	105,015	1,5147	194,609

Cash-Settled NDM*

	Fri., March 31	Mon., April 3	Tues., April 4	Wed., April 5	Thurs., April 6
MAR17	85.650	908	85.650	910	85.550
APR17	84.500	809	84.000	813	83.200
MAY17	84.900	809	85.000	803	84.750
JUN17	86.275	941	86.550	943	86.500
JUL17	88.425	939	88.500	941	88.250
AUG17	90.900	839	90.900	839	90.525
SEP17	93.800	604	94.100	604	93.700
OCT17	95.625	354	96.025	354	95.950
NOV17	97.400	416	97.400	416	97.375
Total Contracts Traded/ Open Interest	1407,533	1157,542	1237,569	1057,830	896,698

Cash-Settled Butter*

	Fri., March 31	Mon., April 3	Tues., April 4	Wed., April 5	Thurs., April 6
MAR17	217.625	903	217.625	903	217.625
APR17	213.500	845	215.000	847	215.750
MAY17	215.000	864	216.500	869	215.525
JUN17	216.000	776	219.000	780	218.000
JUL17	219.000	676	222.000	679	220.000
AUG17	220.500	647	221.500	653	221.000
SEP17	221.750	583	222.500	619	222.000
OCT17	223.000	410	223.750	432	222.250
NOV17	222.700	323	223.675	324	221.625
DEC17	218.625	269	220.150	272	218.625
Total Contracts Traded/ Open Interest	296,377	2246,458	1516,501	486,635	2755,718

Daily market prices are available by visiting CME's online statistics sites at <http://www.cmegroup.com>.

*Total Contracts Traded/Open Interest reflect additional months not included in this chart.

Class & Component Prices

	March 2017	February 2017
Class III:		
Price	\$ 15.81/cwt.	\$ 16.88/cwt.
Skim Price	\$ 7.61/cwt.	\$ 8.69/cwt.
Class IV:		
Price	\$ 14.32/cwt.	\$ 15.59/cwt.
Skim Price	\$ 6.07/cwt.	\$ 7.35/cwt.
Class II:		
Price	\$ 16.21/cwt.	\$ 16.52/cwt.
Butterfat Price	\$ 2.4246/lb.	\$ 2.4344/lb.
Component Prices:		
Butterfat Price	\$ 2.4176/lb.	\$ 2.4274/lb.
Nonfat Solids Price	\$ 0.6747/lb.	\$ 0.8166/lb.
Protein Price	\$ 1.8198/lb.	\$ 2.2348/lb.
Other Solids Price	\$ 0.3345/lb.	\$ 0.2990/lb.
Somatic Cell Adjustment Rate	\$ 0.00078/1,000 scc	\$ 0.00084/1,000 scc
Product Price Averages:		
Butter	\$ 2.1679/lb.	\$ 2.1760/lb.
Nonfat Dry Milk	\$ 0.8493/lb.	\$ 0.9926/lb.
Cheese	\$ 1.5551/lb.	\$ 1.6871/lb.
Dry Whey	\$ 0.5239/lb.	\$ 0.4894/lb.

National Dairy Products Sales Report

For the week ended:	4/1/17	3/25/17	3/18/17	3/11/17
Cheese 40-lb. Blocks:				
Average price ¹	\$ 1.4499	*\$1.4838	\$ 1.5441	\$ 1.5949
Sales volume ²	13,193,855	*13,144,907	12,850,775	13,031,307
Cheese 500-lb. Barrels:				
Average price ¹	\$ 1.5152	\$ 1.5427	\$ 1.6039	\$ 1.6758
Adj. price to 38% moisture	\$ 1.4424	\$ 1.4730	\$ 1.5246	\$ 1.5932
Sales volume ²	12,661,046	13,745,912	15,125,416	13,466,413
Moisture content	34.87	35.07	34.78	34.78
Butter:				
Average price ¹	\$ 2.1456	*\$2.1656	\$ 2.1915	\$ 2.1897
Sales volume ²	4,974,519	*4,754,106	4,341,691	4,237,967
Nonfat Dry Milk:				
Average price ¹	\$ 0.8272	*\$0.8380	\$ 0.8519	*\$0.8508
Sales volume ²	38,117,981	*30,798,923	27,008,835	*23,232,988
Dry Whey:				
Average price ¹	\$ 0.5285			

GUEST COLUMNISTS



Perspective: WMCA

John Umhoefer is executive director of the Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association. He contributes this column monthly for *Cheese Market News®*.

Canadian policy hits Wisconsin dairy farms

A battle of diplomatic letters and press releases has turned into real human concern as Canada's move to wall off ultrafiltered milk from the U.S. has caused Grassland Dairy to cease buying milk from dozens of Wisconsin dairy farms.

Grassland Dairy, one of the nation's largest makers of butter and milk ingredients, told these dairy farmers in a letter this week that its "long term sale of milk products into the Canadian market" has been "eliminated" due to Canadian dairy regulations. The loss to Grassland Dairy is dairy ingredient business that has used nearly 1 million pounds of fresh milk each day from Wisconsin farms.

The Greenwood, Wisconsin-based processor told these farms that Grassland

will no longer be able to accept their milk, effective May 1.

This loss of market and a milk buyer for these Wisconsin farms is the result of a year-long battle which has seen U.S. dairy interests crying foul against protectionist policies in Canada.

In February 2017, coordinated by the Canadian Dairy Commission, Canadian provincial milk marketing boards began to roll-out a special "Class 7" milk price category for Canadian milk—a new low-price milk class for production of skim milk powder, milk protein concentrate and ultrafiltered milk. This new class has the impact of halting imports of U.S. milk ingredients, such as the ultrafiltered milk from Grassland Dairy, by establishing

a milk price so low that Canadian dairy ingredient companies can beat world market prices.

This new milk class is part of a "National Ingredient Strategy" Canadian dairy leaders from across the nation's provinces have been debating for years. Last spring, the Dairy Farmers of Ontario spurred the debate, initiating a milk ingredient class price that has become the template for the new national Class 7 milk price in Canada.

Dairy manufacturers in the United States built long-term sales of ultrafiltered milk into Canada as this liquid milk protein ingredient, often used in cheese-making, can, under NAFTA regulations, enter Canada duty-free. In May 2016, the Canadian Milk Supply Management Committee followed Ontario's lead, instituting a temporary modification to Canada's low 4(m) milk price to include liquid skim milk—a stop-gap measure held in place until the national Class 7 milk price category was approved in February.

U.S. dairy leaders at National Milk Producers Federation, International Dairy Foods Association and more sent concerns to incoming President Donald Trump in January. Referring to the change to 4(m) milk pricing last spring, they wrote, "Provincial policies for ingredient class milk pricing, adopted last April, are displacing U.S. exports into Canada and costing the U.S. thousands of jobs on farms, in processing plants and throughout the supply chain."

The U.S. dairy leaders noted that a nationalized, world-market price for dairy ingredients from Canada not only shuts out dairy ingredients from Grassland Dairy

and others, but "additional large volumes of skim milk powder will be forced onto the thinly traded global market resulting in a further depression of prices that will negatively impact the revenues of dairy farmers around the world."

A diplomatic war of words has become a harsh reality for Grassland and some of its patron dairy farms. As a consequence of this severe loss of business, the Wisconsin manufacturer wrote to farmers this week: "Grassland is now forced to cut back on our milk intake volumes on a very short notice... We appreciate your business over the last several years and regret that the Canadian government's decision has made such a severe impact on Grassland's and your business."

Add to this protectionist policy a host of high tariffs on other U.S. dairy products entering Canada and you have "a one-way street with Canada expecting to enjoy the benefits of exporting its products of interest to our market while denying a sector accounting for hundreds of thousands of jobs in rural America reliable access to the Canadian market," 17 major U.S. dairy processors wrote in a Jan. 30 letter to U.S. governors.

Canada's protectionist move to block U.S. dairy ingredients with a special, low milk price that incents domestic production must be at the top of negotiations as the Trump administration ponders a new North American Free Trade Agreement with our Neighbor to the North. CMN

The views expressed by CMN's guest columnists are their own opinions and do not necessarily reflect those of Cheese Market News®.

Perspective: Dairy Research

John Lucey, director of the Wisconsin Center for Dairy Research at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, contributes this column for *Cheese Market News®*.



The future of dairy ingredients

When it comes to innovation, the dairy foods industry continues to flourish. From new flavored cheeses to unique dairy ingredients, the benefits of dairy are now available in a plethora of delicious products. In particular, the past 30 years has seen tremendous innovation in dairy ingredients, a trend that was a theme at the 2017 Dairy Ingredients Symposium in February. There, industry members gathered to discuss the past, present and future of dairy ingredients including the many exciting new ingredients that have appeared on

the U.S. dairy scene. Given this recent event, and the excitement surrounding this industry, it seems appropriate to celebrate these accomplishments in dairy ingredients and reflect on where we've been as an industry as well as where the next great innovation could take us.

In terms of innovation, research has been at the forefront of this positive trend in the dairy ingredient sector. For example, as nutrition research was highlighting how dairy proteins helped with satiety and muscle synthesis, pro-

cessing research was creating higher protein versions of milk powders that were more suitable for these new opportunities. Whey protein concentrate, whey protein isolate, individual whey proteins like lactoferrin, permeate, milk protein concentrate and milk protein isolate are just a few examples of the successful specialty dairy ingredients that grew out of these efforts.

More specifically, however, these success stories and the overall success of this industry came about due to a few critical efforts related to research. First, the research on processing methods such as membrane filtration and chromatography allowed the industry to economically manufacture these new ingredients, while research into functional properties such as heat stability and solubility allowed researchers to understand their chemistry in various food applications. Secondly, the development of high-quality applications for these ingredients helped to make these dairy products, and their benefits, available to consumers. Additionally, nutrition research highlighted the excellent quality of dairy proteins helping consumers to understand the benefits of these products, eventually leading to a greater demand, new markets and expanded export opportunities.

Going forward, there are many excit-

ing opportunities for continued success in the dairy ingredients industry. For example, new product research is continuing to showcase the almost infinite uses of dairy ingredients. Permeate is an excellent example of this innovative work. Once thought to be just leftover minerals, researchers began adding permeate to various food applications, finding that its addition imparted a savory and salty note. Thanks to this discovery, permeate is now considered an excellent replacement for salt in a variety of baked goods, soups, etc. In fact, significant amounts of permeate are now exported around the world. Other new dairy ingredient concepts mentioned at the symposium include soluble casein isolate, modified whey proteins and beta-casein concentrates.

Currently being studied at CDR, soluble casein isolate is compositionally similar to traditional caseinates and has excellent heat stability, emulsification and whipping properties. At 90-percent protein and low levels of lactose and calcium, soluble casein isolate is an excellent choice for bakery, creamer and beverage products. Similarly, modified whey protein or conjugated proteins, another technology developed at CDR, increases heat stability and acid stability and reduces allergenicity. Additionally,

Turn to LUCEY, page 7 ↵

NEWS/BUSINESS



Danone WhiteWave acquisition approved by D.C. court after agreement to divest Stonyfield

WASHINGTON — Danone this week announced that it has received approval by the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, which will allow

Ellsworth receives credits for expansion

MADISON, Wis. — Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery, which produces 80 tons of cheese curds a day, recently received assistance from the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) for the expansion of its facility in western Wisconsin.

The creamery, which was founded in 1910, has been authorized by WEDC to receive up to \$175,000 in state tax credits for the 28,500-square-foot expansion of its plant in Ellsworth, Wisconsin. The expansion project is expected to create 14 new jobs.

The expansion includes a building that will be used for packaging cheese products as well as additional cooler and dry storage space. The expansion will enable the creamery to purchase additional equipment needed to keep up with growing demand for its cheese curds and cut cheese products.

"We've outgrown our space," says Paul Bauer, manager, Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery. "These tax credits helped this project move forward, allowing us to expand employment opportunities and grow our market share outside the state, both domestically and internationally."

Under WEDC's Business Development Tax Credit Program, Ellsworth can earn up to \$175,000 in tax credits over a three-year period. The actual amount of credits earned is contingent upon the number of jobs created and the amount of capital investment the company makes during that time frame.

"Wisconsin is the top cheese-producing state in the nation, and the success of businesses like the Ellsworth Creamery is crucial to ensuring the industry remains strong," says Mark Hogan, secretary and CEO, WEDC. "We are pleased to be able to support this expansion, which is good news for Pierce County and the region, as well as the entire dairy industry."

Ellsworth Creamery has participated in several trade trips to China and southeast Asia, sponsored by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP). In addition to increasing overseas awareness of its own products, the creamery has been a strong advocate for increasing market share of all Wisconsin cheeses and dairy products on those trips.

"Their curds are a local favorite, but they have found favor in other countries as well," says Ben Brancel, DATCP secretary. "I applaud Ellsworth not only for this expansion, but for its continuing efforts to promote the dairy industry around the world." CMN

Danone to complete its acquisition of WhiteWave. Danone and WhiteWave expect the transaction to close by next week.

Last week, Danone announced that it had reached an agreement in principle with the U.S. Department of Justice's (DOJ's) Antitrust Division that included Danone's agreement to sell one of its U.S. dairy subsidiaries, Stonyfield, in the months following the closing of the acquisition of WhiteWave. Danone says this move assisted in its permission to proceed with the closing.

"While Stonyfield has been a valued part of Danone's portfolio and remains

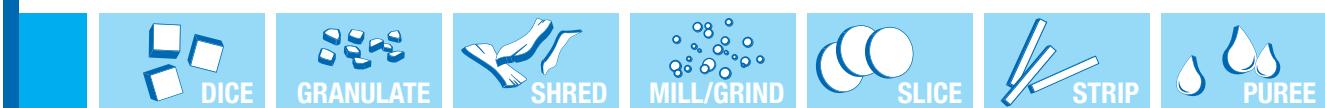
a highly attractive asset, its divestiture does not impact the strategic rationale or financial benefits of the WhiteWave acquisition," the company says in a statement.

Danone adds that Stonyfield generated approximately \$370 million in turnover in 2016.

"As part of the agreement in principle with the DOJ, we made the strategic decision to divest Stonyfield as it allows us to take a major step towards completing the WhiteWave transaction expeditiously," says Danone CEO Emmanuel Faber.

"WhiteWave is expected to accelerate Danone's 2020 profitable growth

journey, drive strong value creation and deliver attractive financial benefits, including an above 10-percent EPS (earnings per share) accretion based on run-rate synergies," Faber adds. "Through this perfect match, we will bring together complementary portfolios, including some of the fastest growing, health-focused categories that are strongly aligned with long term consumer trends. The combination will allow us to develop a world-leading dairy and plant-based food and beverage portfolio, with a full spectrum of better-for-you offerings, including protein-rich, organic, non-GMO and nutrient-dense choices." CMN



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Amount Per Serving	
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Calories from Fat	82
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Saturated Fat 6g	30%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 29mg	10%
Sodium 174mg	7%
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Perspective: Dairy Markets

Phil Plourd is president of Blimling and Associates and president of the services division of Dairy.com.* He contributes this column exclusively for Cheese Market News®.

Look at my collection

Some people collect baseball cards. Others collect rare coins. Me? I collect data tidbits. Most concern the food industry. Many detail consumer habits. I doubt that I have anything as valuable as a Micky Mantle rookie card or a Morgan Silver Dollar. I've never seen notice for a "data-con" gathering, so no bustling social scene with opportunities to dress up as your favorite economist. But, often enough, I stumble upon statistics that inform as well as amuse. During the first quarter, I found several fascinating nuggets that offer potential clues on shifting trends with real impact for cheese demand.

Take a look at the collection ...

8 percent: Consumers who are bypassing meals entirely and opting for all day snacking. The Hartman Group says that **91 percent** of consumers snack throughout the day. Data says **21 percent** of us are snacking more today than five years ago. As a result, snacks now account for **50 percent** of all eating occasions. It's not just a retail store thing: **12 billion** visits to restaurants are for snacking, or about **11 percent**

of all foodservice trips in 2016, up from **7 percent** in 2012. Here's what we don't know — but would like to figure out: Do all the nibbles add up to the same amount of tonnage as three square meals? And, does the evolution hurt or help cheese consumption?

154,500: The number of convenience stores in the United States. One for every 2,000 people. According to the National Association of Convenience Stores (NACS), the average customer visit lasts **3 minutes and 30 seconds**. Customers spend a lot of money in that time. "Inside" sales (read: not gasoline) likely reached **\$235 billion** in 2016. The space just grows and grows: **6 percent** more stores than in 2010, **21 percent** more dollars on stuff other than gasoline. A few years back, the NACS figured that **160 million people** visit a convenience store every day. That's nearly **one in two** Americans. From a dairy perspective, we typically associate C-stores with beverage milk sales. We run to the 7-11 or the Kwik Trip to grab a gallon of milk on the way home. Industry figures suggest that convenience stores account for **7 percent** of fluid milk sales. But pizza might be an even bigger deal. As of 2015, published reports said that Casey's, a Midwestern chain with **1,950 stores** in **15 states**, is now the **sixth largest pizza seller** in the United States. In 2015, Casey's stores sold more than **19 million whole pizzas** and **62 million pizza slices**. Other chains also feature pizza prominently. And, if the dairy industry is trying to court snackers, it needs to keep innovating in ways that fit the C-store format. According to the NACS, **84 percent** of food purchased inside convenience stores is consumed within an hour.

\$10 billion: Sales at "grocerant" outlets in 2016, according to NPD Group. What's a grocerant? The prepared foods section of the grocery store. Visits totaled **2.4 billion** last year, up **30 percent** from 2008. *Progressive Grocer* says it is the fastest growing segment in the foodservice universe. Who's going? Millennials (of course). Why? For one thing, it's cheaper than actual restaurants: average ticket at **\$4.22** compared to **\$7.96** at fast casual. From what we have seen, pizza can do well here, too. But,

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GUEST COLUMNISTS



PLOURD

Continued from page 6

beyond that, we wonder if cheese suffers a little relative to other outlets. A lot of chicken ... not many cheeseburgers. Meatloaf, yes ... mozzarella sticks, no.

-2 percent: Decline in lunchtime restaurant traffic in 2016 versus 2015. A recent *Fortune* magazine story — under the headline “Lunch is Dead” — noted that ecommerce is cutting into lunchtime restaurant visits be-

cause fewer people are going to malls at noon. Telecommuting also is taking its toll. Gallup says that **31 percent** of Americans worked remotely **80 percent to 100 percent** of the time in 2016, up from **24 percent** in 2012. People who work at home tend to eat at home. For cheese demand, is a sandwich at home the same as a sandwich out?

One in four: Number of American adults who have purchased a meal kit (for delivery or in-store) over the past year. According to Nielsen, **70 percent** continue to buy them after making their first purchase. Published reports say that sales at Blue Apron, a leading purveyor, now top **\$750 million** annually. *Packaged Facts* figures total segment sales at **\$1.5 billion** in 2016. That's nothing compared to grocery

sales (Kroger sold about **\$100 billion** worth in 2016). But, the convenience and experience have attracted a following. Portion control is presumably part of the appeal. But, that may not be auspicious for cheese consumption. We looked at Blue Apron's menus for this week. Portions ranged between 620 and 800 calories, with a little “fromage blanc” on a salad one night and fontina paninis on another. We did not find much more cheese on menus at Plated or Hello Fresh, either.

54 percent and 54 percent: The percentage of people who told the Pew Research Center that people are paying more attention to eating healthy foods ... and the percentage of people in the same poll saying that Americans are eating less healthy today. We have

aspirations to eat better ... and we fail. Maybe that's behind this Bloomberg headline last week: “Americans Are Obsessed With Eating Healthy — and With Twinkies.” Apparently, Hostess sales increased 12 percent last year. The message: watch what we do, not what we say — an important lesson for data junkies and dairy market analysts alike. CMN

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LUCEY

Continued from page 4

beta-casein is an important product for the future as it is a primary type of casein in human milk. Once difficult to isolate, new technology has made it easier to obtain beta-casein and utilize it in nutritional products such as infant formulas and in high-end pharmaceutical applications. Nutrition research will continue to open doors for new opportunities such as recent studies indicating the potential benefit dairy ingredients may have on the microbiome (bacterial microflora) present in the human digestive tract. Preliminary results, which were presented at the symposium, indicate that dairy ingredients with high calcium levels may positively impact our microbiome and thereby improve our overall health.

Finally, the innovation taking place in the applications and nutrition research sectors would not be possible without ongoing innovation in the technology and processing sectors. From improved membrane systems and new drying technologies to new methods of water recovery, these technologies will allow for continued growth and improvement in the quality of dairy ingredients. In particular, new membrane developments were discussed at length including forward osmosis and charged membranes. These technologies of the future have the potential to reduce processing costs while charged membranes could also improve our ability to perform milk protein fractionation.

From dairy ingredient research and applications to improvements in processing technologies, the dairy ingredients industry should be proud of its accomplishments over the last 30 years. Though it has been a team effort among industry, food scientists and nutritionists, many of these success stories are thanks to investments in research by dairy farmers. Taking stock of the last 30 years as well as the future of dairy ingredients, it's clear that such investments and partnerships will need to continue in order to meet the growing needs of the nutritional sector as well as support exciting export opportunities. CMN

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Photo courtesy of Switzerland Cheese Marketing

SWISS PASTURES — Dairy cows graze in mountainous pastures in Switzerland. According to Switzerland Cheese Marketing, around 80 percent of the cultivated land in Switzerland is unsuitable for farming and is mainly used for livestock breeding.

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SWITZERLAND

Continued from page 1

a food staple but also became commonly used as a means of payment, SCM notes. Craftsmen, day laborers and even priests were often paid "in cheese and money." Later in the 15th and 16th centuries, Alpine herdsmen would take their surplus cheese supplies down to the valley to sell.

Consumer demand for hard Swiss cheeses significantly increased in the 18th century due to its long shelf life, and since the 1830s, more and more dairies sprang up in Switzerland's valleys as well, SCM says.

Today, dairy producers are split almost evenly among Switzerland's valley areas (11,561) and mountainous areas (10,555), according to 2015 data reported by Swissmilk, which represents Swiss dairy producers. Total 2015 milk production was 4.0 million metric tons, and the average herd size of dairy farms in Switzerland is about 25 head.

"Around 80 percent of the cultivated land is unsuitable for farming and is mainly used for livestock breeding ... this is why Switzerland is ideal for cheese production," Sonderegger says of Switzerland's landscape. "Farmers live at the max 20 kilometers away from the cheese dairy. And cheese production you can find all over the country."

There are about 600 village cheese processors in Switzerland, and while the country has a worldwide reputation for its high-quality cheese, it produces only a tenth of the amount Germany does, Sonderegger notes.

"The dairies are mostly family-owned, and the production is similar to the one 100 years ago," she says.

"There are only some machines ... but otherwise it is still a lot of handcraft in every cheese."

• Cheeses of Switzerland

There are more than 450 varieties of cheeses produced in Switzerland, from the famous hard cheeses Emmentaler AOP and Le Gruyère AOP, to semi-hard cheeses like Raclette Suisse and Appenzeller, to soft mold-ripened and smear-ripened cheeses, cream cheeses and goat's and sheep's milk cheeses. Just under half of the milk produced in the country is made into cheese, SCM says.

"Gruyère AOP is the most produced cheese (26,325 metric tons) followed by Emmentaler AOP (17,029 metric tons)," Sonderegger says. "What is sure a trend is that people are looking for natural products in high quality and these are our cheeses."

Emmentaler AOP, considered the "king of the cheeses" from Switzerland, comes from the valley of the Emme in the canton of Berne. It has been produced there since the 13th century, and today it is made in about 200 different village cheese dairies from unpasteurized milk from cows fed grass and hay but not silage, SCM says. The most typical characteristic of Emmentaler AOP is its holes, which appear during the fermentation process and vary between cherry- and walnut-sized.

Le Gruyère AOP has been produced since at least the 12th century in the region surrounding the small town of Gruyère, and it still is made today in village cheese factories according to the traditional recipe. It owes its subtlety and characteristic taste to quality unpasteurized milk coming straight from cows fed grass during the summer and hay during the winter, SCM says. During the slow maturing stage, which lasts six months, the rounds of cheese are turned and brushed with salted water, and the humidity encourages the cheese rind's "smear," which gives Gruyère AOP its well-known distinctive flavor.

According to a September 2016 Euromonitor report on Cheese in Switzerland, cheese was among the most dynamic categories in Swiss dairy in 2016, with an increasing variety of cheese products available in Switzerland. Although imported cheese accounts for more than a third of total cheese value sales in 2016, Swiss consumers remain loyal to their domestic products, the report says.

"Increasing interest in premium cheese and strong attachment to local products and authenticity will be among the positive influences affecting cheese," Euromonitor reports, adding that the share of cheaper imported products also will continue to grow, limiting growth in value sales.

"Cheesemakers face as a challenge the cheap imports from Europe," Sonderegger adds.

Switzerland is a major exporter of cheese, exporting 68,459 metric tons,

Turn to PROCESSORS, page 9 ↪



PROCESSORS

Continued from page 8

more than a third of its total production, in 2015, according to SCM. Its largest cheese exports are Emmentaler AOP, Le Gruyère AOP and other semi-hard and hard cheeses. Eighty percent of its cheese exports in 2015 went to the European Union, and 13 percent went to the United States.

• Dairy processors

While small village factories are responsible for much of Switzerland's cheese production, four large companies — Emmi, Cremo, Hochdorf and Elsa — are responsible for processing about 60 percent of Switzerland's milk production into dairy products, according to Sibylle Umiker, head of media relations, Emmi Management AG. Some large companies like Emmi also help cure and market cheeses from smaller producers.

"Around 80 percent of the cultivated land is unsuitable for farming and is mainly used for livestock breeding ... this is why Switzerland is ideal for cheese production."

Manuela Sonderegger
SWITZERLAND CHEESE
MARKETING AG

"Emmi is the largest processor of Swiss milk," Umiker says. "In Switzerland, the focus in production is on dairy products (milk, butter, cream), fresh products (e.g. yogurt and drinks), fresh cheese (Mozzarella) and milk powder. We also produce cheese, but we are more of a cheese refiner and trader."

Emmi in 2016 processed a total of 920,000 metric tons of milk at about 25 production sites of various sizes across Switzerland. A stock-listed company since 2004, the majority of Emmi's shares (about 53 percent) are held by the Central Switzerland Milk Producers, a cooperative of small- and mid-size dairyfarmers. Overall, Emmi sources its milk from five producer organizations as well as about 2,500 direct suppliers.

A December 2016 Euromonitor report on Dairy in Switzerland says a large number of dairy farmers in Switzerland remained under economic pressure in 2016. According to Swissmilk, dairy policy needs to be reviewed in order to save Swiss milk production, the report says. Fluid milk prices no longer cover dairy farmers' expenses, threatening operations, and pressure from imports, cross-border shopping and a strong Swiss franc further contributed to over-

all negative performance last year. Swiss milk production likely will remain under pressure due to uncertainties about the price of milk, Euromonitor predicts.

• Product trends

While fluid milk consumption in Switzerland has been steadily declining, Euromonitor reports that manufacturers of yogurt and sour milk products have focused on attracting consumer attention by introducing more innovative products this past year. Indulgence also was a focus as manufacturers capitalized on the trend for Greek yogurt, combining health benefits and good taste. Euromonitor adds that dairy product consumers in Switzerland are increasingly aware of

the importance of healthy nutrition. The trend toward products with lower fat content, healthier ingredients and other health benefits are expected to evolve in the future.

Among Emmi's most well-known brands in Switzerland are yogurts like Jogurtpur, without any additives and flavors, and Yoqua, which is high in protein and low in fat. Another best-seller is Emmi Energy Milk, a brand that's more than 20 years old and known because of some partnerships with Swiss celebrities like tennis player Roger Federer. Umiker notes that Emmi has seen the most growth and current trends in niches like organic or goat's milk (roughly 10 percent of Emmi sales

is organic dairy), high-protein, clean label and low-sugar.

While Emmi produces some of its own cheeses like Scharfer Maxx and Switzerland Swiss, which are available in the U.S. market, some of its most famous cheeses in Switzerland and abroad are its Kaltbach varieties, many of which are procured from smaller dairies and aged in Emmi's Kaltbach sandstone cave. These include cheeses such as Gruyere AOP, Emmentaler AOP and others.

Emmi's specialty cheeses, as well as Emmi Caffè Latte drinks, are its most popular exports, and its biggest export markets include the United States, Spain, Germany and Tunisia. CMN

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NEWS/BUSINESS

Aurora Organic Dairy announces plans to build new milk processing facility in Missouri

COLUMBIA, Mo. — Boulder, Colorado-based Aurora Organic Dairy (AOD) plans to build a new milk processing facility in Columbia, Missouri, according to a recent announcement by the Missouri Department of Economic Development.

AOD's supply chain includes organic dairy farms, a dedicated organic fluid milk processing plant and organic heifer and calf ranches in Colorado and Texas. AOD is an integrated company that produces and processes organic milk products for distribution to grocery stores nationwide.

"The decision to build our second milk plant in Columbia culminates

several years of research and diligence to determine the optimal location for a new processing operation," says Marc Peperzak, founder and CEO, AOD. "Columbia was the best choice because it offers a location that expands and improved the efficiency of our total supply chain, from organic feed, to milk, to consumer. Central Missouri also offers a great workforce and attractive access to major interstate highways."

The new facility will be located on Route B at the Sutter Industrial Site, and construction will begin later this spring. Missouri competed against four other states for the new processing facility and ultimately was given strong con-

sideration because of the supply chain advantages it offers the growing dairy business. AOD will invest \$100 million to construct the new facility with additional expansion possible. AOD expects the plant to be fully operational in early 2019, and the first phase of construction is expected to create more than 90 new jobs. The company may further expand the plant in the next few years and create up to 60 additional new jobs at the facility.

"As one of the largest capital investment business attraction projects in Missouri, Aurora's decision proves Columbia is a great place to invest, expand and grow," says Brian

Treec, mayor of Columbia. "Columbia is proud to offer a skilled workforce that shares Aurora's values of hard work, dedication and commitment to organic stewardship." CMN

Madera Unified School District receives \$44,000 grant in support of healthy eating and physical activity

TRACY, Calif. — Madera Unified School District received a \$44,000 grant from GENYOUth through Fuel Up to Play 60 en español, an evolution of its national flagship program that encourages communities nationwide to live healthier lifestyles. The funding will support the implementation of Fuel Up to Play 60 healthy eating and physical activity initiatives at 11 district schools, according to the California Milk Advisory Board (CMAB).

Fuel Up to Play 60, a program founded by the National Football League (NFL) and National Dairy Council (NDC), and funded locally by dairy farm families, is designed to engage and empower youth to take action for their own health by implementing long-term, positive nutrition and physical activity changes for themselves, their schools and their communities, CMAB says.

"Madera Unified is honored and excited to be awarded the Fuel Up to Play 60 grant," says Marty Bitter, director of athletics, Madera Unified School District. "Madera Unified believes that active, healthy students increase student achievement, student attendance and being ready to learn."

The en español grant means students in the Madera Unified School District will join the 13 million students who are eating healthier, 16 million students who are being more active and 130,000 adults who are enrolled and empowering youth in the nation through Fuel Up to Play 60.

Introduced in 2015, the Fuel Up to Play 60 en español materials, available online, include an interactive, Spanish-language student dashboard and playbook with resources and information about healthy eating and physical activity. Students, parents and educators can access Fuel Up to Play 60 en español by visiting fueluptoplay60.com.

"We're pleased to help Madera activate Fuel Up to Play 60 and inspire students to make healthy habits to fuel their brains and bodies," says Jennifer Giambroni, director of communications, CMAB. "In addition to producing nutritious products, California dairy families have dedicated more than 100 years to supporting healthy kids and families through education about eating well from all five food groups. Fuel Up to Play 60 is part of that legacy." CMN



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NEWS/BUSINESS



Global Dairy Trade results mixed; events surpass \$20 billion in online dairy sales, officials say

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — The Global Dairy Trade (GDT) index increased 1.6 percent, and average prices for commodities were mixed Tuesday following the latest auction on GDT, Fonterra's internet-based sales platform.

The average prices achieved across all contracts and contract periods, and percent change from last month, for each commodity are as follows:

- Anhydrous milkfat: US\$5,936 per metric ton FAS (\$2.6926 per pound), up 2.5 percent.
- Butter: US\$4,751 per metric ton FAS (\$2.1550 per pound), down 1.6 percent.
- Buttermilk powder: US\$1,588 per metric ton FAS (\$0.7203 per pound), down 12.2 percent.
- Cheddar: US\$3,288 per metric ton FAS (\$1.4914 per pound), down 4.4 percent.
- Lactose: US\$927 per metric ton FAS (\$0.4205 per pound), up 2.2 percent.
- Rennet casein: US\$6,260 per metric ton FAS (\$2.8395 per pound), up 6.9 percent.
- Skim milk powder: US\$1,913 per metric ton FAS (\$0.8677 per pound), down 0.8 percent.
- Whole milk powder: US\$2,924 per metric ton FAS (\$1.3263 per pound), up 2.4 percent.

The next auction will be held April 18. For more information, visit www.globaldairytrade.info.

Meanwhile, GDT this week notes that

FPSA Dairy Council commits support to 2017 Defeat Hunger

MCLEAN, Va. — The Food Processing Suppliers Association (FPSA) has announced that the FPSA Dairy Council board of directors has pledged its support to the 2017 Defeat Hunger campaign with a contribution on the part of its members.

The Defeat Hunger campaign was launched April 3, 2017, and will run through the last day of Process Expo, Sept. 21 in Chicago, according to FPSA. The campaign will include cash donations, as well as a food drive at this year's Process Expo with proceeds going to the Greater Chicago Food Depository.

"The FPSA Dairy Council is providing its full support for the 2017 Defeat Hunger campaign," says Bill McPhail, chairman, FPSA Dairy Council. "This support comes from all facets of the dairy industry embodied in our council, including dairy processors, suppliers, regulatory architecture and engineering, and media."

In the coming months, FPSA will be providing information on the type of dairy products that can be donated and how to do so, says David Seckman, president and CEO, FPSA. In the meantime, interested parties can get more information by clicking the "Giving Back" button on www.fpsa.org.

For more information on the Defeat Hunger campaign, contact Alaina Herrera at 703-663-1212 or rataherrera@fpsa.org. CMN

its auctions have passed the milestone of US\$20 billion cumulative value of products sold. This week's auction was GDT's 185th trading event.

"GDT events enable high volumes of dairy ingredients to be traded efficiently, and this unique scale underpins the reliability of the reference pricing," says Eric Hansen, director, GDT.

Hansen notes more than 40 specifications of dairy ingredients are offered to more than 500 registered bidders from 80 countries on GDT, offering more trading opportunities than any other trading platform.

GDT events, now in their ninth year, have traded more than 5.8 million metric

tons (12.8 billion pounds) of dairy ingredients, enough to fill more than 365,000 20-foot shipping containers, Hansen notes.

"We're continuing our investment and commitment to GDT events to deliver a deeper e-commerce customer experience and greater flexibility for users," Hansen says. "We're also looking at the viability of creating multi-seller pools for homogeneous products, such as generic lactose or other commodity products available from certain regions. This would extend the benefits of credible price discovery to a wider range of markets and products."

In 2016, GDT established an Oversight Board to continue enhancing independence and transparency of the twice-

monthly auction platform. Bill Shields, board chairman, notes GDT events are the leading provider of reference prices for core ingredients, reflecting the levels of global supply and demand traded on the platform.

"The prices established on GDT events provide businesses throughout the supply chain with an enhanced level of visibility of the dairy sector and can be used to improve their future planning," Shields says. "GDT events have demonstrated that better price discovery can be beneficial to market participants, whether prices are weak or strong, and can contribute to better price risk management within the dairy industry." CMN



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NEWS/BUSINESS

TRADE

Continued from page 1

recently developed took advantage of a loophole in what otherwise was a very tightly-controlled dairy trade agreement between the United States and Canada, explains Andrew Novakovic, EV Baker Professor of Agricultural Economics, Cornell University.

"U.S. manufacturers discovered that they could sell ultrafiltration, or UF milk to Canadian cheesemakers through a loophole in our trade agreement. Canada and its provinces quickly reacted to defend their border and producers from this invasion of U.S. milk ingredients, and have now

adjusted their system to allow their cheesemakers to buy the same kind of product at a competitive price within Canada," Novakovic says. "This has left two companies in New York and one company in Wisconsin with a significant amount of milk that now must find new markets at a time when plants are awash in milk and struggling to find breakeven marketing outlets."

A group of 24 Wisconsin state representatives this week sent a letter to University of Wisconsin System President Ray Cross requesting that the University of Wisconsin system consider researching new uses for dairy milk in response to the abundant supply resulting in part because of Canada's recent actions.

The letter explains the situation with Grassland and adds that other processors also are swimming in an abundance of milk and cannot absorb it, leaving the farmers with nowhere to sell their milk.

"I'm encouraged that so many of my colleagues recognize and value the importance of dairy to Wisconsin's overall economy," says Wisconsin Rep. Travis Tranel, R-Cuba City. "It is imperative that the state does everything it can to protect this vital industry. I hope this letter leads to many more productive conversations as to how we can begin to find innovative new uses for milk and keep dairy farming as a viable opportunity for generations to come."

Tom Vilsack, president and CEO

of USDEC, says while families in the Northeast and Midwest are suffering the immediate consequences of the loss of Canadian markets, "thousands more will suffer if Canada persists in using its programs to distort the global milk powder markets so critical to tens of thousands of American dairy farmers.

"Our federal and state governments cannot abide by Canada's disregard for its trade commitment to the United States and its intentional decision to pursue policies that are choking off sales of American-made milk to the detriment of U.S. dairy farmers," Vilsack says. "It is deeply concerning that Canada has chosen to continue down a 'beggar thy neighbor' path of addressing its internal issues by forcing the U.S. dairy industry to bear the harmful consequences."

"As we feared, these policies are now prohibiting our nation's dairy processors from accessing the Canadian market."

Michael Dykes
INTERNATIONAL DAIRY FOODS ASSOCIATION

Michael Dykes, president and CEO, IDFA, says the U.S. dairy industry is united on this issue because Canada's policies effectively bar a significant U.S. export to Canada, with total losses estimated to hit \$150 million worth of UF milk exports from Wisconsin and New York.

"As we feared, these policies are now prohibiting our nation's dairy processors from accessing the Canadian market," Dykes says. "IDFA is speaking out against Canada's protectionist policies on Capitol Hill and asking the Trump administration and state governors and legislators to insist that Canada honor its trade commitments and allow more market access for U.S. dairy products."

The groups note that despite efforts by the U.S. government and dairy organizations to shed more light on the Canadian program, Canada is refusing to share sufficient details. For instance, limited information has been posted online by certain provinces, and some of that information has subsequently been removed from provincial milk authorities' websites in what appears to be aimed at obfuscating how the program operates, the U.S. groups say.

The United States is Canada's largest export market, the groups add, accounting for approximately three-fourths of Canada's total exports. The organizations have urged both federal and state governments to move swiftly to demonstrate to Canada that trade is a door that must swing two ways to have a functional relationship. CMN

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NEWS/BUSINESS

15th annual WDE contest issues call for judges

MADISON, Wis. — Wisconsin Dairy Products Association (WDPA), which will be sponsoring its 15th annual World Dairy Expo Championship Dairy Product Contest this year, has put out a call for judges for the contest.

The contest, held in conjunction with the World Dairy Expo, will have 82 different categories, encompassing a wide range of dairy products including cheese, butter, milk, ice cream, yogurt, whey, cottage cheese, sour cream, whipping cream and more. Last year's contest received a record 1,200 product entries.

Judging for the contest will take place Aug. 22-24. WDPA says 16 judges are needed for cheese and butter, four for yogurt, 10 for ice cream and sherbet, two for whey, six for cottage cheese, sour cream and sour cream

dips, and 10 for fluid milk and cultured buttermilk.

Interested parties should send their resumes to Wisconsin Dairy Products Association, 8282 Greenway Blvd. #130, Middleton, WI 53562 by May 1. A WDPA contest committee will review all resumes and select the judges.

Contest entry forms will be mailed to dairy plants in late June. All entries must be shipped during the week of Aug. 14. Winning entries will be auctioned off Oct. 3 at World Dairy Expo.

For more information, contact WDPA at 608-836-3336 or email info@wdpa.net. CMN

Conventional dairy ads decrease 1 percent

WASHINGTON — Total conventional dairy advertisements last week decreased 1 percent from the prior week, says USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) in its latest weekly National Dairy Retail Report released March 31.

AMS says national conventional varieties of 8-ounce natural cheese blocks last week had a weighted average advertised price of \$2.19, up from \$2.12 one week earlier and \$2.15 one year earlier.

Natural varieties of 1-pound cheese blocks last week had a weighted average advertised price of \$2.90, down from \$3.16 one week earlier and \$3.62 one year earlier, AMS says, while 2-pound

cheese blocks had a weighted average advertised price of \$6.21, down from \$6.55 one week earlier but up from \$6.20 one year ago.

AMS says natural conventional varieties of 8-ounce natural cheese shreds last week had a weighted average advertised price of \$2.20, up from \$2.11 one week earlier but down from \$2.36 one year earlier, while 1-pound cheese shreds had a weighted average advertised price of \$3.81, up from \$3.56 one week earlier and \$2.77 one year ago.

Meanwhile, national conventional butter in 1-pound packs last week had a weighted average advertised price of \$3.07, up from \$2.99 one week earlier and \$2.96 one year ago, AMS says. CMN

Cherney Microbiological Services sponsors angler Kuchenberg

GREEN BAY, Wis. — Cherney Microbiological Services, which provides a variety of testing and training services for the dairy and food industries, recently announced it is sponsoring tournament walleye angler Steve Kuchenberg.

Headquartered on the shores of one of the leading walleye fisheries in the nation, Cherney Microbiological Services was founded and continues to be led by fishing and outdoor enthusiasts Debra and Marvin Cherney. Kuchenberg also has worked in the world of biotechnology for more than 10 years, and through that time he has worked with Cherney on more than one occasion. Upon discovering a shared love of the outdoors, his relationship with the Cherneys grew into a friendship that has included joint bird hunting and fishing trips.

"I am thrilled to have the opportunity to work with my friend and colleague Debra Cherney and to help promote Cherney Microbiological," Kuchenberg says. "I am also grateful to have a sponsor that links both my personal and professional lives seamlessly. For me, this is really a best of both worlds situation."

In business for more than 30 years, Cherney offers a variety of services including microbiological and chemical analysis, nutritional labeling, customized training and continuing education classes, consulting/auditing and environmental monitoring.

"Our high performance, team-based culture drives us to be accountable, resourceful, collaborative and cooperative," says Debra Cherney, founder and CEO. "Coincidentally, these terms can describe a tournament angler as well." CMN

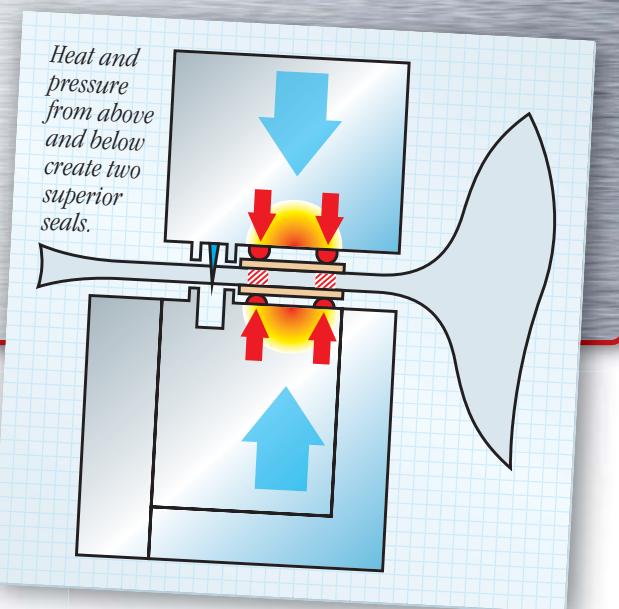


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NEWS/BUSINESS



FDA, CDC, Food Safety and Inspection Service release food safety plan for 2017-2021

WASHINGTON—FDA, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) have issued a new "Strategic Plan for 2017-2021" as part of the Interagency Food Safety Analytics Collaboration (IFSAC).

IFSAC was established in 2011 to improve coordination of federal food safety analytic efforts and address cross-cutting priorities for food safety data collection, analysis and use. Its projects and studies aim to identify foods that are important sources of human illness.

IFSAC focuses analytic efforts on four priority pathogens: *Listeria monocytogenes*, *E. coli*, *Salmonella*

and *Campylobacter*.

CDC estimates that, together, these four pathogens cause 1.9 million cases of foodborne illness in the United States each year.

Under the new strategic plan, IFSAC will focus on continuing to improve estimates of the sources of foodborne illnesses and developing methods to estimate how these sources change over time.

The three goals of the new strategic plan are to improve the use and quality of new and existing data sources; improve analytic methods and models; and enhance communication about IFSAC progress.

The strategic plan outlines key objectives to achieve those goals, including:

- Enhancing the collection and quality of relevant source data;
- Enhancing the use of existing regulatory and foodborne illness surveillance data;
- Incorporating genomic data and other novel data sources;
- Exploring ways to address key gaps in data quality, methods and models;
- Developing new analytic approaches and models to maximize use of existing data;
- Expanding the availability of technical and scientific expertise through collaboration with internal and external

partners;

- Enhancing relationships and engagement with internal and external groups; and
- Improving the synthesis, interpretation and dissemination of analytical findings for multiple audiences.

The new strategic plan also highlights accomplishments from IFSAC's first five years and the group's intent to continue engaging with stakeholders on future work.

For more information, visit www.cdc.gov/foodsafety/ifsac/. CMN

RPI rises to 100.7 in February

WASHINGTON — Driven by a more optimistic outlook for future business conditions, the National Restaurant Association's Restaurant Performance Index (RPI) posted a moderate gain in February. The RPI—a monthly composite index that tracks the health of and outlook for the U.S. restaurant industry—stood at 100.7 in February, up 0.6 percent from a level of 100.1 in January.

Growth in the RPI was fueled by broad-based gains in the forward-looking indicators, as restaurant operators grew increasingly bullish about sales, capital spending, staffing and the overall economy.

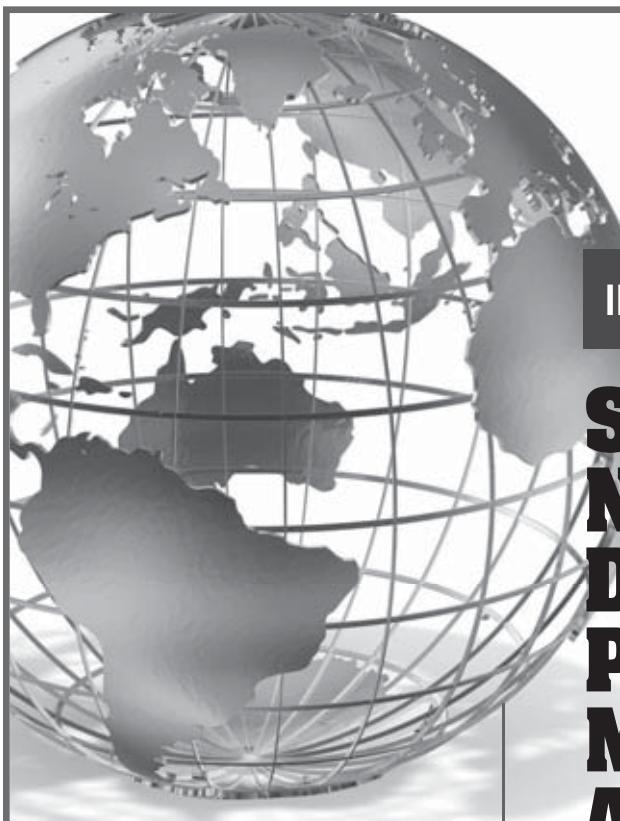
Meanwhile, the RPI's current situation indicators remained dampened overall in February, though a contributing factor was more difficult comparisons as a result of leap year in February 2016.

The RPI is constructed so that the health of the restaurant industry is measured in relation to a steady-state level of 100. Index values above 100 indicate that key industry indicators are in a period of expansion, while index values below 100 represent a period of contraction for key industry indicators.

The RPI consists of two components—the Current Situation Index and the Expectations Index.

The Current Situation Index, which measures current trends in four industry indicators (same-store sales, traffic, labor and capital expenditures), stood at 98.8 in February—up 0.2 percent from a level of 98.6 in January. Despite the gain, February represented the fifth consecutive month in which the Current Situation Index came in below 100, as operators continued to report dampened same-store sales and customer traffic levels.

The Expectations Index, which measures restaurant operators' six-month outlook for four industry indicators (same-store sales, employees, capital expenditures and business conditions), stood at 102.6 in February—up 1.0 percent from January's level of 101.6. The increase was the largest since January 2016, and propelled the Expectations Index to its highest level in nearly two years. CMN



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NEWS/BUSINESS

SAFETY

Continued from page 1

he worked for one of the suppliers of ice cream mix to Schwan's Sales Enterprises, Marshall, Minnesota. While Hood was working for a supplier to Schwan's, Schwan's in October 1994 recalled its ice cream after reports of food poisoning. Investigators found *Salmonella* bacteria in samples of Schwan's ice cream eaten by people who became ill.

Hood notes that reviews of trailer receipts for previous truckloads revealed that raw eggs were being transported in the trucks prior to the ice cream mix, which later was revealed as the likely source of contamination. This discovery led to a review of cleaning and sanitation programs related to use of the trucks.

At General Mills, Hood also has dealt with recalls. In November 2007 General Mills issued a recall of 5 million pepperoni pizzas under its Totino's pizza line. The pizzas were linked to an outbreak of *E. coli*.

"People were scratching their heads; how do you get sick from a frozen pizza?" Hood says.

"Conduct risk assessments, and focus on the areas of greatest concern."

Scott Hood
GENERAL MILLS

He says the source of the contamination was never fully confirmed, but what is suspected is that people were not fully cooking their food. While all of the ingredients on the frozen pizzas had been cooked at one time, "it's not a ready-to-eat food," Hood says.

Last May, General Mills issued three recalls related to *E. coli* in its Gold Medal brand flour.

"Flour is about the most complicated supply chain you've ever seen," Hood says. "With all of the blending, it's very hard to trace."

Hood notes that in this instance, investigations revealed people were eating raw cookie dough, the likely cause of illness.

Over time, methods to track the source of contamination have evolved, Hood says. He notes the industry now has whole genome sequencing, the process of determining the complete DNA sequence of an organism's genome at a single time. These methods help to solve more outbreaks so there are fewer cases of illness per outbreak, he says.

As science has evolved, views on product testing also have changed, Hood says. Historically, companies would test for safety, but over time, companies have taken on more of a prevention mindset.

At General Mills, testing is part of the verification process related to prevention, Hood says.

"The basic principle is that patho-

gens shouldn't be present in ready-to-eat foods," he says. "If we agree, why are we afraid to test? We shouldn't be."

General Mills has developed routine testing and a risk assessment of its products to focus on key, low-moisture, ready-to-eat foods with higher risk of contamination, he says.

"It's not just about preventive measures — testing can lead to discovery and improvement," he says. "As we increased our testing, our product safety improved over time."

"Testing is one means to verify your preventive systems are working as intended," he adds.

Hood acknowledges, however, that more testing, at least initially, likely will lead to more positive results for

food pathogens.

"It's certainly not a reason not to test, but something to be aware of as you develop a food safety program," he says.

When it comes to forecasting and preventing recalls, Hood recommends that companies take a holistic approach to HACCP regulations and preventive controls.

"Conduct risk assessments, and focus on the areas of greatest concern," he says. "For example, if people are not trained well or if your plant has a high turnover rate, those factors can increase your risk."

Hood notes that it's also important to be aware of the most common causes of recalls. He says that General Mills has averaged about five recalls per year over

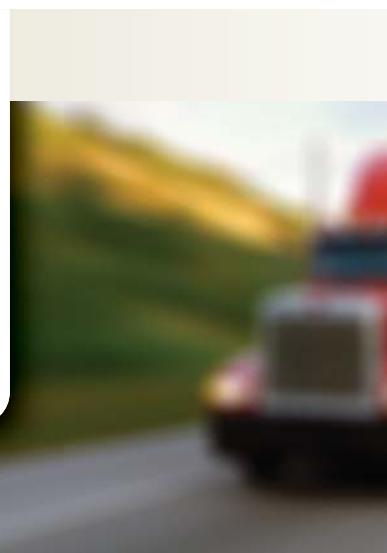
the last five years. Half of those recalls were for undeclared allergens in products, while a quarter were for physical hazards and the other 25 percent for microbiological hazards.

"If you really want to prevent recalls, focus on your allergen programs," he says.

He adds it's important to keep in mind that when taking a closer look at prevention and testing to reduce risk, "it gets worse before it gets better," as a deeper look often leads to more discovery of problems.

However, once those problems are identified and addressed, there is overall improvement for the long term, he says.

"As an industry, we can learn from each other," Hood says. CMN



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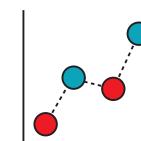
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NEWS/BUSINESS



February U.S. dairy exports up from year ago in both value, volume

WASHINGTON—U.S. dairy exports rose in both value and volume in February compared to a year earlier, according to the most recent data reported by the U.S. Dairy Export Council and USDA.

Total U.S. dairy exports in February were valued at \$438.3 million, up 14 percent from last year (or 18 percent adjusted for leap day), USDEC reports. Suppliers shipped 152,856 metric tons of milk powders, cheese, butterfat, whey and lactose in February, up 11 percent from volume a year ago (or up 15 percent leap-day adjusted).

USDEC adds that on a daily-average basis, this was the best showing for U.S. dairy exports since May 2015. Sales to Mexico rebounded in February with ship-

ments valued at \$114 million, the highest total on a daily average basis in nearly two years. More than half of this came from nonfat dry milk/skim milk powder (NDM/SMP), USDEC says.

Overall, exports of NDM/SMP totaled 51,996 metric tons, up 26 percent (up 30 percent adjusted) from a year earlier. Improved shipments to Mexico and Pakistan more than offset declines in sales to the Philippines, USDEC says.

February U.S. cheese exports totaled 26,347 metric tons, up 8 percent from February 2016 (up 12 percent adjusted), and the most in 21 months on a daily average basis. USDEC reports sales to Australia were the most ever on a daily average basis and shipments to South Korea continued

to rebound, while sales to Mexico, Japan and the Middle East/North Africa region lagged year-ago levels.

Whey exports remained particularly strong, USDEC says. Total whey shipments in February were 43,307 metric tons, up 22 percent from last year (up 26 percent adjusted). Nearly half these sales went to China, which bought twice as much as a year ago, though for the second straight month, exporters sold less to Southeast Asia.

On a total milk solids basis, USDEC says U.S. dairy exports were equivalent to 14.8 percent of U.S. milk production in February, and imports were equivalent to 3.6 percent of the month's production. CMN

ACS contest now accepting entries

DENVER — The American Cheese Society (ACS) recently announced that the 2017 ACS Judging & Competition now is open for entries.

ACS's annual judging of American cheeses and cultured dairy products will take place July 24-25 in its hometown of Denver. Judging will be held immediately prior to "Cheese with Altitude," the 34th Annual ACS Conference in Denver.

Winners in each category, including "Best of Show" honorees, will be revealed at the awards ceremony in Denver July 28.

Entries received before the May 12 deadlines will be \$60 each, and late entries received before the late deadline of May 19 will be \$85 each. No entries will be accepted after May 19.

New features in this year's contest include separate sheep's milk subcategories based on the style of cheese or cultured product, as well as separate options for entering drinkable yogurts.

To view this year's category list, visit http://cheesejudging.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/2017_Categories_FINAL_2016-12-12.pdf. The online entry system is available at <http://cheesejudging.org>. CMN

Bel Group opens new cheese plant in Vietnam

HO CHI MINH CITY, Vietnam — Bel Group recently held an official opening of a new plant to make The Laughing Cow cheese in Binh Duong province in Vietnam. The new production site will supply the Vietnamese market and support the group's growth in Southeast Asia.

Present in Vietnam for more than 65 years, the Bel Group leads the country's cheese market, with The Laughing Cow holding 85-percent market share. A sales subsidiary was established in Ho Chi Minh City in 2008, followed by the company's first test-production site in 2010.

Building on the success of its initial local production test, Bel says it selected Vietnam to host its own production site, which will supply the local market and support the acceleration of the group's development strategy in Southeast Asia.

"The Laughing Cow is an iconic brand here, and I am delighted that we are strengthening the group's presence in this country to supply Southeast Asian markets," says Antoine Fiévet, Bel Group chairman and CEO.

Situated on 20,000 square meters of land, the plant itself spans 10,000 square meters, enabling it to double its current production capacity to meet increased demand in the future. The plant employs 120 people, who currently produce more than 3 million single-serve portions of The Laughing Cow each week for the Vietnamese market, as well as for the Cambodian, Philippine, Singaporean and Thai markets. CMN



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NEWS/BUSINESS



PLMA: Private label expanding in fast-growing channels, despite supermarket declines

NEW YORK — For the 52-week period that ended Dec. 24, 2016, store brands gained market share against the big national brands in America's fastest-growing retail channels while at the same time losing ground in supermarkets, according to the Private Label Manufacturers Association (PLMA), citing Nielsen data.

Retailers' brands outperformed national brands in the rapidly-growing mass merchandisers segment of Nielsen's total outlets database, which includes national retailers such as

Dean Foods reports fourth quarter, full year financials

DALLAS — Dean Foods Co. recently reported its fourth quarter and full-year 2016 financial results.

Fourth quarter net income per diluted share was \$0.36, and adjusted net income per diluted share was \$0.38. Full-year net income per diluted share was \$1.31 and adjusted net income per diluted share was \$1.57.

Dean Foods reported continued year-over-year improvement in total volume performance, operating income and earnings per share. It also reported significant cost productivity throughout the entire supply chain, delivering more than \$80 million of gross savings.

"2016 was a strong year for Dean Foods," CEO Ralph Scizzafava says. "In the fourth quarter, we delivered 6 percent growth in both adjusted operating income per gallon and adjusted earnings per share. For the full year, our operating income per gallon grew nearly 21 percent versus prior year. Our adjusted earnings per share of \$1.57 represents a nearly 28-percent increase over 2015. I am very pleased with the hard work this organization has dedicated to driving improved results in support of our long-term strategic agenda."

Total volume across all products was 653 million gallons for the fourth quarter of 2016, a 0.8-percent decline compared to total volume of 658 million gallons in the fourth quarter of 2015. Full year 2016 volumes totaled 2.6 billion gallons, a 2.1-percent decline versus full year 2015.

Net cash flow provided by continuing operations for the 12 months ended Dec. 31 totaled \$257 million. Free cash flow provided by continuing operations less capital expenditures was \$113 million for the 12 months ended Dec. 31, a \$133 million decrease compared to the prior year period.

For full-year 2017, Dean Foods expects capital expenditures of \$120 million to \$130 million, and free cash flow of \$125 million to \$150 million. Full year 2017 adjusted diluted earnings are expected to be \$1.35 to \$1.55 per diluted share, while first-quarter 2017 adjusted diluted earnings are expected to be \$0.12 to \$0.20 per diluted share. CMN

Wal-Mart and Target, as well as some warehouse clubs and dollar store chains.

Private label dollar volume in the mass merchandisers/club/dollar store segment climbed 4.4 percent to \$49.6 billion, resulting in a 0.5 point market share gain to 16.6 percent. A similar pattern emerged with regard to units, with private label advancing 4.2 percent compared to 0.2 percent for the brands. As a result, private label's market share moved up 0.6 of a point to 19.7 percent, PLMA says.

These gains are especially important, PLMA says, because total channel sales for mass merchandisers, clubs and dollar stores are climbing at a much greater rate than in the supermarket channel.

Dollar volume sales for Nielsen's all retail outlets combined segment, which also includes drug chains, outpaced the supermarkets-only measure, increasing 0.8 percent compared to 0.1 percent growth for supermarkets.

It wasn't all rosy for store brands, though. PLMA notes that store brands' market share declined in the slow-growth supermarket channel — measured at 18.4 percent dollar share and 22.3 percent unit share — as well as in Nielsen's all outlets combined sector. Still, PLMA says the data indicate that — separate from the adverse impact of supermarket numbers dragging down the overall private label results — market shares for retailer brands in

the other outlets have experienced solid gains at the expense of national brands.

Private label's success in mass merchandisers and other non-supermarket channels also is an important factor when estimating the total size of the private label market in the United States, PLMA says.

While Nielsen reports total private label sales for 2016 at \$118 billion, these results do not include sales from some of the biggest and best store brands retailers in the country, such as Costco, Aldi and Trader Joe's, PLMA says. Estimates of their private label sales would add \$35 billion to the total and push the total U.S. private label market to more than \$150 billion. CMN

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PEOPLE

Comings and goings ... comings and goings ... comings and goings ... comings and goings

The California Milk Advisory Board (CMAB) has announced the newly elected 2017 officers of its executive committee. New officers are Renae De Jager, member-at-large, of Chowchilla, California; Dante Migliazzo, chairman, of Atwater, California; and Kirsten Areias of Los Banos.

Custom Fabricating & Repair (CFR), Marshfield, Wisconsin, has announced the addition of Dane Anderson to its team. Anderson has been in the dairy and food processing industries with Cortez Inc., A&B Processing and, most recently, Dairy Farmers of America (DFA). He will be responsible for leading

CFR's Cheese Processing Division with the promotion of cheesemaking equipment such as vats, de-whey, mellowing, salting belts and integration of the processes in a cheese manufacturing facility.

CFR also has announced the addition of Troy Spruce as director — cheese technology. Spruce has been in cheese manufacturing since his start with Fonterra in 1987 and has worked with Hilmar Cheese and DFA as well. As part of CFR's Cheese Processing Division, Spruce will participate in the design of new plants and the optimization of existing processes. He also will be instrumental in CFR's efforts to bring new cheese

manufacturing technologies to market.

Blake Criswell also has accepted the position of vice president — dairy technology at CFR. His manufacturing and engineering experience include all aspects of milk and whey processing, and he also has experience working on large-scale green-field and brown-field capital projects. His application experience will prove valuable as he leads CFR's Dryer & Evaporator Division, the company says.

Sargento Foods Inc., Plymouth, Wisconsin, has announced Jane Bullinger has accepted the role of vice president of sales, and Jeremy Schellin has joined the company as senior manager of new

platform development in the Consumer Products Division.

Bullinger will help oversee sales operations in the Consumer Products Division, and she will report to Mark Gumm, senior vice president of sales. Prior to joining Sargento Foods, Bullinger most recently served as the regional sales director of Nestle Waters North America.

Schellin will lead the identification and development of new product initiative in his role as senior manager. He will report to Rod Hogan, vice president of new platform development. Previously, Schellin held several marketing and innovation positions for General Mills. CMN

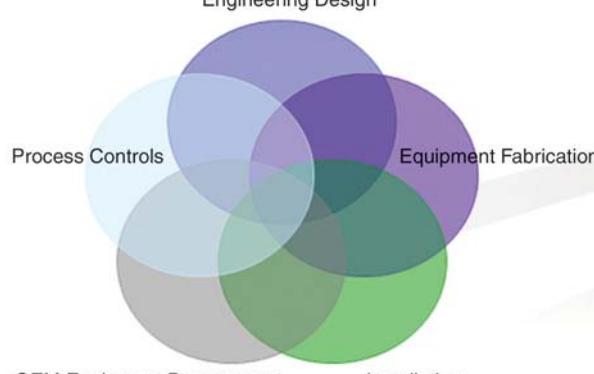


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Cindy Sorensen of Midwest Dairy Association named Woman of the Year by WGA

ST. PAUL, Minn. — Cindy Sorensen, senior vice president of business development for St. Paul, Minnesota-based Midwest Dairy Association (MDA), recently was presented with the 2017 Woman of the Year Award by the Women Grocers of America (WGA). The award was presented Feb. 14 at the National Grocers Association (NGA) show in Las Vegas.

With more than 25 years of experience working with consumer product goods companies in the grocery industry, Sorensen was recognized for this award because of her leadership and passion for helping others who work within the field, says Lucas Lentsch, CEO, MDA.

"Cindy's vast knowledge and expertise in the grocery channel has been a huge asset to many of our organization's partners, as well as to many dairy farmers throughout the Midwest," Lentsch says. "Cindy's passion for providing new insights and strategic guidance on how to give more people and communities access to fresh, local dairy products shines through every day, and, as a result, she is making a difference in our industry."

In addition to speaking across the country on topics including reinventing the dairy department, increasing transparency with consumers and helping empower women in agriculture in Mexico, Sorensen is an active participant in the NGA mentoring program, which pairs industry executives with college students interested in the food industry. Sorensen remains connected and engaged with these students after they leave the program, providing guidance in their careers and lives.

"Throughout her tenure in the food industry, Cindy has proven herself to be a steadfast leader, often lending her time to mentor others," says Lorelei Mottese, chairwoman, WGA. "WGA is proud to present this award to someone who has had such positive impacts on her organization and the industry." CMN

PEOPLE

WCMA awards five scholarships to invest in the next generation, future of cheesemaking

MADISON, Wis. — The Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association (WCMA) is pleased to announce the 2017 winners of its annual scholarship programs. In total, five awards worth a total of \$15,000 will be given to students pursuing careers in agriculture and, more specifically, in the dairy industry April 12 at the Wisconsin Cheese Industry Conference at the Alliant Energy Center in Madison, Wisconsin.

Winners of the 2017 WCMA Myron P. "Mike" Dean Cheese Industry Student Scholarship are:

- Michelle Henning, daughter of Kerry and Barb Henning of Kiel, Wisconsin, is a sophomore at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, pursuing a degree in human resource management, and hopes to work for a cheese manufacturer upon graduation. Her father co-owns Henning's Cheese Factory, where Michelle Henning works part time in packaging and as a factory tour guide. She has made the Dean's List throughout her college career and is involved in the school's honors program.

- Sarah Jacobsen, daughter of Chad and Donna Jacobsen of Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, is working toward a degree in chemical engineering from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Her father is a quality assurance specialist at Grande Cheese Co. and her mother is an account manager in the food and beverage division of Ecolab. Jacobsen works part time as a Leopold GreenHouse Assistant and as a Kids Garden and Nutrition Coordinator at the East Madison Community Center.

"Educating the next generation is an investment in our future," says John Umhoefer, WCMA executive director. "Ensuring that these bright young people have a firm foundation of knowledge at the start of their careers in agriculture and cheesemaking ensures that our industry will be strong for decades to come."

The scholarship selection process for the WCMA Myron P. "Mike" Dean Cheese Industry Student Scholarship was highly competitive this year, with many applicants offering impressive transcripts and references. WCMA first initiated this scholarship program in 1997 and later named it in honor of Myron P. "Mike" Dean, a WCMA Life Member and dairy extension specialist at the University of Wisconsin, who passed away in 1999.

Also on April 12, WCMA will award monies to the winners of the WCMA Cheese Industry Supplier Student Scholarship. The 2017 recipients are:

- Jenna Fryer, the daughter of Melissa and Jeremy Fryer of North Syracuse, New York, is working toward a degree in food science and technology from The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio. Fryer's mother works at Kelvion, a WCMA supplier member company. Fryer hopes to attend gradu-

ate school and become a research and development scientist.

- Daniel Kocourek, the son of Don and Debbie Kocourek of Reedsville, Wisconsin, will attend Fox Valley Technical College this fall, pursuing a degree in dairy herd management and farm operations. His mother works at Prolamina, a WCMA supplier member company. Kocourek currently works as a farmhand, and someday hopes to buy into his family's farm.

- Zachary Zarnke has worked at Nelson Jameson Inc. for the past five years, currently serving as a maintenance, repair and operations buyer. He also is studying at the University

"Educating the next generation is an investment in our future."

John Umhoefer
WISCONSIN CHEESE
MAKERS ASSOCIATION

of Wisconsin-Green Bay, pursuing a degree in integrative leadership studies. Zarnke has a cumulative GPA of 4.0, and is set to graduate in May

2018. He and his wife, Jessica, live in Marshfield with their twin toddlers, Alainna and Jackson.

The source of scholarship monies is the annual Championship Cheese Auction, where gold medal cheeses from WCMA's Championship Cheese Contests are sold to the highest bidders. This year's auction will take place April 12 at the Wisconsin Cheese Industry Conference during the Chr. Hansen Reception, beginning at 5 p.m. Contact WCMA Events Manager Kirsten Henning at khenning@wischeesemakers.org for a bid sheet.

For more information, visit www.cheeseconference.org. CMN



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Natalee Ihde awarded \$2,500 scholarship

MADISON, Wis. — Natalee Ihde of Fish Creek, Wisconsin, is the recipient of the 2017 Beginning Cheesemaker Scholarship from Wisconsin Cheese Originals.

Ihde has a culinary arts degree and professional cheesemongering experience. She will use the \$2,500 award to begin the process of earning her Wisconsin Cheesemaker's License. Wisconsin is the only state to require cheesemakers to be licensed, an 18-month process that involves attendance at university short courses, 240 hours of apprenticeship under a licensed cheesemaker and passing a written exam at the Wisconsin Department of Ag, Trade and Consumer Protection.

Ihde currently is taking cheesemaking short courses while working as a farm helper at Door County Creamery in Sister Bay. Her goal is to create artisan cheeses someday in her own farmstead creamery.

"I hope to follow in the footsteps of the many passionate cheesemakers that encouraged me and also create an environment to support the next generation of cheesemakers," Ihde says.

Since 2009, Wisconsin Cheese Originals has awarded \$21,500 to nearly a dozen different beginning Wisconsin cheesemakers, many of whom have won U.S. and World Championship medals for their cow, goat and sheep's milk cheeses. CMN

Foreign Type Cheesemakers Association names new and retiring board members

MONROE, Wis. — The Foreign Type Cheesemakers Association, Monroe, Wisconsin, recently held their annual election for members of the board of directors.

Newly-elected board members include Ben Workman, plant manager at Edelweiss Creamery; Thomas Dahmen, senior plant manager at Chula Vista Cheese; Lindsey White, co-owner of Torkelson Cheese; and Rob Bradley, quality/product development/technical systems for Family Fresh Pack. They join returning board members Gary Grossen, Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker at Babcock Hall Dairy Plant; Chris Roelli, owner of Roelli Cheese Co.;

Rob Frie, plant manager at Emmi Roth USA; Adam Buholzer, vice president of production at Klondike Cheese; John Jaeggi, cheese industry and applications coordinator at the Center for Dairy Research; and John (Randy) Pittman, owner of Mill Creek Cheese.

The Foreign Type Cheesemakers Association also recognized four long-serving, retiring members of the board including Steve Stettler, president of Decatur Dairy; Bruce Workman, owner of Edelweiss Cheese; Mark Witke, president of Zimmerman Cheese; and Myron Olson, plant manager at Chalet Cheese. CMN

NEWS/BUSINESS

Land O'Lakes to construct new feed facility

ARDEN HILLS, Minn. — Land O'Lakes Inc. recently announced it will build a state-of-the-art animal

feed manufacturing facility in Roanoke, Virginia, with plans to open the facility in December 2018.

"The Southeast region is the single biggest growth opportunity for our Purina animal nutrition business. While the new facility is being constructed, we will serve our important current and future customers from product made at our existing facilities and distributed through warehouses at Virginia and Kentucky," says Beth Ford, group executive vice president and chief operating officer, Land O'Lakes Inc.

Although it had been announced in November 2016 that Land O'Lakes had entered into a letter of intent to purchase the feed assets of Southern States Cooperative, Ford says the company is looking to move more quickly in this strategic market than the discussions with Southern States allowed. CMN

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NEWS/BUSINESS



Bipartisan group of lawmakers reintroduces bill to reform EPA Renewable Fuel Standard

WASHINGTON—U.S. Reps. Bob Goodlatte, R-Va., Jim Costa, D-Calif., Steve Womack, R-Ark., and Peter Welch, D-Vt., recently reintroduced the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) Reform Act.

The RFS Reform Act eliminates corn-based ethanol requirements, caps the amount of ethanol that can be blended into conventional gasoline at 10 percent, requires the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to set cellulosic biofuels levels at production levels and decreases the total volume of renewable fuel that must be contained in gasoline sold or introduced into commerce for the years 2017-2022.

"The Renewable Fuel Standard is a well-intentioned flop. After a decade of this policy, it's clearer than ever that the federal government's creation of an artificial market for the ethanol industry has resulted in a domino effect that is hurting people across the country," the lawmakers say. "The misguided RFS failed to lower prices at the pump all while creating an artificial market for ethanol that is having unintended

and profound effects on consumers, energy producers, livestock producers, retailers, our food supply and even the environment."

Lawmakers say Congress must reform the RFS and provide Americans relief.

"Leaders in the House have signaled that there is a real appetite to reform the ethanol mandate this year, and we urge our colleagues to consider the RFS Reform Act as a vehicle to guide this debate and reform process," they say. "Not only does this bill have bipartisan backing in the House, but it also has the support of a diverse coalition of organizations representing folks from every corner

of the United States. Congress cannot continue to stick with the status quo when it comes to the ethanol mandate. We do not need any more delays — now is the time to act on RFS reform."

Meanwhile, amidst rumors of a pending executive order to change the point of obligation for the RFS, the National Farmers Union (NFU) is urging the Trump administration to avoid changes to the RFS that NFU says "would undermine the success of the nation's strongest biofuel policy."

Echoing concerns raised by the organization in a recent letter to EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt, NFU President Roger Johnson notes that to this

point, President Trump has expressed support for renewable biofuels and the RFS, and his administration has stated its intent to administer the program as written by Congress.

"Any attempt by the administration to change the point of obligation through an executive order would unnecessarily complicate compliance and undermine the underpinnings of the RFS," Johnson says. "NFU strongly urges the Trump administration to avoid changes that would undermine the RFS. We look forward to ensuring the program continues to grow the ethanol market and be a boon to rural economies, energy independence and the environment." CMN

EU implements new e-certificate system for organic imports

WASHINGTON — USDA's National Organic Program has alerted organic exporters that the European Union is implementing a new electronic system of certificates of inspection for imports of organic products from the United States and other third countries. The Trade Control & Expert System (TRACES) — the EU's existing electronic system for tracking movements of food products across the EU — will now electronically facilitate the exchange of information between EU trading parties and control authorities, such as the National Organic Program.

Under the current organic equivalency arrangement between the United States and the EU, certified operations must ship organic products with an EU certificate of inspection, completed by a USDA-accredited certifier. The implementation of updates to EU TRACES will digitize the certification documentation for organic products imported to EU member countries.

The electronic certification via EU TRACES for organic imports becomes effective April 19. Once effective, U.S. certifiers will have an additional six months to adapt to using the system, during which time paper and electronic certificates of inspection will coexist in the marketplace. The system will become fully electronic beginning Oct. 19, 2017, after which time organic imports will be covered only by e-certification.

To help certifiers and other authorities comply with this new requirement, the EU has provided instruction and plans to conduct training. For more information, visit http://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/traces_en. CMN

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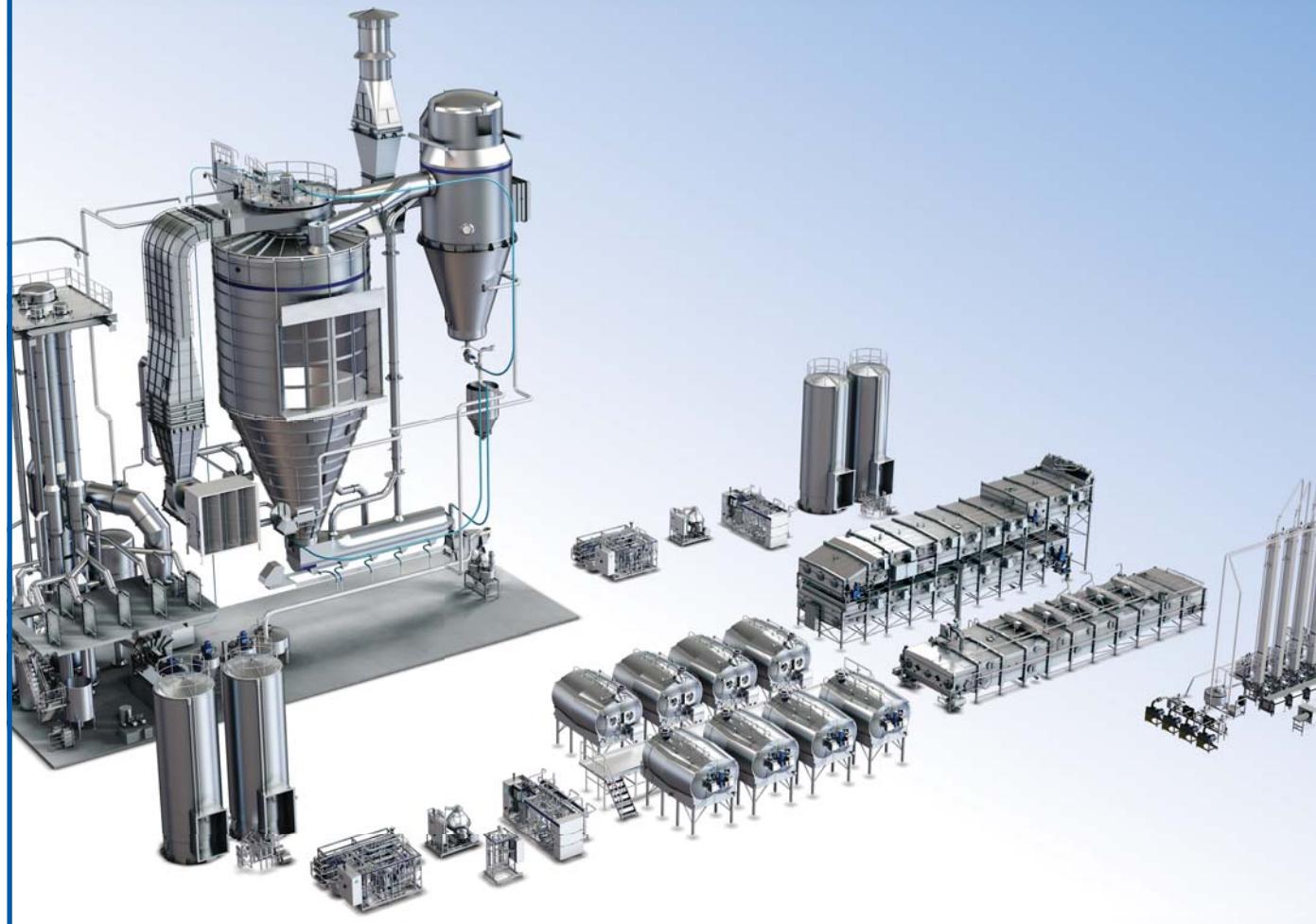
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Stonyfield reduces sugar across portfolio

LONDONDERRY, N.H. — Organic yogurt maker Stonyfield recently announced a comprehensive plan to reduce added sugar across its portfolio. After more than two years of research, Stonyfield says it has achieved a formula that reduces tartness and balances the sweetness of yogurt, allowing for sugar reduction without sacrificing taste.

Stonyfield YoKids yogurt already is available in stores featuring as much as 40-percent less sugar than the leading lowfat kids' yogurt, the company says. Stonyfield is working to reduce sugar in all of its yogurt offerings this year and already offers plain, unsweetened options in its Stonyfield YoBaby, Stonyfield Greek and Stonyfield core lines.

"The commitment to reducing sugar across the product portfolio was born from Stonyfield's mission to continually provide healthier food both for our consumers and the planet," says Nichole Cirillo, Stonyfield's mission director. "We are achieving a lower amount of added sugar in all Stonyfield yogurt without compromising taste or organic standards and are working towards purchasing 25-percent less sugar as a company this year."

By the end of fall 2017, Stonyfield Smooth & Creamy varieties in cups and quarts and lowfat Smoothies will have at least 25-percent less sugar than previous recipes, the company says.

For more information, visit www.stonyfield.com. CMN

Dairy Business Milk Marketing Cooperative offers two \$1,000 college scholarships

GREEN BAY, Wis. — Dairy Business Milk Marketing Cooperative (DBMMC) is seeking applicants for two \$1,000 college scholarships that will be awarded to children of its members.

Applicants must be high school seniors, high school graduates or college undergraduates. They must be enrolled or planning to enroll in a full-time course of study at an accredited four-year college or university or a two-year program at a technical, junior or community college. The area of study does not need to be in agriculture.

Only dependents of DBMMC members qualify.

Scholarship recipients will be

selected based on academic achievement, leadership, participation in school and community activities, academic honors, goals and aspirations, recommendations and work experience.

The application with full guidelines is available at www.dbmmc.com. Applications must be postmarked by May 1. For more information, contact Lauren Brey at 920-883-0020 ext. 107 or email lbrey@dbmmc.com. CMN

MilkPEP offers milk marketing award

WASHINGTON — The Milk Processor Education Program (MilkPEP) and *Dairy Foods* magazine have revived the Milk Marketer of the Year Award to honor fluid milk processors for their efforts in promoting the consumption of white or flavored milk. The deadline for submissions is July 31, 2017, according to the International Dairy Foods Association.

Winners will be evaluated on the strength of their marketing programs and measurable results that show an increase in milk consumption. Examples of marketing programs include brand marketing campaigns that incorporate MilkPEP programs; events; in-store promotions; social media campaigns; and more.

All fluid processors that participate in the MilkPEP checkoff program are eligible to participate. Marketing programs must be for milk products that conform to the Code of Federal Regulations standards of identity, and only marketing efforts that have taken place between July 1, 2015, to Dec. 31, 2016, will be considered.

Entries may be submitted at dairyfoods.com. CMN



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EVENTS

FSPCA Preventive Controls for Human Food course is May 18 at Idaho Water Center

BOISE, Idaho—Jeff Kronenberg, assistant professor at the University of Idaho and food safety specialist at TechHelp, is offering a one-day Food Safety Preventive Controls Alliance (FSPCA) blended course as an alternative to TechHelp's traditional 2.5-day course.

The course will take place from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. May 18 at the Idaho Water Center in Boise, Idaho.

The blended course includes a Part

NEWS/BUSINESS

NASS

Continued from page 1

chart at right.) When adjusted for the length of the months, February cheese production was up 2.1 percent on an average daily basis from February 2016, which was a leap year, and down 0.2 percent on an average daily basis from January 2017.

Italian-type cheese production totaled 407.1 million pounds in February, down 4.0 percent from February 2016 (not adjusted for leap year). Production of Mozzarella, the most-produced Italian-type cheese, totaled 315.6 million pounds in February, 5.1 percent lower than February 2016.

American-type cheese production totaled 373.2 million pounds in February, and, unadjusted for the 2016 leap year, was still 1.7 percent higher than February 2016 production. Production of Cheddar, the largest component of American-type production, was up 6.9 percent, unadjusted, versus February 2016.

Wisconsin led the nation's cheese production in February with 252.0 million pounds, up 1.8 percent (unadjusted) from February 2016.

California followed with 192.1 million pounds, down 7.8 percent from its production a year earlier.

The next four cheese-producing states in February 2017 were Idaho with 68.3 million pounds, down 3.4 percent;

New York with 66.0 million pounds, down 0.9 percent, New Mexico with 59.4 million pounds, down 1.8 percent, and Minnesota with 51.6 million pounds, down 0.1 percent.

NASS reports total U.S. butter production was 164.3 million pounds in February 2017, down 5.8 percent from February 2016 and down 7.6 percent from January 2017. When adjusted for the length of the months, February butter production was down 2.4 percent on an average daily basis from February 2016, which was a leap year, and up 2.3 percent on an average daily basis from January 2017.

California led the nation's butter production with 48.6 million pounds in February 2017, down 4.7 percent, unadjusted, from February 2016. CMN

1 online component that must be completed before participants can take the Part 2 one-day instructor-led course.

The course is ideal for directors and vice presidents of food safety, maintenance managers, production supervisors and leads, and more. It will cover topics including good manufacturing practices, process preventive controls and recall plans. A certificate of attendance will be provided to participants who complete both parts of the course, according to organizers.

To register for Part 1 of the FSPCA Preventive Controls for Human Food Blended Course, visit ifpti.absorbtraining.com. The fee of \$198 per person includes a \$50 charge for an AFDO certificate. The course takes about 8 to 12 hours to complete, organizers say.

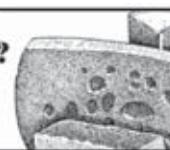
To register for the Part 2 instructor-led course, visit www.techhelp.org. The course fee of \$330 per person covers all course materials, continental breakfast, lunch, snacks and beverages.

Participants should download a free FSPCA Manual for Part 1 and bring it to Part 2.

For registration questions, contact Paula Peterman at 208-364-6188 or at paulap@uidaho.edu. For technical questions, contact Jeff Kronenberg at 208-364-4937 or at jkron@uidaho.edu. CMN

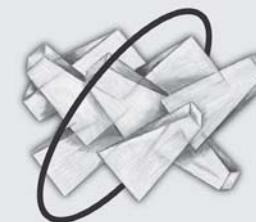
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Dairy Product Production — February 2017

Cheese	February 16	February 17	% Change	YTD 2016 ²	YTD 2017 ³	% Change
American types ¹						
Cheddar	366,870	373,174	1.7	767,859	790,758	3.0
Other American	257,550	275,254	6.9	554,042	586,857	5.9
Blue & Gorgonzola	100,320	97,920	-10.4	213,817	203,901	-4.6
Brick & Muenster	7,206	7,279	1.0	13,992	14,902	6.5
Cream & Neufchatel	14,155	13,008	-8.1	29,124	28,083	-3.6
Feta	70,793	67,483	-4.7	139,867	145,478	4.0
Gouda	9,203	8,774	-4.7	21,165	17,584	-16.9
Hispanic	4,639	6,099	31.5	8,808	9,823	11.5
Italian types	20,588	21,802	5.9	40,049	43,063	7.5
Mozzarella	423,918	407,134	-4.0	859,094	861,140	0.2
Parmesan	332,553	315,605	-5.1	669,418	667,980	-0.2
Provolone	31,521	32,470	3.0	65,628	70,898	8.0
Ricotta	29,147	28,800	-1.2	62,158	60,090	-3.3
Romano	20,621	19,400	-5.9	42,020	40,201	-4.3
Other Italian	4,299	4,808	13.9	7,976	9,673	21.3
Swiss	5,777	5,961	3.2	11,894	12,298	3.4
All other types	24,459	23,975	-2.0	51,954	49,910	-3.9
TOTAL CHEESE	13,220	12,980	-1.8	26,417	25,950	-1.8
	955,051	941,708	-1.4	1,958,329	1,986,691	1.4
Butter	174,353	164,264	-5.8	350,007	342,082	-2.3
Cottage Cheese - curd	31,728	31,585	-0.5	63,103	62,023	-1.7
Cottage Cheese - cream	25,233	25,938	2.8	49,010	49,681	1.4
Cottage Cheese - lowfat	28,708	28,132	-2.0	57,318	55,120	-3.8
Sour Cream	103,420	101,655	-1.7	206,351	212,828	3.1
Yogurt (Plain & Flav.)	396,799	365,926	-7.8	791,566	740,743	-6.4
Dry Whole Milk	8,647	10,178	17.7	18,594	22,081	18.8
NDM - Human	140,225	140,035	-0.1	277,271	293,409	5.8
Skim Milk Powders ²	40,201	40,031	-0.4	91,444	95,295	4.2
Dry Skin - Animal	669	702	4.9	1,307	1,445	10.6
Dry Buttermilk	10,817	10,672	-1.3	22,231	22,460	1.0
Cond. Whey - Human	9,582	8,647	-9.8	20,955	17,501	-16.5
Dry Whey - Human	73,742	76,056	3.1	154,192	155,963	1.1
Dry Whey - Animal	1,717	1,964	14.4	4,548	4,373	-3.8
Lactose - Human & Animal	83,897	84,663	0.9	168,499	177,321	5.2
WPC - Human	36,575	36,463	-0.3	75,433	76,297	1.1
WPC - Animal	200	240	20.0	393	567	44.3
WPC 25.0-49.0 Percent	15,479	13,623	-12.0	30,524	28,618	-6.2
WPC 50.0-89.0 Percent	21,296	23,080	8.4	45,302	48,246	6.5
Protein Isolates	7,903	9,713	22.9	16,695	19,732	18.2
Ice Cream, hard	60,423	58,712	-2.8	117,489	115,820	-1.4
Ice Cream, lowfat, total	31,137	32,919	5.7	56,860	61,854	8.8
Frozen Yogurt	5,377	5,109	-5.0	9,502	9,926	4.5

Notes: Production reported in thousands of pounds, except frozen products, which are reported in thousands of gallons.

Source: USDA. All production percentages are rounded.

¹Includes, Cheddar, Colby, Monterey and Jack. ²Includes protein standardized and blends. ³YTD includes current plus revised previous month's data.

EVENTS

Global Cheese Technology Forum to be held Oct. 24-26 at Peppermill Resort in Reno, Nev.

ELMHURST, Ill. — Cheese and whey production in the United States and its place in the global economy will be the theme for this year's Global Cheese Technology Forum (GCTF) Oct. 24-26 at the Peppermill Resort in Reno, Nevada.

The event, organized by the American Dairy Products Institute (ADPI), is an opportunity for those in the cheese and whey manufacturing industries to learn and discuss their role in today's global economy. It is designed to be a forum for discussion of topics of importance to industry leaders in the United States and anyone with an interest in technology and the global cheese and whey industries. Attendees can come to learn and consider new ideas, meet friends and colleagues, engaging in asking questions and network.

Topics will include industry challenges and opportunities, cheese microbiology and chemistry, new cheese manufacturing technology, dairy ingredients for cheese, new market opportunities, workforce needs and innovations in whey processing.

"The two-day forum is designed to provide the latest technical information relevant to the cheese industry in the United States, provide information on current marketing issues related to cheese

"The two-day forum is designed to provide the latest technical information relevant to the cheese industry in the United States."

David Thomas
AMERICAN DAIRY
PRODUCTS INSTITUTE

and provide a forum to discuss future challenges of the cheese industry," says David Thomas, CEO, ADPI. "The forum will be useful for cheese industry management, suppliers, distributors and end users, food research and development professionals, and academics. The Global Cheese Technology Forum allows industry leaders to meet and learn of cutting-edge technology."

A full agenda and online registration is available at www.globalcheesetechnologyforum.org. For more information, contact Beth Holcomb at 630-530-8700, ext. 228 or email bholcomb@adpi.org. CMN

CDR to host World of Cheese dairy short course

MADISON, Wis. — The Wisconsin Center for Dairy Research (CDR) will host "The World of Cheese from Pasture to Plate" short course April 23-27 at Babcock Hall in Madison, Wisconsin.

CDR invites culinary professionals, end users, brokers, distributors, retailers and marketers to attend the hands-on course, which will feature lectures on cheesemaking, cheese handling and display, packaging fundamentals, cheese economics, the basics of cheese grading and more.

The course is designed as a survey course for participants and is not intended

to address technical research issues, according to organizers.

The cost of the course is \$800. Participants should plan to attend the course introductory session at 6 p.m. April 23 at the DoubleTree Hotel. The coursework at CDR will begin 8 a.m. April 24 at Babcock Hall.

For registration information, directions and accommodations, visit www cdr.wisc.edu/shortcourses/world_of_cheese_17 or contact CALS Conference Services at 608-236-1672 or conference@cals.wisc.edu. CMN

CDR to hold Buttermakers Short Course in June

MADISON, Wis. — The Wisconsin Center for Dairy Research (CDR) will hold its Buttermakers Short Course June 28-29 at Babcock Hall in Madison, Wisconsin.

This two-day, hands-on workshop serves as an introduction to buttermaking. Covering everything from the production of quality butter to understanding flavor, composition and shelf life, this course is designed to illustrate and correct difficulties in manufacture before they occur.

Ideal industry practices will be

highlighted through lectures, manufacturing and laboratory sessions.

To register, visit www cdr.wisc.edu/shortcourses/buttermakers_summer_17.

Cost to attend is \$600, and each student should bring the course confirmation to the workshop. Check in begins at 8 a.m. and the program starts at 8:25 a.m.

For more information about the curriculum, contact Marianne Smukowski, CDR, at 608-265-6346 or at msmuk@cdr.wisc.edu. CMN



Global Cheese TECHNOLOGY FORUM

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 24

- 6:00 pm Welcome Reception

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 25

- 7:00 am Breakfast Buffet
- 8:30 am Industry Challenges & Opportunities
Senior Leadership Panel:
Louise Hemstead, Organic Valley
Kyle Jensen, Hilmar Cheese
Doug Simon, Agropur inc.
Doug Wilke, Valley Queen Cheese Co.
- 10:30 am Dairy Ingredients For Cheese
- 12:00 pm Luncheon - Speaker
Ross Christieson, USDEC
- 1:30 pm Understanding Cheese Microbiology
- 3:00 pm Break
- 3:30 pm New Cheese Manufacturing Technology
- 6:00 pm Cheese & Wine Social

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 26

- 7:00 am Breakfast Buffet
- 8:00 am Whey Processing/Products/Applications
- 10:30 am Understanding Cheese Chemistry
- 12:00 pm Luncheon - Student Recognition
- 1:30 pm Training / Education / Workforce Development
- 3:00 pm Close

October 24 - 26, 2017 • Peppermill Resort, Reno, NV

Global Cheese Technology Forum Cheese and Whey Production In The U.S.

October 24 - 26, 2017 • Reno, Nevada

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Topics will include:

- Cheese & Whey Challenges (CEO Panel)
- Cheese Microbiology & Chemistry
- Whey Processing and Applications
- Training/Education/Workforce Development Panel
- Cheese Ingredients
- Cheese Process Technology
- New Market Opportunities

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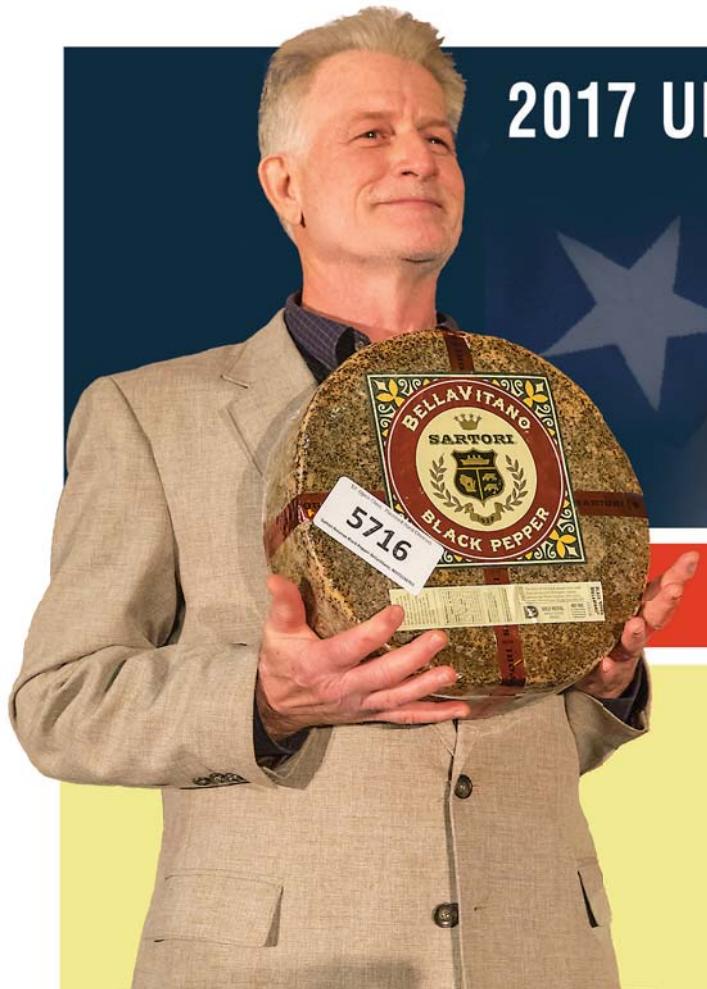
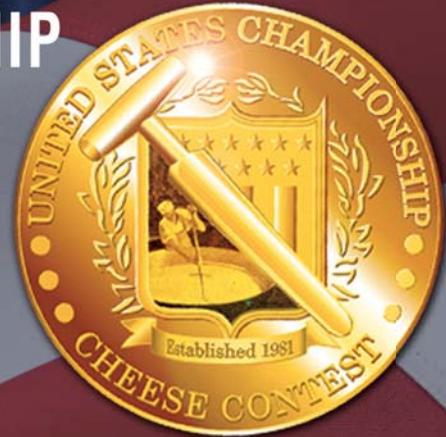
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2017 UNITED STATES CHAMPIONSHIP

Cheese CONTEST



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Black Pepper
BellaVitano**

**Mike Matucheski
Sartori Co.
Antigo, Wisconsin**
**Champion Round
Score: 99.018**



FIRST RUNNER-UP

Aged Cheddar

Terry Lensmire
Agropur
Weyauwega,
Wisconsin
**Champion Round
Score: 98.813**

SECOND RUNNER-UP

**Marieke Gouda
Belegen**

Marieke Gouda Team
Marieke Gouda
Thorp, Wisconsin
**Champion Round
Score: 98.593**



All photos of the United States Championship Cheese Contest by Mike Roemer.

U.S. CHAMPIONSHIP

CHEESE CONTEST

Cheese Market News congratulates winners of the U.S. Championship Cheese Contest

GREEN BAY, Wis. — Out of a record-setting 2,303 cheese entries from 33 states, Sartori Reserve Black Pepper BellaVitano was named best cheese March 9 at the 2017 U.S. Championship Cheese Contest held in Green Bay, Wisconsin.

The winning cheese, created by Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker Mike Matucheski and Sartori team members in Antigo, Wisconsin, won with a final-round score of 99.02 out of 100. According to Sartori Co., the winning cheese was lauded by the judges for its impeccable balance — the creamy, nuttiness of the aged cheese combined with the bright and bold flavors of fresh-cracked black pepper. Sartori Co. previously won the

U.S. Championship Cheese Contest with its SarVecchio Parmesan in 2009.

"We look forward to this competition every year," says Jim Sartori, CEO, Sartori Co. "To win the title of Grand Champion, when we know perfectly well how many talented cheeses were in the competition, makes me proud of all of our incredibly hard-working team members."

Two other Wisconsin cheeses rounded out the top three spots at this year's championship. First runner-up, with a final round score of 98.81, went to a Cheddar aged 1-2 years made by Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker Terry Lensmire of Agropur, Weyauwega, Wisconsin. Second

runner-up was Marieke Gouda Belegen, with a final round score of 98.59, made by the Marieke Gouda Team in Thorp, Wisconsin. Marieke Penterman of Marieke Gouda was the Grand Champion in the 2013 U.S. Championship Cheese Contest.

Overall, Wisconsin cheesemakers earned gold medals in 58 of the 101 classes judged. Vermont cheesemakers took home seven golds, while New York cheesemakers placed third in the gold medal count with six.

"As we recognize the efforts of these fine craftsmen and women, we support continuous improvement in the cheese-making industry and in the products we all enjoy with our family and friends,"

says John Umhoefer, executive director of the Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association, which hosts the biennial competition.

In addition to the champion and two runners-up, the top 20 finalists of the contest include: Team Meister 3, Meister Cheese, Muscoda, Wisconsin, *Medium Cheddar*; Terry Lensmire, Agropur, Weyauwega, Wisconsin, *Cheddar cut from 640*; Daniel Stearns, Agropur, Weyauwega, Wisconsin, *Cheddar cut from 640*; Saxon Cheese LLC, Cleveland, Wisconsin, *Old English Style Cheddar aged 5 months* and *Smoked Gouda aged 7 months*; Wayne Hintz, Red Barn Family Farms, Appleton, Wisconsin, *Bandaged Cheddar sharp to aged*; Casey Petak, Rothenbuhler Cheesemakers, Middlefield, Ohio, *Baby Swiss*; Imperia Foods Montfort, Wisconsin, Team, Schuman Cheese, Fairfield, New Jersey, *Montforte Bleu Wheel*; Lake Country Dairy Team, Schuman Cheese, Fairfield, New Jersey, *Yellow Door Creamery Harissa Rubbed Fontal Cheese*; Jasper Hill, Cellars at Jasper Hill, Greensboro Bend, Vermont, *Moses Sleeper*; Marieke Gouda Team, Marieke Gouda, Thorp, Wisconsin, *Marieke Gouda Belegen* and *Marieke Gouda Aged*; Christopher Gonzales, Glanbia Nutritionals, Twin Falls, Idaho, *Gouda/Green Olives & Pimento*; Mike Matucheski, Sartori Co., Antigo, Wisconsin, *Sartori Reserve Black Pepper BellaVitano* and *Sartori Tre Donnes*; Zimmerman Cheese Team 2, Zimmerman Cheese, South Wayne, Wisconsin, *Smoked Brick*; John (Randy) Pitman, Mill Creek Cheese, Arena, Wisconsin, *Reduced Fat Muenster*; Widmer's Cheese Cellars, Theresa, Wisconsin, *Traditional Washed Rind Aged Brick Spread*; Cypress Grove, Arcata, California, *Fresh Goat Cheese*; and Team Montchevre, Montchevre-Betin Inc., Belmont, Wisconsin, *Trivium*.

The championship cheeses and gold medal winners will be auctioned off April 12 during a special reception at the 2017 Wisconsin Cheese Industry Conference in Madison, Wisconsin.

The three top-scoring entries in each category were:

Cheddar, Mild (0-3 months)

Class 1

Best of Class: Shawn Sadler, Associated Milk Producers Inc. (AMPI), Jim Falls, Wisconsin, *White Cheddar/Vat 5, 12/10/16, 99.40*.

Second: Andy Follen, Lynn Dairy Inc., Granton, Wisconsin, *Mild Cheddar, 98.65*.

Third: Middlebury Cheese Team, Cabot Creamery Cooperative, Middlebury, Vermont, *Vermont Mild Cheddar, 98.60*.

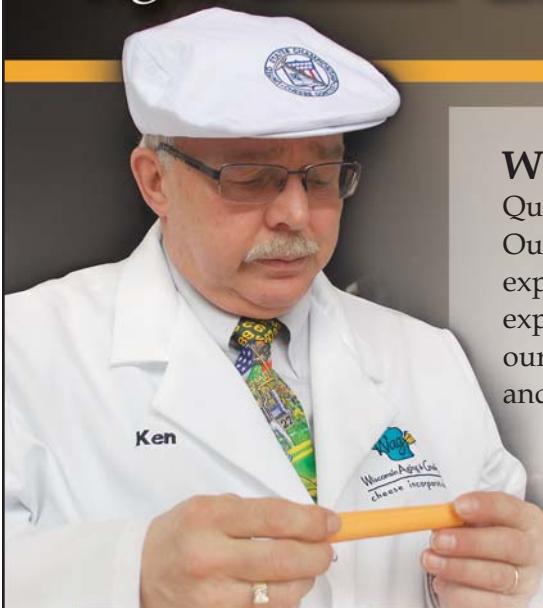
Fourth: Ken Hall, Cabot Creamery Cooperative, Cabot, Vermont, *Vermont Mild Cheddar, 98.55*.

Turn to CHEDDAR, page 27 ⇔



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U.S. CHAMPIONSHIP**CHEESE CONTEST****CHEDDAR***Continued from page 26*

Fourth: Joseph Gallo Farms, Maker of Joseph Farms Cheese, Atwater, California, *Mild Cheddar made from cow's milk*, 98.55.

Fifth: David Lindgren, Lynn Dairy Inc., Granton, Wisconsin, *Mild Cheddar*, 98.50.

**Cheddar, Medium
(3-6 months)**

Class 2

Best of Class: Team Meister 3, Meister Cheese, Muscoda, Wisconsin, *Medium Cheddar*, 99.25.

Second: Kiel Cheesemakers, Land O'Lakes Inc., Kiel, Wisconsin, *Medium Cheddar*, 99.05.

Third: Charles VanDyke, Great Lakes Cheese, Adams, New York, *Cheddar*, 98.75.

Fourth: Tillamook County Creamery, Tillamook, Oregon, *Medium White Cheddar*, 98.70.

Fifth: Tillamook County Creamery, Tillamook, Oregon, *Medium Yellow Cheddar*, 98.65.

**Cheddar, Sharp
(6 months-1 year)**

Class 3

Best of Class: Daniel Stearns, Agropur, Weyauwega, Wisconsin, *Cheddar cut from 640*, 99.05.

Second: AMPI-Blair, Blair, Wisconsin, *Sharp Cheddar*, 99.00.

Third: Maple Leaf Cheesemaking Team, Maple Leaf Cheesemakers Inc., Monroe, Wisconsin, *English Hollow Cheddar*, 98.95.

Fourth: Daniel Stearns, Agropur, Weyauwega, Wisconsin, *Cheddar cut from 640*, 98.60.

Fifth: Mark Stahl, Great Lakes Cheese of New York, Adams, New York, *Cheddar*, 98.45.

Cheddar, Aged 1-2 Years

Class 4

Best of Class: Terry Lensmire, Agropur, Weyauwega, Wisconsin, *Cheddar cut from 640*, 99.30.

Second: Kiel Production Team, Land O'Lakes Inc., Kiel, Wisconsin, *Aged Cheddar - 1-2 years*, 99.25.

Third: Daniel Stearns, Agropur, Weyauwega, Wisconsin, *Cheddar cut from 640*, 99.15.

Fourth: Daniel Stearns, Agropur, Weyauwega, Wisconsin, *Cheddar cut from*

640, 99.10.

Fifth: Manufactured by Land O'Lakes Kiel, entered by Masters Gallery Foods Inc., Plymouth, Wisconsin, *Land O'Lakes Aged Cheddar*, 98.90

Cheddar, Aged 2 Years or Longer

Class 5

Best of Class: Daniel Stearns, Agropur, Weyauwega, Wisconsin, *Cheddar cut from 640*, 99.45.

Second: Land O'Lakes Kiel, Masters Gallery Foods Inc., Plymouth, Wisconsin, *Land O'Lakes Aged Cheddar*, 99.30.

Third: Kiel Cheesemakers, Land O'Lakes Inc., Kiel, Wisconsin, *Aged Cheddar - Over 2 Years*, 99.05.

Fourth: Kiel Production Team, Land O'Lakes Inc., Kiel, Wisconsin, *Aged Cheddar - Over 2 Years*, 98.85.

Fifth: Tim Elmer, Great Lakes Cheese of New York, Adams, New York, *Cheddar*, 98.65.

**Bandaged Cheddar,
Mild to Medium**

Class 6

Best of Class: Saxon Cheese LLC, Cleveland, Wisconsin, *Old English Style*

Cheddar, aged 5 months, 99.10.

Second: Wayne Hintz, Red Barn Family Farms, Appleton, Wisconsin, 99.05.

Third: Chris Roelli, Roelli Cheese Co., Shullsburg, Wisconsin, *Roelli Haus Select Mild*, 98.90.

Fourth: Kerry Henning, Henning Cheese, Kiel, Wisconsin, *White Cheddar Midget*, 98.85.

Fourth: Eric Steltenpohl, Saxon Cheese LLC, Cleveland, Wisconsin, *Old English Style Cheddar*, aged 4 months, 98.85.

Fifth: Wayne Hintz, Red Barn Family Farms, Appleton, Wisconsin, *lot 59228*, 98.65.

Fifth: Wayne Hintz, Red Barn Family Farms, Appleton, Wisconsin, *lot 60184*, 98.65.

Turn to BANDAGED, page 28 ⇨

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f t in

U.S. CHAMPIONSHIP

CHEESE CONTEST

BANDAGED

Continued from page 27

Bandaged Cheddar, Sharp to Aged

Class 7

Best of Class: Wayne Hintz, Red Barn Family Farms, Appleton, Wisconsin, *lot 45826 vat 3*, 99.15.

Second: GVC Cheesemakers, Grafton Village Cheese, Brattleboro, Vermont, *Queen of Quality Clothbound Cheddar Reserve*, 98.70.

Third: GVC Cheesemakers, Grafton Village Cheese, Brattleboro, Vermont, *Queen of Quality Clothbound Cheddar*, 98.65.

Fourth: Murray's Cheese, Long Island City, New York, *Murray's Clothbound Cheddar*, 98.60.

Fifth: GVC Cheesemakers, Grafton Village Cheese, Brattleboro, Vermont, *Vermont Clothbound Cheddar*, 98.35.

Colby

Class 8

Best of Class: LaGrander's Cheese Team No. 2, LaGrander's Hillside Dairy, Inc., Stanley, Wisconsin, *Colby Longhorn*, 98.75.

Second: Artisan Cheese Exchange, Henning Cheese, Kiel, Wisconsin, *Colby Midget 1/6/17*, 98.60.

Third: Burnett Dairy-Wilson, Burnett Dairy Cooperative, Wilson, Wisconsin, *Colby No. 1*, 98.45.

Fourth: Team SWC, Southwest Cheese LLC, Clovis, New Mexico, *Colby Southwest*, 98.10

Fifth: LaGrander's Cheese Team No. 3, LaGrander's Hillside Dairy, Inc., Stanley, Wisconsin, *Colby Longhorn*, 98.05.

Monterey Jack

Class 9

Best of Class: Team Meister 2, Meister Cheese, Muscoda, Wisconsin, 99.40.

Second: Team SWC, Southwest Cheese LLC, Clovis, New Mexico, 99.35.

Third: Tillamook County Creamery, Tillamook, Oregon, 99.15.

Fourth: Team SWC, Southwest Cheese LLC, Clovis, New Mexico, 99.00.

Fifth: Team Meister 1, Meister Cheese, Muscoda, Wisconsin, 98.85.

Marbled Curd Cheese

Class 10

Best of Class: Sam Metzger, Agropur, Hull, Iowa, *Colby Jack (cut 640)*, 98.60.

Second: Jesse Hernandez, Glanbia Nutritionals, Twin Falls, Idaho, *Colby Jack*, 98.50.

Third: Roger Schmith, Agropur, Hull, Iowa, *Colby Jack (cut 640)*, 98.30.

Fourth: Joseph Gallo Farms, Maker of Joseph Farms Cheese, Atwater, California, *Marbled Jack Cheese*, 98.25.

Fifth: Team SWC, Southwest Cheese LLC, Clovis, New Mexico, *Colby Jack*, 98.10.

Swiss Style Cheese

Class 11

Best of Class: Team Guggisberg Sugarcreek, Guggisberg Cheese, Millersburg, Ohio, *200-pound Aged Emmental Block*, 99.75.

Second: Swiss Team, Pearl Valley Cheese, Fresno, Ohio, *Swiss Cheese*,

99.10.

Third: Team Guggisberg Sugarcreek, Guggisberg Cheese, Millersburg, Ohio, *200-pound Swiss Block*, 98.90.

Fourth: Team Guggisberg Sugarcreek, Guggisberg Cheese, Millersburg, Ohio, *200-pound Swiss Block*, 98.70.

Fifth: Silvan Blum, Chalet Cheese/Deppeler Factory, Monroe, Wisconsin, *20-pound Swiss Wheel*, 98.35.

Mozzarella

Class 12

Best of Class: Candido's Team, Dairy Farmers of America (DFA), Turlock, California, *whole-milk Mozzarella 2017-B*, 97.65.

Second: Roger L. Krohn, Agropur, Luxemburg, Wisconsin, *Low Moisture Mozzarella, whole milk*, 97.55.

Third: Team Lake Norden, Agropur, Lake Norden, South Dakota, *low-moisture whole-milk Mozzarella*, 97.45.

Fourth: Team Lake Norden, Agropur, Lake Norden, South Dakota, *low-moisture whole-milk Mozzarella*, 96.30.

Turn to MOZZARELLA, page 29 ⇨

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U.S. CHAMPIONSHIP**CHEESE CONTEST****MOZZARELLA***Continued from page 28*

Fifth: Mozzarella Team, Lactalis American Group, Buffalo, New York, *Sorrento Whole Milk Low Moisture Mozzarella*, 96.15.

Mozzarella, Part Skim

Class 13

Best of Class: Roger L. Krohn, Agropur, Luxemburg, Wisconsin, *low-moisture part-skim Mozzarella*, 98.85.

Second: Team Three, Empire Cheese, Inc., Cuba, New York, *Part Skim*, 98.80.

Third: Terry Lenmsire, Agropur, Luxemburg, Wisconsin, *low-moisture part-skim Mozzarella*, 98.75.

Fourth: Ernesto's Team, DFA, Turlock, California, *low-moisture part-skim Mozzarella*, 98.70.

Fifth: Roger L. Krohn, Agropur, Luxemburg, Wisconsin, *low-moisture part-skim Mozzarella*, 98.65.

Fourth: Team Lake Norden, Agropur Lake Norden, Lake Norden, South

Dakota, *low-moisture part-skim Mozzarella*, 98.65.

Fresh Mozzarella

Class 14

Best of Class: Crave Brothers Team, Crave Brothers Farmstead Cheese LLC, Waterloo, Wisconsin, *Fresh Mozzarella*, 99.50.

Second: Crave Brothers Team, Crave Brothers Farmstead Cheese LLC, Waterloo, Wisconsin, *Fresh Mozzarella*, 99.45.

Third: Crave Brothers Team, Crave Brothers Farmstead Cheese LLC, Waterloo, Wisconsin, *Fresh Mozzarella*, 99.40.

Fourth: Phil Frater, BelGioioso Cheese Inc., Green Bay, Wisconsin, *BelGioioso Fresh Mozzarella Ciliegine water packed*, 99.20.

Fourth: Team Aguas, Caputo Cheese, Melrose Park, Illinois, *Burrata*, 99.20.

Fourth: Crave Brothers Team, Crave Brothers Farmstead Cheese LLC, Waterloo, Wisconsin, *Fresh Mozzarella*, 99.20.

Fifth: Andy Gerrits, BelGioioso

Cheese Inc., Green Bay, Wisconsin, *BelGioioso Burrata - 4-ounce Ball*, 99.10.

Provolone, Mild

Class 15

Best of Class: Terry Lensmire, Agropur, Luxemburg, Wisconsin, 98.95.

Second: Arturo's Team, DFA, Turlock, California, 98.80.

Third: Team Two, Empire Cheese Inc., Cuba, New York, 98.75.

Fourth: Roger Krohn, Agropur, Luxemburg, Wisconsin, 98.70.

Fifth: Anselmo's Team, DFA, Turlock, California, 98.55.

Fourth: Team Two, Empire Cheese Inc., Cuba, New York, 98.70.

Fifth: Ernesto's Team, DFA, Turlock, California, 98.55.

Smoked Provolone

Class 17

Best of Class: Team Lake Norden, Agropur, Lake Norden, South Dakota, 98.75.

Second: Team One, Empire Cheese Inc., Cuba, New York, 98.70.

Third: C. V. 2nd Shift Team, Cedar Valley Cheese Inc., Belgium, Wisconsin, 98.65.

Fourth: Team Appleton, Foremost Farms USA, Appleton, Wisconsin, 98.55.

Fifth: Team Three, Empire Cheese Inc., Cuba, New York, 98.50.

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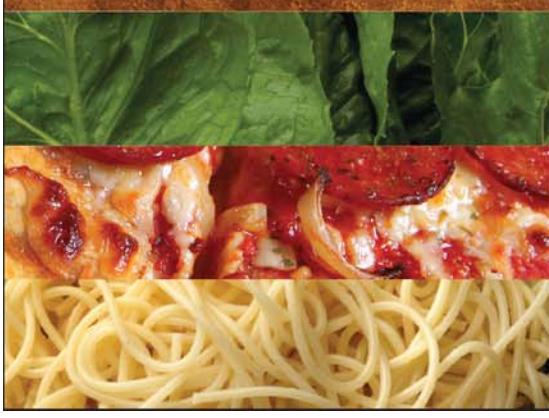
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U.S. CHAMPIONSHIP**CHEESE CONTEST****RICOTTA***Continued from page 29**Whole Milk Jersey Basket Ricotta, 99.50.**Second: Tomas Robles, BelGioioso Cheese Inc., Green Bay, Wisconsin, *BelGioioso Ricotta con Latte Whole Milk*, 99.30.**Third: Joe Taranto, Montena Taranto Foods, Ridgefield, New Jersey, *Traditional Italian*, 98.90.**Fourth: Team Salazar, Caputo Cheese, Melrose Park, Illinois, *Ricotta Red*, 98.65.**Fourth: Ricotta Team, Lactalis American Group, Buffalo, New York, *Whole-Milk Milk-Based Ricotta*, 98.65.**Fifth: Team Salazar, Caputo Cheese, Melrose Park, Illinois, *Ricotta Red* 16-ounce, 98.50.***Introducing****Mondo Vecchio****Offer your customers authentic Italian taste in the most popular hard-grated cheeses:**

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**Parmesan****Class 19***Best of Class: Dan Szczepanski, BelGioioso Cheese Inc., Green Bay, Wisconsin, *BelGioioso Parmesan*, 99.75.**Second: Steve Bierhals, BelGioioso Cheese Inc., Green Bay, Wisconsin, *BelGioioso American Grana*, 99.50.**Third: Lake Country Dairy Team, Schuman Cheese, Fairfield, New Jersey, *Cello Copper Kettle Parmesan Wheel*, 99.45.**Fourth: Erin Radtke, Sartori Co., Antigo, Wisconsin, *Sartori Classic Parmesan*, 99.35.**Fifth: Lake Country Dairy Team, Schuman Cheese, Fairfield, New Jersey, *Cello Copper Kettle Parmesan*, 98.90.***Fresh Asiago****Class 20***Best of Class: Team SWC, Southwest Cheese LLC, Clovis, New Mexico, *Southwest Asiago*, 99.30.**Second: Randy Krahenbuhl, BelGioioso Cheese Inc., Green Bay, Wisconsin, *BelGioioso Asiago*, 99.10.**Third: Saxon Creamery Team, Saxon Cheese LLC, Cleveland, Wisconsin,**Whole Milk Asiago (Fresh Style) aged 4 months, 98.75.**Fourth: Team SWC, Southwest Cheese LLC, Clovis, New Mexico, *Southwest Asiago*, 98.70.**Fifth: Team SWC, Southwest Cheese LLC, Clovis, New Mexico, *Southwest Asiago*, 98.65.***Aged Asiago (over 6 months)****Class 21***Best of Class: Team Almena on behalf of Saputo, Saputo Specialty Cheese, Richfield, Wisconsin, *Stella Aged Asiago*, 99.30.**Second: Mike Matucheski, Sartori Co., Antigo, Wisconsin, *Sartori Reserve Extra-Aged Asiago*, 99.10.**Third: Erin Radtke, Sartori Co., Antigo, Wisconsin, *Sartori Classic Asiago*, 98.95.**Fourth: Lake Country Dairy Team, Schuman Cheese, Fairfield, New Jersey, *Cello Hand Crafted Asiago Wheel*, 98.90.**Fifth: Lake Country Dairy Team, Schuman Cheese, Fairfield, New Jersey, *Cello Hand Crafted Asiago Wheel*, 98.85.***Baby Swiss-Style****Class 22***Best of Class: Casey Petak, Rothenbuhler Cheesemakers, Middlefield, Ohio, *Baby Swiss*, 99.40.**Second: Team Guggisberg Doughty Valley, Guggisberg Cheese, Millersburg, Ohio, *Baby Swiss Wheel*, 99.10.**Third: Penn Cheese, Winfield, Pennsylvania, *Full Cream Baby Swiss Deli Style Loaf*, 98.70.**Fourth: Gary Sloan Jr., Rothenbuhler Cheesemakers, Middlefield, Ohio, *Baby Swiss*, 98.55.**Fifth: Mike Nelson, Chalet Cheese Co-op, Monroe, Wisconsin, *40-pound Block Baby Swiss*, 98.40.***Feta****Class 23***Best of Class: Steve Webster, Klondike Cheese Co., Monroe, Wisconsin, *Odyssey Feta*, 99.10.**Second: Micah Klug, Agropur, Weyauwega, Wisconsin, *Feta*, 98.85.**Third: Randy Timm, Agropur, Weyauwega, Wisconsin, *Feta*, 98.55.**Fourth: Feta Production-John Peck, Maplebrook Farm, Bennington, Vermont, 98.30, Whole Milk Block Feta.**Fifth: Fresh Cheese Team, Vermont Creamery, Websterville, Vermont, *Feta*, 98.25.**For more information please visit www.bellapak.com**Turn to FETA, page 31 ⇨*

U.S. CHAMPIONSHIP**CHEESE CONTEST****FETA***Continued from page 30***Feta, Flavored**

Class 24

Best of Class: Luke Buholzer, Klondike Cheese Co., Monroe, Wisconsin, *Odyssey Mediterranean Feta*, 99.35.

Second: Terry Lensmire, Agropur, Weyauwega, Wisconsin, *Feta with Peppercorn*, 99.30.

Third: Jim Demeter, Klondike Cheese Co., Monroe, Wisconsin, *Odyssey Peppercorn Feta*, 99.05.

Fourth: Micah Klug, Agropur, Weyauwega, Wisconsin, *Feta with Peppercorn*, 99.00.

Fourth: Steve Webster, Klondike Cheese Co., Monroe, Wisconsin, *Odyssey Peppercorn Feta*, 99.00.

Fifth: Matt Eardley, Klondike Cheese Co., Monroe, Wisconsin, *Odyssey Tomato & Basil Feta*, 98.95.

Havarti

Class 25

Best of Class: Emmi Roth USA, Fitchburg, Wisconsin, *Whole Milk Havarti*, 99.15.

Second: Bruce Workman, Fair Oaks Farms, Fair Oaks, Indiana, *Havarti 1/5/17 vat 5*, 99.00.

Third: Team Edelweiss, Edelweiss Creamery, Monticello, Wisconsin, *Havarti 1/17/2017 vat 4*, 98.70.

Fourth: Matt Henze, Decatur Dairy Inc., Brodhead, Wisconsin, *Havarti*, 98.65.

Fifth: Ron Buholzer, Klondike Cheese Co., Monroe, Wisconsin, *Havarti*, 98.60.

Havarti, Flavored

Class 26

Best of Class: Decatur Cheesemakers, Decatur Dairy Inc., Brodhead, Wisconsin, *Havarti Mediterranean Herb*, 99.25.

Second: Ron Bechtolt, Klondike Cheese Co., Monroe, Wisconsin, *Dill Havarti*, 99.10.

Third: Valerie Arechiga, Glanbia Nutritionals, Twin Falls, Idaho, *Havarti/Garlic*, 99.00.

Fourth: Dave Newman, Arla Foods, Kaukauna, Wisconsin, *Havarti Caraway*, 98.95.

Fourth: Nikola Strbac, Glanbia Nutritionals, Twin Falls, Idaho, *Havarti/Dill*, 98.95.

Fourth: Jose Villagomez, Glanbia Nutritionals, Twin Falls, Idaho, *Havarti/Sweet Onion*, 98.95.

Fifth: Ken Henningson, Decatur

Dairy Inc., Brodhead, Wisconsin, *Havarti Dill*, 98.90.

String Cheese

Class 27

Best of Class: Cesar & Heydi, Cesar's Cheese, Random Lake, Wisconsin, *Hand Stretched String Cheese Batch 2*, 99.50.

Second: Mark Boelk, Chula Vista Cheese Co./V&V Supremo Foods, Brownstown, Wisconsin, *Mexican String Cheese*, 99.30.

Third: Little Cesar & Damaris, Cesar's Cheese, Random Lake, Wisconsin,

Turn to STRING, page 32 ↗



Photo by Mike Roemer

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Jim Demeter, Steve Buholzer, Adam Buholzer, Dave Buholzer & Ron Buholzer (from left)

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- 1st Place: Odyssey Greek Yogurt French Onion Dip

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U.S. CHAMPIONSHIP**CHEESE CONTEST****STRING***Continued from page 31**Hand Stretched String Cheese Batch 3, 99.20.**Fourth: Team Two, Empire Cheese Inc., Cuba, New York, *String Cheese*, 99.05.**Fifth: Dan Schwind, Baker Cheese Factory Inc., St. Cloud, Wisconsin, *low-moisture part-skim Mozzarella String Cheese*, 98.85.***Flavored String Cheese**

Class 28

*Best of Class: Anthony Mongiello, Formaggio Italian Cheese Specialties, Hurleyville, New York, *Strings of Cheese Truffle Oil & Basil*, 98.70.**Second: Kevin Entringer, Baker Cheese Factory Inc., St. Cloud, Wisconsin, *Jalapeno Peppers*, 98.55.**Third: Anthony Mongiello, Formaggio Italian Cheese Specialties, Hurleyville, New York, *Strings of Cheese Marinated*, 98.50.**Fourth: Anthony Mongiello, Formaggio Italian Cheese Specialties, Hurleyville, New York, *Strings of Cheese Everything Bagel*, 98.25.**Fifth: Burnett Dairy Team, Burnett Dairy, Grantsburg, Wisconsin, *Smoked String Cheese*, 97.90.***Cottage Cheese**

Class 29

*Best of Class: Cottage Team, Westby Co-op Creamery, Westby, Wisconsin, *4-percent Small Curd Cottage Cheese*, 95.00.**Second: West Seneca Cultured Division, Upstate Niagara Cooperative, West Buffalo, New York, *5-percent Fat Cottage Cheese*, 94.75.**Third: Gillis Richards, Cabot Creamery Cooperative, Cabot, Vermont, *Vermont Style Cottage Cheese*, 94.35.**Fourth: Crystal Creamery, Modesto, California, *4-percent Cottage Cheese*, 94.20.**Fifth: Cottage Team, Westby Co-op Creamery, Westby, Wisconsin, *4-percent Large Curd Cottage Cheese*, 94.00.***Gorgonzola**

Class 30

*Best of Class: Team Salemville on behalf of Saputo, Saputo Specialty Cheese, Richfield, Wisconsin; *Salemville Gorgonzola*, 99.65.**Second: Team KS Selection, Costco Wholesale, Issaquah, Washington, *Kirkland Signature "American Blue" cheese*, 99.35.**Third: Team Seymour, Great Lakes Cheese, Seymour, Wisconsin, *Gorgonzola*, 99.30.**Fourth: Imperia Foods Montfort WI Team 1, Schuman Cheese, Fairfield, New Jersey, *Montforte Gorgonzola Wheel*, 98.95.**Fifth: Team Sartori, Sartori Co., Plymouth, Wisconsin, *Sartori Reserve Dolcina Gorgonzola*, 98.60.***Blue Veined, Exterior Molding**

Class 31

*Best of Class: von Trapp Farmstead, Waitsfield, Vermont, *Mad River Blue*, 99.30.**Second: Blue Team, Rogue Creamery, Central Point, Oregon, *Organic Caveman Blue*, 99.15.**Third: Murray's Cheese & Consider Bardwell, Murray's Cheese, Long Island City, New York, *Barden Blue*, 98.45.**Fourth: von Trapp Farmstead, Waitsfield, Vermont, *Mad River Blue*, 98.40.**Fifth: Sequatchie Cove Creamery, Sequatchie, Tennessee, *Bellamy Blue*, 97.70.***Blue Veined**

Class 32

*Best of Class: Imperia Foods Montfort WI team, Schuman Cheese, Fairfield, New Jersey, *Montforte Bleu Wheel*, 98.95.**Second: Emmi Roth USA, Fitchburg, Wisconsin, *Roth Buttermilk Blue*, 98.45.**Third: Blue Team, Rogue Creamery, Central Point, Oregon, *Organic Oregon Blue*, 97.70.**Fourth: Imperia Foods Montfort WI team, Schuman Cheese, Fairfield, New Jersey, *Montforte Bleu Wheel*, 97.65.**Fifth: Team Salemville on behalf of Saputo, Saputo Specialty Cheese, Richfield, Wisconsin, *Salemville Reserve Blue Cheese*, 97.60.*

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U.S. CHAMPIONSHIP**CHEESE CONTEST****CONTEST***Continued from page 32***Brick, Muenster**

Class 33

Best of Class: Luke Buholzer, Klondike Cheese Co., Monroe, Wisconsin, *Brick*, 99.70.*Second:* Steve Buholzer, Klondike Cheese Co., Monroe, Wisconsin, *Brick*, 99.60.*Third:* Ron Bechtolt, Klondike Cheese Co., Monroe, Wisconsin, *Brick*, 99.55.*Fourth:* Steve Buholzer, Klondike Cheese Co., Monroe, Wisconsin, *Muenster*, 99.45.*Fifth:* John(Randy) Pitman, Mill Creek Cheese, Arena, Wisconsin, *Muenster*, 99.40.**Brie & Camembert**

Class 34

Best of Class: Jasper Hill, Cellars at Jasper Hill, Greensboro Bend, Vermont, *Moses Sleeper*, 99.40.*Second:* Israel Gil, Old Europe Cheese Inc., Benton Harbor, Michigan, *3-kilogram Double Cream Brie*, 99.05.*Third:* Green Hill, Sweet Grass Dairy, Thomasville, Georgia, 012617, 99.00.*Fourth:* Lactalis American Group, Belmont, Wisconsin, *19.6-ounce Brie*, 98.85.*Fifth:* Lactalis American Group, Belmont, Wisconsin, *8-ounce Camembert*, 98.75.**Open Class: Soft Ripened Cheeses**

Class 35

Best of Class: Jasper Hill, Cellars at Jasper Hill, Greensboro Bend, Vermont, *Harbison*, 99.75.*Second:* Lactalis American Group, Belmont, Wisconsin, *1-kilogram Triple Cream*, 99.55.*Third:* Aged Cheese Team, Vermont Creamery, Websterville, Vermont, *St. Albans*, 99.50.*Fourth:* Team Marin French, Marin French Cheese, Petaluma, California, *Petite Supreme*, 99.35.*Fifth:* Lactalis American Group, Belmont, Wisconsin, *8-ounce Triple Cream*, 99.25.**Edam & Gouda**

Class 36

Best of Class: Marieke Gouda Team, Marieke Gouda, Thorp, Wisconsin, *Marieke Gouda Belegen*, 99.55.*Second:* Dave Newman, Arla Foods, Kaukauna, Wisconsin, *Gouda wheel*, 99.50.*Third:* Marieke Gouda Team, Marieke Gouda, Thorp, Wisconsin, *Marieke Gouda Belegen (4-6 month)*, 99.45.*Fourth:* Marieke Gouda Team, Marieke Gouda, Thorp, Wisconsin, *Marieke Gouda Young*, 99.40.*Fifth:* Ed Giamarino, Arla Foods, Kaukauna, Wisconsin, *Gouda wheel*, 99.35.**Gouda, Aged**

Class 37

Turn to GOUDA, page 34 ⇨

Photo by Mike Roemer

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U.S. CHAMPIONSHIP

CHEESE CONTEST

GOUDA

Continued from page 33

Best of Class: Marieke Gouda Team, Marieke Gouda, Thorp, Wisconsin, *Marieke Gouda Aged*, 99.65.

Second: Marieke Gouda Team, Marieke Gouda, Thorp, Wisconsin, *Marieke Gouda Aged*, 99.60.

Third: Marieke Gouda Team, Marieke Gouda, Thorp, Wisconsin, *Marieke Gouda Mature*, 99.25.

Fourth: Maple Leaf Cheesemaking Team 1, Maple Leaf Cheesemakers Inc., Monroe, Wisconsin, *Gouda*, 99.20.

Fifth: Eric Steltenpohl, Saxon Cheese LLC, Cleveland, Wisconsin, *Gouda Aged 8 months*, 99.15.

Gouda, Flavored

Class 38

Best of Class: Christopher Gonzales, Glanbia Nutritionals, Twin Falls, Idaho, *Gouda/Green Olives & Pimento*, 99.05.

Second: Marieke Gouda Team, Marieke Gouda, Thorp, Wisconsin, *Marieke Gouda Truffle*, 98.50.

Third: Marieke Gouda Team, Marieke Gouda, Thorp, Wisconsin, *Marieke Gouda Bacon*, 98.10.

Fourth: Saxon Creamery Team, Saxon Cheese LLC, Cleveland, Wisconsin, *Gouda Aged 14 months with Italian Spices*, 98.05.

Fifth: Deaven Halbach, Arla Foods, Kaukauna, Wisconsin, *Gouda Wheel*, 97.90.

Fifth: John Dirk Bulk, Oakdale Cheese, Oakdale, California, *Cumin Gouda*, 97.90.

Smoked Gouda

Class 39

Best of Class: Saxon Creamery Team, Saxon Cheese LLC, Cleveland, Wisconsin, *Smoked Gouda Aged 7 months*, 99.55.

Second: Eric Steltenpohl, Saxon Cheese LLC, Cleveland, Wisconsin,

Smoked Gouda Aged 8 months, 99.15.

Third: Marieke Gouda Team, Marieke Gouda, Thorp, Wisconsin, *Marieke Gouda Smoked Cumin*, 98.95.

Fourth: Marieke Gouda Team, Marieke Gouda, Thorp, Wisconsin, *Marieke Gouda Smoked*, 98.80.

Fifth: Marieke Gouda Team, Marieke Gouda, Thorp, Wisconsin, *Marieke Gouda Smoked*, 98.60.

Fresh Hispanic Cheeses (Quesos Frescos)

Class 40

Best of Class: Marquez Brothers International, Hanford, California, *Queso Panela*, 99.85.

Second: Marquez Brothers International, Hanford, California, *Cremoso*, 99.80.

Third: Gerardo Adame, Mill Creek Cheese, Arena, Wisconsin, *Queso Blanco*, 99.65.

Fourth: Marquez Brothers International, Hanford, California, *Panela*, 99.60.

Fourth: John(Randy) Pitman, Mill Creek Cheese, Arena, Wisconsin, *Para Frier*, 99.60.

Fourth: John(Randy) Pitman, Mill Creek Cheese, Arena, Wisconsin, *Queso Blanco*, 99.60.

Fourth: Team V&V Supremo, V&V Supremo Foods Inc., Chicago, *Queso Fresco*, 99.60.

Fourth: W&W Dairy, Monroe, Wisconsin, *2-kilogram Queso Fresco*, 99.60.

Fifth: WCG Team, Wisconsin Cheese Group, Monroe, Wisconsin, *Panela*, 99.55.

Hispanic Melting Cheese (Queso Para Fundir)

Class 41

Best of Class: Casey Berget, Chula Vista Cheese Co./V&V Supremo Foods, Browntown, Wisconsin, *Oaxaca Cheese Ball*, 99.35.

Second: Tom Dahmen, Chula Vista Cheese Co./V&V Supremo Foods, Browntown, Wisconsin, *Oaxaca Cheese Ball*, 99.00.

Third: Torkelson Cheese Co., Lena, Illinois, *Quesadilla*, 98.95.

Fourth: Tim Pehl, Chula Vista Cheese Co./V&V Supremo Foods, Browntown, Wisconsin, *Oaxaca Cheese Ball*, 98.85.

Fourth: Francisco Ochoa, Ochoa's Queseria, Albany, Oregon, *Don Froylan Queso Oaxaca*, 98.85.

Fifth: John Jay Lewis, Chula Vista Cheese Co./V&V Supremo Foods, Browntown, Wisconsin, *Oaxaca Cheese Ball*, 98.75.



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U.S. CHAMPIONSHIP**CHEESE CONTEST****QUESO***Continued from page 34***Hard Hispanic Cheeses
(Queso Duro)**

Class 42

Best of Class: Team V&V Supremo, V&V Supremo Foods Inc., Chicago, *Cotija Wheel*, 99.60.

Second: MCP Team, Mexican Cheese Producers Inc. (Bar-S), Darlington, Wisconsin, *Cotija Wheel AF*, 99.55.

Third: MCP Team, Mexican Cheese Producers Inc. (Bar-S), Darlington, Wisconsin, *Queso Cotija Wheel*, 99.50.

Fourth: Team V&V Supremo, V&V Supremo Foods Inc., Chicago, *Cotija Wheel*, 99.45.

Fourth: Team V&V Supremo, V&V Supremo Foods Inc., Chicago, *Cotija Wheel*, 99.45.

Fifth: Team SWC, Southwest Cheese LLC, Clovis, New Mexico, *Queso Para Enchilada*, 99.40.

**Open Class: Smear
Ripened Soft Cheeses**

Class 43

Best of Class: Jasper Hill, Cellars at Jasper Hill, Greensboro Bend, Vermont, *Willoughby*, 99.70.

Second: Murray's Cheese & Jasper Hill, Murray's Cheese, Long Island City, New York, *Greensward*, 99.65.

Third: von Trapp Farmstead, Cellars at Jasper Hill, Greensboro Bend, Vermont, *Oma*, 99.60.

Fourth: Jasper Hill, Cellars at Jasper Hill, Greensboro Bend, Vermont, *Win-nimere*, 99.40.

Fifth: Joey Jaeggi, Chalet Cheese Co-op, Monroe, Wisconsin, *6-ounce Limburger*, 99.05.

**Open Class: Smear
Ripened Semi-soft
(Semi-hard) Cheeses**

Class 44

Best of Class: Matthew Brichford, Jacobs and Brichford Farmstead Cheese, Connersville, Indiana, *Everton Premium Reserve*, 99.55.

Second: Matthew Brichford, Jacobs and Brichford Farmstead Cheese, Connersville, Indiana, *Everton No. 190*, 99.45.

Third: Team Chalet on behalf of Saputo, Saputo Specialty Cheese, Rich-

field, Wisconsin, *Liederkranz Cheese*, 99.35.

Fourth: Murray's Cheese & Point Reyes, Murray's Cheese, Long Island City, New York, *Cornelia*, 99.10.

Fifth: Team Alpine - Lake Country Dairy, Schuman Cheese, Fairfield, New Jersey, *Yellow Door Creamery Valis*, 99.05.

**Open Class: Smear
Ripened Hard Cheeses**

Class 45

Best of Class: Emmi Roth USA, Fitchburg, Wisconsin, *Roth Grand Cru Reserve*, 99.35.

Second: Emmi Roth USA, Fitchburg, Wisconsin, *Roth's Private Reserve*, 99.30.

Third: Emmi Roth USA, Fitchburg, Wisconsin, *Roth's Grand Cru Original*, 99.20.

Fourth: Spring Brook Farm, Farms For City Kids Foundation, Reading, Vermont, *Tarentaise*, 99.05.

Fifth: Chris Roelli, Roelli Cheese Co., Shullsburg, Wisconsin, *Little Mountain*, 98.70.

Fifth: Andy Hatch, Uplands Cheese, Dodgeville, Wisconsin, *Pleasant Ridge Reserve*, 98.70.

Pepper Flavored Monterey Jack, Mild Heat

Class 46

Best of Class: Team Alto on behalf of Saputo, Saputo Specialty Cheese, Richfield, Wisconsin, *PepperJack*, 99.55.

Second: Team SWC, Southwest Cheese LLC, Clovis, New Mexico, *Pepper Jack*, 99.50.

Third: Shawn Sadler, AMPI, Jim Falls, Wisconsin, *Monterey Jack with Jalapeno Peppers/Vat 36*, 12/27/16, 99.45.

Fourth: Yusupov Bakhriddin, Glanbia Nutritionals, Twin Falls, Idaho,

Turn to PEPPER, page 36 ⇨

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U.S. CHAMPIONSHIP**CHEESE CONTEST****PEPPER***Continued from page 35**Pepper Jack, 99.40.**Fifth: LaGrander's Cheese Team No. 1, LaGrander's Hillside Dairy Inc., Stanley, Wisconsin, Pepper Jack Longhorn, 99.30.***Pepper Flavored Monterey Jack, Medium Heat**

Class 47

*Best of Class: Team SWC, Southwest Cheese LLC, Clovis, New Mexico, Pepper**Jack, 99.30.**Second: Team SWC, Southwest Cheese LLC, Clovis, New Mexico, Pepper Jack, 99.25.**Third: Team SWC, Southwest Cheese LLC, Clovis, New Mexico, Pepper Jack, 99.10.**Fourth: Team SWC, Southwest Cheese LLC, Clovis, New Mexico, Pepper Jack, 99.00.**Fifth: Pearl Valley Cheese, Fresno, Ohio, Pepper Jack Deli-Horn, 98.35.***Pepper Flavored Monterey Jack, High Heat**

Class 48

*Best of Class: Team SWC, Southwest Cheese LLC, Clovis, New Mexico, Ghost Pepper Jack, 99.80.**Second: Maple Leaf Cheesemaking Team 2, Maple Leaf Cheesemakers Inc., Monroe, Wisconsin, Habanero Jack, 99.70.**Third: Maple Leaf Cheesemaking Team 1, Maple Leaf Cheesemakers Inc., Monroe, Wisconsin, Habanero Jack, 99.35.**Fourth: Adelita Simic, Glanbia Nutritionals, Twin Falls, Idaho, Ghost Pepper Monterey Jack, 99.05.**Fifth: Kelly Hamlett, Glanbia Nutritionals, Twin Falls, Idaho, Red Habanero Monterey Jack, 98.95.**Best of Class: John(Randy)Pitman, Mill Creek Cheese, Arena, Wisconsin, Mild Chile Pepper Quesadilla, 99.60.***Open Class: Pepper Flavored Cheeses, Mild Heat**

Class 49

*Second: MouCo Cheese Co. Inc., Fort Collins, Colorado, MouCo PepBert, 99.55.**Third: John(Randy)Pitman, Mill Creek Cheese, Arena, Wisconsin, Mild Chile Pepper Muenster, 99.50.**Fourth: Maple Leaf Cheesemaking Team 1, Maple Leaf Cheesemakers Inc., Monroe, Wisconsin, Chipotle Cheddar Wheel, 99.45.**Fifth: Marieke Gouda Team, Marieke Gouda, Thorp, Wisconsin, Marieke Jalapeno, 99.40.***Open Class: Pepper Flavored Cheeses, Medium Heat**

Class 50

*Best of Class: Saxon Creamery Team, Saxon Cheese LLC, Cleveland, Wisconsin, Gouda w/ Serrano Peppers Aged 9 months, 99.25.**Second: Carr Valley Cheese Makers, Carr Valley Cheese Co. Inc., LaValle, Wisconsin, Cranberry Chipotle Cheddar, 98.60.**Third: Steve Stettler, Decatur Dairy Inc., Brodhead, Wisconsin, Havarti Pepper, 98.45.**Fourth: Felimon Aquirre, Saxon Cheese LLC, Cleveland, Wisconsin, Gouda w/ Serrano Peppers Aged 8 months, 98.40.**Fifth: Burnett Dairy Cooperative, Wilson, Wisconsin, Triple Pepper Gold'N Jack No. 1, 98.25.***Open Class: Pepper Flavored Cheeses, High Heat**

Class 51

*Best of Class: Team SWC, Southwest Cheese LLC, Clovis, New Mexico, Habanero Cheddar, 98.35.**Second: Team SWC, Southwest Cheese LLC, Clovis, New Mexico, Habanero Cheddar, 98.15.**Third: Team SWC, Southwest Cheese LLC, Clovis, New Mexico, Habanero Cheddar, 98.10.**Fourth: Team SWC, Southwest Cheese LLC, Clovis, New Mexico, Habanero Cheddar, 98.05.***SÜDMO • HAFFMANS • BEVERAGE FILTRATION SOLUTIONS****FROM INGREDIENTS TO THE FINISHED PRODUCT****PROCESS TECHNOLOGIES BACKED BY EXPERIENCE**

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U.S. CHAMPIONSHIP**CHEESE CONTEST****OPEN***Continued from page 36*

Fifth: Jim Grant, Cabot Creamery Cooperative, Cabot, Vermont, *Vermont Habanero Cheddar*, 97.95.

Open Class: Soft Cheeses

Class 52

Best of Class: Fresh Cheese Team, Vermont Creamery, Websterville, Vermont, *Crème Fraîche Madagascar Vanilla*, 99.75.

Second: Nampa Mascarpone Team, Lactalis American Group, Nampa, Idaho, *Galbani Mascarpone*, 99.70.

Third: Alouette Cheese USA, New Holland, Pennsylvania, *Alouette Creme Fraîche*, 99.40.

Fourth: Narragansett Creamery, Providence, Rhode Island, *Fresh Burrata*, 99.25.

Fourth: Fresh Cheese Team, Vermont Creamery, Websterville, Vermont, *Mascarpone*, 99.25.

Fifth: Mascarpone Team 3 - Lake Country Dairy, Schuman Cheese, Fairfield, New Jersey, *Cello Rich and Creamery Mascarpone*, 99.15.

Open Class: Semi-soft Cheeses

Class 53

Best of Class: John (Randy) Pitman, Mill Creek Cheese, Arena, Wisconsin, *Farmer*, 99.60.

Second: Marieke Gouda Team, Marieke Gouda, Thorp, Wisconsin, *Marieke Golden*, 99.50.

Third: Marieke Gouda Team, Marieke Gouda, Thorp, Wisconsin, *Marieke Golden*, 99.40.

Fourth: Marieke Gouda Team, Marieke Gouda, Thorp, Wisconsin, *Marieke Golden*, 99.25.

Fifth: Saxon Creamery Team, Saxon Cheese LLC, Cleveland, Wisconsin, *Aged Butterkase 28-month* 99.20.

Open Class: Hard Cheeses

Class 54

Best of Class: Sequatchie Cove Creamery, Sequatchie, Tennessee, *Cumberland batch 323*, 99.25.

Second: Saxon Creamery Team, Saxon Cheese LLC, Cleveland, Wisconsin, *Alpine Style 22 months*, 99.15.

Third: Saxon Creamery Team, Saxon Cheese LLC, Cleveland, Wisconsin, *Al-*

pine Style 12 months, 99.00.

Fourth: Rumiano Cheese, Willows, California, *Dry Monterey Jack*, 98.95.

Fourth: Saxon Creamery Team, Saxon Cheese LLC, Cleveland, Wisconsin, *Alpine Style 24 months*, 98.95.

Fifth: Saxon Creamery Team, Saxon Cheese LLC, Cleveland, Wisconsin, *Alpine Style 14 months*, 98.90.

Open Class: Flavored Soft Cheeses

Class 55

Best of Class: Bryan Springborn, BelGioioso Cheese Inc., Green Bay, WI, *BelGioioso Burrata with Black Truffles*, 99.55.

Second: Lactalis American Group, Belmont, Wisconsin, *3-kilogram Brie with Herbs*, 99.25.

Third: Louis Vazquez, BelGioioso Cheese Inc., Green Bay, Wisconsin, *Zesty Marinated Hand Braided Fresh Mozzarella*, 99.20.

Fourth: Jean Manuel Renard, Old Europe Cheese Inc., Benton Harbor, Michigan, *3-kilogram Brie with Herbs*, 99.15.

Fifth: Anthony Mongiello, Formaggio Italian Cheese Specialities, Hurleyville, New York, *Fresh Mozzarella & Grilled Vegetables*, 99.05.

Open Class: Flavored Semi-soft Cheeses

Class 56

Best of Class: Lake Country Dairy Team, Arthur Schuman Inc., Fairfield, New Jersey, *Yellow Door Creamery Harissa Rubbed Fontal Cheese*, 99.05.

Second: Marieke Gouda Team, Marieke Gouda, Thorp, Wisconsin, *Marieke Gouda Honey Clover*, 98.80.

Third: John (Randy) Pitman, Mill Creek Cheese, Arena, Wisconsin, *Caraway Brick*, 98.75.

Turn to FLAVORED, page 38 ⇔

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U.S. CHAMPIONSHIP

CHEESE CONTEST

FLAVORED

Continued from page 37

Fourth: Amber Pitman, Mill Creek Cheese, Arena, Wisconsin, *Caraway Brick*, 98.50.

Fifth: Lake Country Dairy Team, Arthur Schuman Inc., Fairfield, New Jersey, *Yellow Door Creamery Tuscan Rubbed Fontal Cheese*, 99.45.

Open Class: Flavored Hard Cheeses

Class 57

Best of Class: Mike Matucheski, Sartori Co., Antigo, Wisconsin, *Sartori Reserve Black Pepper BellaVitano*, 99.45.

Second: Mike Matucheski, Sartori Co., Antigo, Wisconsin, *Sartori Reserve Citrus Ginger BellaVitano*, 99.40.

Third: Mike Matucheski, Sartori Co., Antigo, Wisconsin, *Sartori Reserve Herbs de Provence BellaVitano*, 99.35.

Fourth: Mike Matucheski, Sartori Co., Antigo, Wisconsin, *Sartori Reserve Chipotle BellaVitano*, 99.30.

Fifth: Glanbia Nutritionals, Blackfoot, Idaho, *Black Pepper Cheddar*, 99.25.

Open Class: Flavored Cheeses with Sweet Condiments

Class 58

Best of Class: Penn Cheese, Winfield, Pennsylvania, *Vache: Smooth and creamy yet somewhat curd defined with cranberry, orange flavoring*, 99.05.

Second: Team Hennings on behalf of Saputo, Saputo Specialty Cheese, Richfield, Wisconsin, *Blueberry Cobbler Cheddar*, 98.85.

Third: Mike Matucheski, Sartori Co., Antigo, Wisconsin, *Sartori Reserve Rum*

Runner BellaVitano, 98.55.

Fourth: Bampa Dalibor, Glanbia Nutritionals, Twin Falls, Idaho, *Pecans Monterey Jack*, 98.20.

Fifth: Grant Kohler, Heber Valley Artisan Cheese LLC, Midway, Utah, *Lavender Honey Cheddar*, 98.00.

Fifth: Maple Leaf Cheesemaking Team, Maple Leaf Cheesemakers Inc., Monroe, Wisconsin, *Maple Harvest Cheddar*, 98.00.

Open Class: Smoked Soft and Semi-soft (Semi-hard) Cheeses

Class 59

Best of Class: Zimmerman Cheese Team 2, Zimmerman Cheese, South Wayne, Wisconsin, *Smoked Brick*, 99.00.

Second: Team Lake Norden, Agropur, Lake Norden, South Dakota, *Smoked low-moisture, whole-milk Mozzarella*, 98.90.

Third: Zimmerman Cheese Team 1, Zimmerman Cheese, South Wayne, Wisconsin, *Smoked Brick*, 98.55.

Fourth: Zimmerman Cheese AM Team, Zimmerman Cheese, South Wayne, Wisconsin, *Smoked Brick*, 98.35.

Fifth: Burnett Dairy Team, Burnett Dairy, Grantsburg, Wisconsin, *Smoked String Cheese*, 98.30.

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Turn to REDUCED, page 39 ⇨

Best of Class: John (Randy) Pitman, Mill Creek Cheese, Arena, Wisconsin, *Reduced Fat Muenster*, 99.65.

Second: John (Randy) Pitman, Mill Creek Cheese, Arena, Wisconsin, *Reduced Fat Brick*, 99.45.

U.S. CHAMPIONSHIP**CHEESE CONTEST****REDUCED***Continued from page 38*

Third: Terry Lensmire, Agropur, Luxemburg, Wisconsin, *Reduced Sodium Provolone*, 99.40.

Fourth: Team Clayton D, Foremost Farms USA, Clayton, Wisconsin, *Reduced Fat Provolone*, 99.20.

Fourth: Lactalis American Group, Belmont, Wisconsin, *Reduced-Fat Feta 6-ounce*, 99.20.

Fifth: Steve Webster, Klondike Cheese Co., Monroe, Wisconsin, *Odyssey Reduced Fat Mediterranean Feta*, 99.15.

Reduced Fat Hard Cheeses

Class 62

Best of Class: Terry Chase, Cabot Creamery Cooperative, Cabot, Vermont, *Vermont 50-percent Reduced Fat Jalapeno Cheddar*; 99.60.

Second: Maple Leaf Cheesemaking Team, Maple Leaf Cheesemakers Inc., Monroe, Wisconsin, *Gouda*, 99.55.

Third: Troy Morfin, Glanbia Nutritionals, Twin Falls, Idaho, *Reduced Fat Cheddar*, 99.30.

Fourth: James Nickell, Glanbia Nutritionals, Twin Falls, Idaho, *Reduced Fat Cheddar*, 99.05.

Fifth: Nicola Mulcahy, Glanbia Nutritionals, Twin Falls, Idaho, *Reduced Fat Cheddar*, 99.00.

Lowfat Cheeses

Class 63

Best of Class: Steve Webster, Klondike Cheese Co., Monroe, Wisconsin, *Odyssey Fat Free Feta in Brine*, 99.60.

Second: Ricotta Team, Lactalis American Group, Buffalo, New York, *Low Fat Whey Based Ricotta*, 99.20.

Third: Lactalis American Group, Belmont, Wisconsin, *Fat-Free Feta 6-ounce*, 99.05.

Fourth: Maple Leaf Cheesemaking Team 1, Maple Leaf Cheesemakers Inc., Monroe, Wisconsin, *Light Cheddar*, 99.00.

Fifth: Maple Leaf Cheesemaking Team 2, Maple Leaf Cheesemakers Inc., Monroe, Wisconsin, *Light Cheddar*, 98.80.

Reduced Sodium Cheeses

Class 64

Best of Class: Connor Bowman, Rothenbuhler Cheesemakers, Middlefield, Ohio, *Reduced Sodium Swiss*, 99.75.

Second: Ryan Shaheen, Rothenbuhler Cheesemakers, Middlefield, Ohio, *Reduced Sodium Swiss*, 99.50.

Third: Terry Lensmire, Agropur, Luxemburg, Wisconsin, *Reduced Sodium Provolone*, 99.40.

Fourth: Terry Lensmire, Agropur, Luxemburg, Wisconsin, *Reduced Sodium Provolone*, 99.30.

Fifth: Pearl Valley Cheese, Fresno, Ohio, *Lacey Swiss*, 99.25.

Cold Pack Cheese, Cheese Food

Class 65

Best of Class: Widmer's Cheese Cellars, Theresa, Wisconsin, *Traditional*

Washed Rind Aged Brick Spread, 99.45.

Second: Team Pine River, Pine River Pre-Pack, Newton, Wisconsin, *Chunky Bleu Cold Pack Cheese Food*, 99.40.

Third: Team Pine River, Pine River Pre-Pack, Newton, Wisconsin, *Smokey Bacon Cold Pack Cheese Food*, 99.30.

Fourth: Team Pine River, Pine River Pre-Pack, Newton, Wisconsin, *Swiss and Almond Cold Pack Cheese Food*, 99.00.

Fifth: Team Pine River, Pine River Pre-Pack, Newton, Wisconsin, *Horseradish Flavor Cold Pack Cheese Food*, 98.75.

Cold Pack Cheese Spreads

Class 66

Best of Class: Carr Valley Cheese Makers, Carr Valley Cheese Co. Inc., LaValle, Wisconsin, *Swiss Almond Cold Pack Spread*, 99.10.

Second: Lon Riedel, Lactalis U.S.A., Inc., Merrill, Wisconsin, *Black Diamond Extra Sharp Cheddar Spreadable Cheese* 1/20/17, 98.85.

Third: Saxon Creamery Team, Saxon Cheese LLC, Cleveland, Wisconsin, *Gouda Cold Pack Cheese Spread*, 98.65.

Fourth: Carr Valley Cheese Makers, Carr Valley Cheese Co. Inc., LaValle, Wisconsin, *Chunky Blue Cold Pack Spread*, 98.60.

Fifth: Sugar Brook, Family Fresh Pack, Monticello, Wisconsin, *Vintage Cheddar Spread-Aged Wisconsin White Cheddar Spread*, 98.45.

Turn to SPREADS, page 40 ⇨**ECOLAB®****QUALITY & PRODUCTIVITY OPTIMIZATION**
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U.S. CHAMPIONSHIP**CHEESE CONTEST****SPREADS***Continued from page 39***Spreadable Natural Cheeses**

Class 67

Best of Class: Schreiber Foods, Green Bay, Wisconsin, *Whipped Plain Cream Cheese Spread*, 99.25.

Second: Schreiber Foods, Green Bay, Wisconsin, *Plain Cream Cheese Spread*, 99.20.

Third: California Dairies, Inc., Visalia, California, *Real Cream Cheese*, 98.75.

Fourth: Alouette Cheese USA, New Holland, Pennsylvania, *Smithfield Whipped Cream Cheese*, 98.55.

Fifth: Tom Stubbs, Lactalis USA Inc., Merrill, Wisconsin, *Président Pub Sharp Cheddar Spreadable Cheese*, 98.35.

Fifth: Schreiber Foods, Green Bay, Wisconsin, *Plain Cream Cheese Bar*, 98.35.

Flavored Spreadable Natural Cheeses

Class 68

Best of Class: Lyle Gast Jr., Lactalis USA Inc., Merrill, Wisconsin, *Président*

Pub Cheddar Horseradish Spreadable Cheese lot 1/17/17, 99.50.

Second: Schreiber Foods, Green Bay, Wisconsin, *Strawberry Cream Cheese Spread*, 99.45.

Third: Shawn Schult, Lactalis USA Inc., Merrill, Wisconsin, *Rondelé Organic Garden Vegetable Gourmet Spreadable Cheese*, 99.35.

Fourth: Alouette Cheese USA, New Holland, Pennsylvania, *Alouette Garlic & Herbs Spreadable Cheese*, 99.15.

Fourth: Alouette Cheese USA, New Holland, Pennsylvania, *Alouette Chipotle Cheddar Spreadable Cheese*, 99.15.

Fourth: Dave Zielazowski, Lactalis USA Inc., Merrill, Wisconsin, *Rondelé Garlic & Herbs Gourmet Spreadable Cheese*, 99.15.

Fifth: Courtney Schreiner, Lactalis

USA Inc., Merrill, Wisconsin, *Président Pub Cheddar & Bacon Spreadable Cheese* lot 1/10/17, 99.05.

Pasteurized Process Cheeses

Class 69

Best of Class: Loaf Day Shift, Bongards Premium Cheese, Bongards, Minnesota, *American Deli Loaf*, 99.45.

Second: Process Loaf Team, AMPI, Portage, Wisconsin, *Colored American Pasteurized Process Cheese Loaf*, 99.25.

Third: Process Loaf Team, AMPI, Portage, Wisconsin, *White American Pasteurized Process Easy Melt Cheese Loaf*, 99.05.

Fourth: Matthew Eggebrecht, Welcome Dairy LLC, Colby, Wisconsin, *rbGH Free White American*, 98.95.

Fifth: Aaron Allen, Welcome Dairy LLC, Colby, Wisconsin, *RF/RSAmerican*, 98.85.

Flavored Pasteurized Process Cheeses

Class 70

Best of Class: Old Croc Cheese, Trugman-Nash & Gilman Cheese Corp., Millburn, New Jersey, *Horseradish Pasteurized Process Cheddar made with Old Croc*, 98.90.

Second: Old Croc Cheese, Trugman-Nash & Gilman Cheese Corp., Millburn, New Jersey, *Bacon & Jalapeño Pasteurized Process Cheddar made with Old Croc*, 98.40.

Third: Old Croc Cheese, Trugman-Nash & Gilman Cheese Corp., Millburn, New Jersey, *Roasted Garlic & Herb Pasteurized Process Cheddar made with Old Croc*, 98.30.

Fourth: Ladd Williams, Williams Cheese Co., Linwood, Michigan, *Smoked Hot Pepper Cheese*, 98.25.

Fifth: Justin Kersey, Biery Cheese Co., Louisville, Ohio, *Hickory Smoked Pasteurized Process Cheddar Cheese Food*, 98.15.

Fifth: Ladd Williams, Williams Cheese Co., Linwood, Michigan, *Smoked Cheddar Cheese*, 98.15.

Pasteurized Process Cheese Slices

Class 71

Best of Class: Process Slice Team, AMPI, Portage, Wisconsin, *American Pasteurized Process Cheese Slices*, 97.65.

Second: Land O'Lakes, Spencer, Wisconsin, *White American/Swiss Slice*, 97.50.

Turn to PROCESS, page 41 ⇨

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U.S. CHAMPIONSHIP**CHEESE CONTEST****PROCESS***Continued from page 40*

Third: Slice B Shift, Bongards Premium Cheese, Bongards, Minnesota, *Processed American with Peppers Slice on Slice*, 96.35.

Fourth: Land O'Lakes, Spencer, Wisconsin, *Yellow American Slice*, 96.25.

Fifth: Slice A Shift, Bongards Premium Cheese, Bongards, Minnesota, *Processed American Slice on Slice*, 96.15.

Pasteurized Process Cheese Spread

Class 72

Best of Class: Alouette Cheese USA, New Holland, Pennsylvania, *Alouette Original Creme de Brie*, 99.45.

Second: Dairyfood USA Team, Dairyfood USA Inc., Blue Mounds, Wisconsin, *Naturally Smoked Gouda Spread lot 120717*, 99.05.

Third: Team Whitehall, Whitehall Specialties, Whitehall, Wisconsin, *White Cheddar Ranch*, 98.90.

Fourth: Land O'Lakes, Spencer, Wisconsin, *Queso Bravo White Cheese Dip with Jalapeno & Red Peppers*, 98.35.

Fifth: Alouette Cheese USA, New Holland, Pennsylvania, *Alouette Garlic & Herbs Creme de Brie*, 98.00.

Soft Goat's Milk Cheeses

Class 73

Best of Class: Cypress Grove, Arcata, California, *Fresh cream with a citrus finish*, 99.30.

Second: Cypress Grove, Arcata, California, *Fresh cream with a citrus finish*, 99.25.

Third: Manon Servouse, Laura Chenel's, Sonoma, California, *Laura Chenel's Chef Chevre 7-ounce*, 99.20.

Fourth: Peter Messmer, Lively Run Dairy, Interlaken, New York, *Lively Run Chèvre*, 99.05.

Fifth: Fresh Cheese Team, Vermont Creamery, Websterville, Vermont, *Fresh Goat Cheese*, 99.00.

Flavored Soft Goat's Milk Cheeses

Class 74

Best of Class: Team Montchevre, Montchevre-Betin Inc., Belmont, Wisconsin, *4-ounce Truffle*, 99.20.

Second: Team Montchevre, Montchevre-Betin Inc., Belmont, Wisconsin, *8-ounce Pepper*, 99.15.

Third: Cypress Grove, Arcata, California, *A blend of peppers and spices*

including chili threads, 98.90.

Fourth: Manon Servouse, Laura Chenel's, Sonoma, California, *Laura Chenel's Spicy Cabecou*, 98.85.

Fourth: Team Montchevre, Montchevre-Betin Inc., Belmont, Wisconsin, *4-ounce Four Pepper*, 98.85.

Fifth: Team Montchevre, Montchevre-Betin Inc., Belmont, Wisconsin, *4-ounce Jalapeno*, 98.80.

Flavored Soft Goat's Milk Cheeses with Sweet Condiments

Class 75

Best of Class: Team Montchevre, Montchevre-Betin Inc., Belmont, Wisconsin, *4-ounce Blueberry Vanilla*, 99.50.

Second: Team Mackenzie, Mackenzie Creamery, Hiram, Ohio, *Apricot Ginger Chevre*, 99.30.

Third: Team Mackenzie, Mackenzie Creamery, Hiram, Ohio, *Cognac Fig Chevre*, 99.10.

Fourth: Team Idyll, Idyll Farms, Northport, Michigan, *Idyll Pastures with Honey and Lavender fresh goat cheese*, 99.00.

Fifth: Team Mackenzie, Mackenzie Creamery, Hiram, Ohio, *Sour Cherry Bourbon Chevre*, 98.95.

Surface (Mold) Ripened Goat's Milk Cheeses

Class 76

Best of Class: Cypress Grove, Arcata, California, *Fresh goat cheese with a bloomy rind and distinct layer of edible black ash*, 99.85.

Second: Cypress Grove, Arcata, California, *Italian black summer truffles in soft ripened goat cheese*, 99.80.

Third: Jackie Chang, Haystack Mountain Goat Dairy, Longmont, Colorado,

Turn to GOAT, page 42 ▶

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U.S. CHAMPIONSHIP**CHEESE CONTEST****GOAT***Continued from page 41*

Pasteurized goat's milk Camembert 8-ounce disk, 99.75.

Fourth: Cypress Grove, Arcata, California, Fresh goat cheese with a bloomy rind and layer of edible ash, 99.70.

Fourth: Aged Cheese Team, Vermont Creamery, Websterville, Vermont, *Creamont*, 99.70.

Fifth: Cypress Grove, Arcata, California, Edible ash and a rind surrounding a triangular shaped goat cheese, 99.65.

Fifth: Team Idyll, Idyll Farms, Northport, Michigan, *Mount Idyll*, 99.65.

Semi-soft Goat's Milk Cheeses

Class 77

Best of Class: Team Montchevre, Montchevre-Betin Inc., Belmont, Wisconsin, 2-pound *Crumble Plain Bag*, 99.20.

Fifth: Carr Valley Cheese Makers, Carr Valley Cheese Co. Inc., LaValle, Wisconsin, *Cardona*, 99.15.

Fifth: Team Montchevre, Montchevre-Betin Inc., Belmont, Wisconsin, *Feta*, 99.15.

Third: Katie Fuhrmann and Team, LaClare Farms, LaClare Farms Specialties LLC, Malone, Wisconsin, *Goat Milk Feta*, 99.45.

Third: Trent Hendricks, Cabriejo LLC, Koshkonong, Missouri, *Queso Cabriejo*, 99.25.

Fourth: John Windemuller, Country Winds Creamery, Zeeland, Michigan,

Aged Goat Milk Gouda, 99.20.

Fourth: Team Montchevre, Montchevre-Betin Inc., Belmont, Wisconsin, 2-pound *Crumble Plain Bag*, 99.20.

Fifth: Carr Valley Cheese Makers, Carr Valley Cheese Co. Inc., LaValle, Wisconsin, *Cardona*, 99.15.

Fifth: Team Montchevre, Montchevre-Betin Inc., Belmont, Wisconsin, *Feta*, 99.15.

Flavored Semi-soft Goat's Milk Cheeses

Class 78

Best of Class: Team Montchevre, Montchevre-Betin Inc., Belmont, Wisconsin, 4-ounce *Crumble Apricot & Sage*, 99.55.

Second: Carr Valley Cheese Makers, Carr Valley Cheese Co. Inc., LaValle, Wisconsin, *Cocoa Cardona*, 99.45.

Third: Team Montchevre, Montchevre-Betin Inc., Belmont, Wisconsin, 4-ounce *Crumble Candied Cranberry*, 99.25.

Fourth: Carr Valley Cheese Makers, Carr Valley Cheese Co. Inc., LaValle, Wisconsin, *Smoked Billy Blue*, 99.00.

Fourth: Carr Valley Cheese Makers, Carr Valley Cheese Co. Inc., LaValle, Wisconsin, *Sweet Vanilla Cardona*, 99.00.

Fifth: Team Idyll, Idyll Farms, Northport, Michigan, *Temptation*, 98.90.

Hard Goat's Milk Cheeses

Class 79

Best of Class: Team Montchevre, Montchevre-Betin Inc., Belmont, Wisconsin, *Trivium*, 99.45.

Second: Carr Valley Cheese Makers, Carr Valley Cheese Co. Inc., LaValle, Wisconsin, *CaveAged Cardona*, 99.40.

Third: Katie Fuhrmann and Team, LaClare Farms, LaClare Farms Specialties LLC, Malone, Wisconsin, *Grevalon*, wash rind aged goat milk, 99.35.

Fourth: Erika McKenzie-Chapter, Pennyroyal Farm, Boonville, California, *Natural rind, raw milk Tomme*, 99.10.

Fifth: Trent Hendricks, Cabriejo LLC, Koshkonong, Missouri, *Organic Goat Cheddar*, 99.05.

Fifth: Jackie Chang, Haystack Mountain Goat Dairy, Longmont, Colorado, *Gold Hill pasteurized goat's milk aged over 60 days*, 99.05.

Soft & Semi-Soft Sheep's Milk Cheeses

Class 80

Best of Class: Landmark Creamery Team, Landmark Creamery, Albany, Wisconsin, *Petit Nuage*, 99.75.

Second: Ryan Randell & Peter Baldino, Old Chatham Shepherding Co., Old Chatham, New York, *Mini Kinderhook Creek*, 99.60.

Third: Ryan Randell & Peter Baldino, Old Chatham Shepherding Co., Old Chatham, New York, *Kinderhook Creek*, 99.40.

Fourth: Brenda Jensen, Hidden Springs Creamery, Westby, Wisconsin, *Driftless Natural*, 99.05.

Fifth: Carr Valley Cheese Makers, Carr Valley Cheese Co. Inc., LaValle, Wisconsin, *Marisa*, 98.50.

Fifth: Meadowood Farms, Cazenovia, New York, *Lorenzo*, 98.50.



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Turn to SHEEP, page 43 ⇔

U.S. CHAMPIONSHIP**CHEESE CONTEST****SHEEP***Continued from page 42***Flavored Soft & Semi-Soft Sheep's Milk Cheeses**

Class 81

Best of Class: Murray's Cheese & Old Chatham Sheepherding Co., Murray's Cheese, Long Island City, New York, *Hudson Flower*, 98.40.

Second: Eric Anderson & Gregory Bankes, Old Chatham Sheepherding Co., Old Chatham, New York, *Shaker Blue*, 98.35.

Third: Brenda Jensen, Hidden Springs Creamery, Westby, Wisconsin, *Driftless - Cranberry Cinnamon*, 98.15.

Fourth: Brenda Jensen, Hidden Springs Creamery, Westby, Wisconsin, *Driftless - Honey/Lavender*, 98.10.

Fifth: Brenda Jensen, Hidden Springs Creamery, Westby, Wisconsin, *Driftless - Maple*, 97.85.

Surface (Mold) Ripened Sheep's Milk Cheeses

Class 82

*No entries in this class.***Hard Sheep's Milk Cheeses**

Class 83

Best of Class: GVC Cheesemakers, Grafton Village Cheese, Brattleboro, Vermont, *Bear Hill*, 99.70.

Second: Brenda Jensen, Hidden Springs Creamery, Westby, Wisconsin, *Ocooch Reserve*, 99.65.

Third: Cedar Grove Team, Cedar Grove Cheese, Plain, Wisconsin, *Donatello*, 99.60.

Fourth: Brenda Jensen, Hidden Springs Creamery, Westby, Wisconsin, *Ocooch Grande*, 99.30.

Fifth: Carr Valley Cheese Makers, Carr Valley Cheese Co., Inc., La Valle, Wisconsin, *Aged Marisa*, 99.00.

Soft & Semi-Soft Mixed Milk Cheeses

Class 84

Best of Class: Liam Callahan, Bellwether Farms, Petaluma, California, *Blackstone-A Bellwether Farms Original*, 99.35.

Second: Carr Valley Cheese Makers, Carr Valley Cheese Co., Inc., La Valle,

Wisconsin, *Mobay*, 99.05.

Third: Anthony Ellis, BelGioioso Cheese Inc., Green Bay, Wisconsin, *BelGioioso Crumbly Gorgonzola with Sheep's Milk*, 98.85.

Fourth: Lorraine Lambiase, Lumazu LLC dba Nettle Meadow, Warrensburg, New York, *Habanero Peach Fromage Frais*, 98.80.

Fifth: Al Bekkum, Nordic Creamery, Westby, Wisconsin, *Capriko*.

Surface (Mold) Ripened Mixed Milk Cheeses

Class 85

Best of Class: Sheila Flanagan, Lumazu LLC dba Nettle Meadow, Warrensburg, New York, *Briar Summit*, 98.90.

Second: Sheila Flanagan, Lumazu LLC dba Nettle Meadow, Warrensburg, New York, *Sappy Eve*, 98.70.

Third: Ryan Randell & Peter Baldino, Old Chatham Sheepherding Co., Old Chatham, New York, *Hudson Valley Camembert*, 98.45.

Fourth: Katie Fuhrmann and Team LaClare, LaClare Farms, Malone, Wisconsin, *Martone*, 98.20.

Fifth: Sheila Flanagan, Lumazu LLC dba Nettle Meadow, Warrensburg, New York, *Three Sisters*, 98.10.

Hard Mixed Milk Cheeses

Class 86

Best of Class: Mike Matucheski, Sartori Co., Antigo, Wisconsin, *Sartori Tre Donnes*, 99.80.

Second: Mike Matucheski, Sartori Co., Antigo, Wisconsin, *Sartori Limited Edition Pastorale Blend*, 99.60.

Third: Central Coast Creamery, Paso

Robles, California, *Seascape*, 99.50.

Fourth: Brenda Jensen, Hidden Springs Creamery, Westby, Wisconsin,

Turn to MIXED, page 44 ▶

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MIXED

Continued from page 43

Meadow Melody, 99.45.

Fourth: Mike Matucheski, Sartori Co., Antigo, Wisconsin, *Sartori Tre Donnes (Basket Weave)*, 99.45.

Fifth: Brenda Jensen, Hidden Springs Creamery, Westby, Wisconsin, *Meadow Melody Grande Reserve*, 98.95.

Open Class: all other milk cheeses

Class 87

No entries in this class.

Butter

Class 88

Best of Class: Team 1, O-AT-KA Milk Products Co-op Inc., Batavia, New York, *Salted Butter*, 99.80.

Second: Team 2, O-AT-KA Milk Products Co-op Inc., Batavia, New York, *Salted Butter*, 99.50.

Third: Team Chaseburg, CROPP Cooperative/Organic Valley, La Farge, Wisconsin, *Organic Salted Butter*, 99.40.

Fourth: California Dairies Inc., Visalia, California, *European Style Salted Super Premium Butter*, 99.30.

Fourth: Team Graf, Graf Creamery, Bonduel, Wisconsin, *Salted Butter*, 99.30.

Fifth: Grassland Dairy Products, Greenwood, Wisconsin, *Salted Butter*, 99.25.

Unsalted Butter

Class 89

Best of Class: Al Bekkum, Nordic Creamery, Westby, Wisconsin, *Cultured Butter*, 98.85.

Second: West Point Dairy Products, West Point, Nebraska, *European-Style unsalted butter*, 98.65.

Third: Grassland Dairy Products, Greenwood, Wisconsin, *Unsalted Butter*, 98.45.

Fourth: California Dairies Inc., Visalia, California, *European Style Unsalted Super Premium Butter*, 98.40.

Fifth: Len Dion, Cabot Creamery Cooperative, West Springfield, Massachusetts, *Unsalted Creamery Butter Solids*, 98.30.

Flavored Butter

Class 90

Best of Class: Al Bekkum, Nordic Creamery, Westby, Wisconsin, *Cinnamon/Sugar Butter*, 98.85.

Second: Al Bekkum, Nordic Creamery, Westby, Wisconsin, *Garlic and Basil Butter*, 98.65.

Third: Butter Team, Vermont Creamery, Websterville, Vermont, *Cultured Butter with Sea Salt & Maple*, 98.45.

Fourth: Michigan Milk Producers Association, Ovid, Michigan, *80-percent Unsalted with Natural Flavor*, 98.40.

Fifth: Pine River Dairy, Manitowoc, Wisconsin, *European Style Butter*, 98.25.

Lowfat Cow's Milk Yogurt

Class 91

No entries in this class.

Lowfat Cow's Milk Yogurt, Flavored

Class 92

Best of Class: West Seneca Culture Division, Upstate Niagara Cooperative, Buffalo, New York, *Lowfat Blended Yogurt - Vanilla Maple*, 98.20.

Second: West Seneca Culture Division, Upstate Niagara Cooperative, Buffalo, New York, *Blended Lowfat Yogurt - Coffee*, 97.10.

Third: Dave Rapson, Country View Dairy, Hawkeye, Iowa, *Vanilla Cream-Top Farmstead Yogurt*, 96.70.

Fourth: North Country Dairy, Upstate Niagara Cooperative, Buffalo, New York, *Lowfat Blended Yogurt - Strawberry*, 96.15.

Fifth: North Country Dairy, Upstate

Turn to YOGURT, page 45 ⇔

U.S. CHAMPIONSHIP**CHEESE CONTEST****YOGURT***Continued from page 44*

Niagara Cooperative, Inc., Buffalo, New York, *Lowfat Blended Yogurt - Key Lime*, 96.00.

Yogurt - Cow's Milk

Class 93

Best of Class: Team Schreiber, CROPP Cooperative/Organic Valley, La Farge, Wisconsin, *Organic Plain Grassmilk Yogurt*, 96.60.

Second: Narragansett Creamery, Providence, Rhode Island, *Whole Milk Plain Yogurt*, 96.45.

Third: Smith, Pure Eire Dairy, Othello, Washington, *Organic Irish Homestead Plain Whole Milk Yogurt*, 94.65.

Fourth: North Country Dairy, Upstate Niagara Cooperative, Inc., Buffalo, New York, *Organic Whole Milk Yogurt - Blended*, 94.35.

Fifth: Team Saint Benoit, Saint Benoit Creamery, Petaluma, California, *Organic Original Jersey Cow's Milk Yogurt*, 94.30.

Fifth: West Seneca Cultured Division, Upstate Niagara Cooperative, Inc., Buffalo, New York, *Whole Milk Cupset Yogurt*, 94.30.

Yogurt - Cow's Milk, Flavored

Class 94

Best of Class: Smith, Pure Eire Dairy, Othello, Washington, *Organic Irish Homestead Strawberry Whole Milk Yogurt*, 96.75.

Second: North Country Dairy, Upstate Niagara Cooperative Inc., Buffalo, New York, *Organic Whole Milk Yogurt - Vanilla*, 96.35.

Third: Smith, Pure Eire Dairy, Othello, Washington, *Organic Irish Homestead Vanilla Bean Whole Milk Yogurt*, 95.75.

Fourth: Team Saint Benoit, Saint Benoit Creamery, Petaluma, California, *Organic French Vanilla Whole Jersey Cow's Milk Yogurt*, 95.60.

Fifth: Team Saint Benoit, Saint Benoit Creamery, Petaluma, California, *Organic Strawberry Whole Jersey Cow's Milk Yogurt*, 94.75.

High Protein Cow's Milk Yogurt

Class 95

Best of Class: Westby Cooperative Creamery, Westby, Wisconsin, *Smari Icelandic Yogurt Plain*, 99.20.

Second: Adam Buholzer, Klondike

Cheese Co., Monroe, Wisconsin, *Odyssey Greek Yogurt 10-percent*, 99.15.

Third: Peter Marschall, Cabot Creamery Cooperative, Cabot, Vermont, *Vermont Greek Yogurt 10-percent*, 99.10.

Fourth: Adam Buholzer, Klondike Cheese Co., Monroe, Wisconsin, *Odyssey Greek Yogurt 2-percent*, 99.05.

Fifth: West Seneca Cultured Division, Upstate Niagara Cooperative, Inc., Buffalo, New York, *Nonfat Greek Yogurt*, 98.95.

High Protein Cow's Milk Yogurt, Flavored

Class 96

Best of Class: Ron Buholzer, Klondike Cheese Co., Monroe, Wisconsin, *Odyssey Greek Yogurt Vanilla*, 99.85.

Second: Adam Buholzer, Klondike Cheese Co., Monroe, Wisconsin, *Odyssey Greek Yogurt Pomegranate Acai*, 99.70.

Third: Adam Buholzer, Klondike Cheese Co., Monroe, Wisconsin, *Odyssey Greek Yogurt Raspberry*, 99.55.

Fourth: Westby Cooperative Creamery, Westby, Wisconsin, *Smari Icelandic Yogurt Vanilla*, 99.50.

Fifth: Dave O'Dell, Cabot Creamery Cooperative, Cabot, Vermont, *Vermont Strawberry Greek Yogurt*, 99.15.

Fifth: Dennis Allaire, Cabot Creamery Cooperative, Cabot, Vermont, *Vermont Coconut Greek Yogurt*, 99.15.

Class 97

Yogurt, All Other Milks*Best of Class:* George Roehrig and Team LaClare, LaClare Farms, Malone, Wisconsin, *LaClare Farms Goat Milk Yogurt - Vanilla*, 99.80.

Second: George Roehrig and Team LaClare, LaClare Farms, Malone, Wisconsin, *LaClare Farms Goat Milk Yogurt - Original*, 99.55.

Third: George Roehrig and Team LaClare, LaClare Farms, Malone, Wisconsin, *LaClare Farms Goat Milk Yogurt - Blueberry*, 99.50.

Turn to MILKS, page 46 ⇨**Asset Solutions Experts****Billions of Dollars of Asset Valuations**

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MILKS*Continued from page 45*

Fourth: George Roehrig and Team LaClare, LaClare Farms Specialties LLC, Malone, Wisconsin, *Goat Milk Yogurt - Strawberry*, 99.45.

Fourth: Laura DiStefano, Old Chatham Sheepherding Co., Old Chatham, New York, *Sheep's Milk Yogurt - Ginger*, 99.45.

Fifth: Laura DiStefano, Old Chatham Sheepherding Co., Old Chatham, New York, *Sheep's Milk Yogurt - Mission Fig*, 99.30.

Class 99

Open Class Shredded Cheese, Flavored & Unflavored

Best of Class: Team Schuman, Schuman Cheese, Fairfield, New Jersey, *Cello Shredded Parmesan*, 98.35.

Second: JCC-Team 4, Agropur, Jerome, Idaho, *Sharp Cheddar Feather Cut Shred*, 98.30.

Third: Team Appleton, Foremost Farms USA, Appleton, Wisconsin, *Shredded Low-Moisture, Whole-Milk Mozzarella*, 98.25.

Fourth: South Side Plymouth, Great Lakes Cheese, Plymouth, Wisconsin, *2-pound White Medium Shredded Cheese*, 98.20.

Fifth: Dan Reed, Chula Vista Cheese Co./V&V Supremo Foods, Browntown, Wisconsin, *Chihuahua Cheese*, 97.95.

Class 98

Drinkable Cultured Products - All Flavors/All Milks**Open Class Shredded Cheese Blends, Flavored & Unflavored**

Class 100

Best of Class: Ludwig Dairy, Inc., Dixon, Illinois, *Kefir - Plain, reduced fat milk*, 99.90.

Second: Ludwig Dairy, Inc., Dixon, Illinois, *Kefir - Strawberry, reduced fat milk*, 99.80.

Third: Marquez Brothers International Inc., Hanford, California, *Pina Colada Drinkable*, 99.75.

Fourth: Alex Quiles, Tropical Cheese Industries Inc., Perth Amboy, New Jersey, *Guava Mango drinkable*, 99.40.

Fifth: Alex Quiles, Tropical Cheese Industries Inc., Perth Amboy, New Jersey, *Mango drinkable*, 99.35.

Fifth: Alex Quiles, Tropical Cheese Industries Inc., Perth Amboy, New Jersey, *Passion Fruit drinkable*, 99.35.

Best of Class: Masters Gallery Foods Inc., Plymouth, Wisconsin, *Gourmet Cheddar Blend*, 99.60.

Second: Masters Gallery Foods Inc., Plymouth, Wisconsin, *Cheddar, Gruyere & Asiago Blend*, 99.25.

Third: Tillamook County Creamery, Tillamook, Oregon, *Farmstyle Cheddar Jack Shreds*, 98.60.

Fourth: Tillamook County Creamery, Tillamook, Oregon, *Farmstyle Mexican 4 Cheese Shreds*, 97.50.

Fifth: Shred Team, AMPI, Portage, Wisconsin, *Cheddar Jack Cheese Feather Shred*, 97.40.

Prepared Cheese Foods

Class 101

Best of Class: Carr Valley Cheese Makers, Carr Valley Cheese Co. Inc., LaValle, Wisconsin, *Garlic Bread Cheese*, 99.65.

Second: Team Pasture Pride, Pasture Pride Cheese, Cashton, Wisconsin, *Juustoleipa*, 99.55.

Third: Anthony Mongiello, Formaggio Italian Cheese Specialities, Hurleyville, New York, *Betta Brie*, 99.50.

Fourth: Team Brunkow, Brunkow Cheese, Darlington, Wisconsin, *Brunnuusto Baked Cheese Original*, 99.40.

Fifth: Anthony Mongiello, Formaggio Italian Cheese Specialities, Hurleyville, New York, *Pre-sliced Sopresatta roll*, 99.35.

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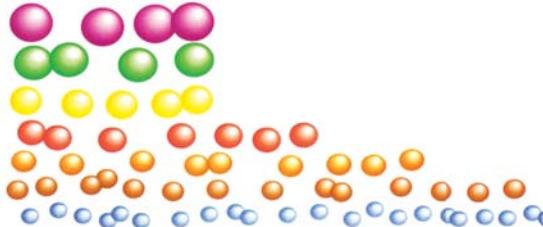
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U.S. CHAMPIONSHIP**CHEESE CONTEST****CHEESE***Continued from page 46***Natural Snack Cheese****Class 102**

Best of Class: Crave Brothers Team, Crave Brothers Farmstead Cheese LLC, Waterloo, Wisconsin, *Jalapeno Cheddar Cheese Curds*, 99.45.

Second: Jose Marin, BelGioioso Cheese Inc., Green Bay, Wisconsin, *BelGioioso Fresh Mozzarella Snacking Cheese*, 99.00.

Third: Cut & Wrap Team, Cabot Creamery Cooperative, Cabot, Vermont, *Vermont Sharp*, 98.85.

Fourth: Bel Brands USA, Brookings, South Dakota, *Light Mini Babybel*, 98.80.

Fourth: Crave Brothers Team, Crave Brothers Farmstead Cheese LLC, Waterloo, Wisconsin, *White Cheddar Cheese Curds*, 98.80.

Fourth: Fresh Mozz Team, Lactalis American Group, Nampa, Idaho, *Galbani Mozzarella Fresca Fresh Mozzarella Snack*, 98.80.

Fifth: Team Arthur Schuman, Schuman Cheese, Fairfield, New Jersey, *Cello Whisps - Parmesan*, 98.75.



Photo by Mike Roemer

**Natural Sliced Cheeses****Class 103**

Best of Class: Slice Samurai, Great Lakes Cheese, Plymouth, Wisconsin, *8-ounce Havarti Shingle Slices*, 98.60.

Second: Team Wapsie, Wapsie Valley Creamery, Independence, Iowa, *Sliced Colby Jack*, Vat 2 from 1-16-17, 98.10.

Third: Cut & Wrap Team, Cabot Creamery Cooperative, Cabot, Vermont, *Cabot Sharp Sliced Cheddar*, 98.05.

Fourth: Masters Gallery Foods Inc., Plymouth, Wisconsin, *Colby Jack Slices*, 97.70.

Fifth: Masters Gallery Foods Inc., Plymouth, Wisconsin, *Red Rind Muenster Slices*, 97.45.

Cheese Based Spreads**Class 104**

Best of Class: Anthony Mongiello, Formaggio Italian Cheese Specialties, Hurleyville, New York, *2-Cheese Stuffed Mozzarella*, 98.70.

Second: Rising Sun Farms, Phoenix, Oregon, *Pesto Dried Tomato Cheese Torta*, 98.35.

Third: Martha Davis Kipcak, Mighty Fine Food, Milwaukee, *Martha's Pimento Cheese Mild*, 98.20.

Fourth: Ciolo Foods, Lafayette, Colorado, *Truffled Ricotta Dip*, 98.10.

Fifth: Anthony Mongiello, Formaggio Italian Cheese Specialties, Hurleyville, New York, *Italian Meat Stuffed Mozzarella*, 97.95.

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NEWS/BUSINESS

GDT Quarterly update shows 55 percent increase in price index

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — In its recently-released "Quarterly" update for March, Global Dairy Trade (GDT) notes that the GDT price index has increased 55 percent over the past 12 months.

For the first quarter of 2017, the average GDT price index is lower, the first quarterly drop since the first quarter of 2016, GDT says. However, the final trading event of the first quarter of 2017 on March 21 ended with a 1.7-percent price index increase.

In June 2016, GDT began grouping cream products to allocate supply to the strongest demand within the constraints of total available milkfat quantities and supply ranges for each

product. The Cream Group was applied to Fonterra's anhydrous milkfat (AMF) and butter products.

GDT says that AMF and butter prices have shown a tighter relationship since the introduction of the Cream Group. The goal of the grouping was to smooth demand fluctuations across AMF and butter, thereby reducing short-term price volatility, GDT says. Since the grouping, the correlation between AMF and butter price changes has been 90 percent; prior to the grouping, it was 60 percent. This indicates significant "demand smoothing," GDT says.

AMF and butter also showed the most significant annual gains in aver-

age price for the first quarter of 2017 versus the first quarter of 2016, GDT says, noting increases of 94 percent and 78 percent, respectively.

Meanwhile, unique bidder participation in the first quarter of 2017 was 1.5 percent lower than in the last quarter of 2016, GDT says. While bidder participation varied from event to event, quarterly participation was stable.

Consistent with previous quarters, skim milk powder and whole milk powder attracted the highest number of participating bidders, with 119 and 129, respectively, in the first quarter of 2017, GDT says.

For more information, visit www.globaldairytrade.info. CMN

Bega Cheese to acquire several Mondelez brands

MELBOURNE, Australia — Mondelez International Inc. recently reached an agreement to sell most of its grocery business in Australia and New Zealand to Bega Cheese Ltd. for A\$460 million (US\$352 million).

Included in the sale are Mondelez International owned brands — Including Vegemite, Zoosh and Bonox — and other products that use the Kraft brand under license, such as processed cheese slices, cheese spread, Parmesan cheese, Kraft Easy Mac and Kraft Mac & Cheese, mayonnaise, peanut butter and nut spreads. Bega will receive a license to use the Dairylea brand in Australia and New Zealand. The Philadelphia business is not included in the deal as it is a Mondelez International power brand.

Mondelez says the move enables it to further focus its portfolio and drive profitable growth by investing in its core snacks categories and power brands, such as Philadelphia cream cheese, Cadbury Dairy Milk chocolate and Oreo cookies.

"As we continue to execute our strategic growth plan, with a keen focus on core snacks categories and global power brand, we're excited to see Vegemite and these much-loved brands continue to grow and thrive under Bega's ownership," says Amanda Banfield, vice president Australia, New Zealand and Japan, Mondelez International.

Bega will acquire a manufacturing site in Port Melbourne, Australia, as part of the agreement, and approximately 200 employees will be offered roles on comparable terms with Bega. The transaction is expected to close in the coming months. CMN

Mead Johnson to acquire spray drying capabilities from Bega Cheese

GLENVIEW, Ill. — Mead Johnson Nutrition Co. (MJN) recently announced it has reached an agreement to acquire spray drying and finishing capabilities in Australia from Bega Cheese Ltd., one of Australia's leading dairy product companies. The deal builds on a longtime relationship between the two companies, as Bega has been a certified ingredient supplier for MJN products since 2009.

"We believe that supply chain flexibility is important in the pediatric nutrition category," says Kasper Jakobsen, president and CEO, MJN. "This acquisition further strengthens our ability to protect and expand our growth in China by creating both additional capacity and the ability to adapt to a changing regulatory environment."

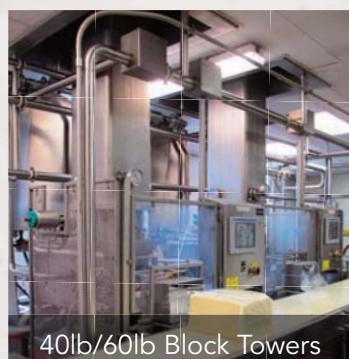
The transaction is expected to close in the second quarter of this year. CMN



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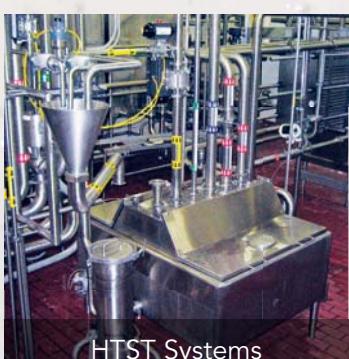
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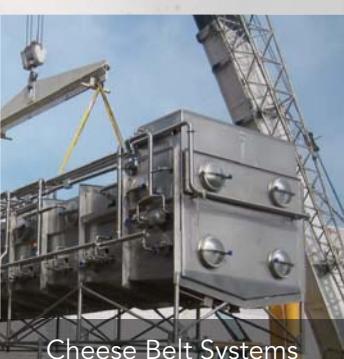
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2017 WISCONSIN MASTER CHEESEMAKERS



Wisconsin companies find value in Master Cheesemaker program, Master's Mark logo

By Rena Archwamety

MADISON, Wis. — Wisconsin, the largest cheese producing state in the country, also boasts the nation's only Master Cheesemaker program — an advanced education program for experienced cheesemakers modeled after advanced cheesemaker training programs in Europe. Administered by the Center for Dairy Research (CDR) and funded by the Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board (WMMB), the Master Cheesemaker program is open only to Wisconsin cheesemakers with 10 or more years of experience. The rigorous three-year course of study and practical apprenticeship provides scientific and technical expertise in specific cheeses that these veteran cheesemakers can add to their arsenal of experience.

Completion of the Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker program and participation in subsequent annual product grading allows the participants' companies to use the Master's Mark seal on their products, assuring customers that the cheese has been made by or under the supervision of a Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker.

"The Master's Mark is intended to be a really distinctive mark, a mark of top quality," says Suzanne Fanning, vice president of national product communications, WMMB. "Once certified as a Master, you can go ahead and use the Master's Mark only for products you are certified for. There's a strict trademark agreement you need to sign — both the company and the individual master. Then they take part in an annual sampling program in order to continue to use it."

A number of Wisconsin companies use the Master's Mark on their cheeses — including this year's U.S. Champion Cheese, Sartori Reserve Black Pepper BellaVitano, made by Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker Mike Matucheski, Antigo, Wisconsin.

"So many companies do a lot with the Master's Mark and use the Master's Mark as a cornerstone of their marketing," Fanning says. "Sartori puts it on all their BellaVitano and SarVecchio and promote it quite a bit as part of their whole program. Klondike, with all their masters, it's important to them to put on their product and use as something they promote for retail products and also for foodservice products."

Klondike Cheese Co., Monroe, Wisconsin, has four Master Cheesemakers and two currently completing the program. The company has Master certification in all of the cheeses it makes — Feta, Brick, Muenster and Havarti.

Luke Buholzer, vice president of sales, Klondike Cheese Co., says he believes the Master Cheesemaker program and the quality it conveys has helped with the company's marketing and sales.

"It definitely lends a lot of credit when we can explain the program to a cheese buyer — explain all the things involved

in it," Buholzer says. "It adds more than just a sales pitch — it's saying what good quality our cheese is."

As a company and as a family — four members of the Buholzer family have completed the Masters program — Klondike Cheese really believes in the program and encourages anyone in the company who wants to pursue it.

"We tout it pretty heavily," Buholzer adds. "We talk up its benefits on both sides — for what it gives our cheesemakers, and how those cheesemakers can apply that knowledge to making better cheese."

BelGioioso Cheese Inc., Green Bay, Wisconsin, actively markets the fact that as of this spring's graduation it has six certified Wisconsin Master Cheesemakers — more than any other cheese company — and two more of its cheesemakers recently were accepted into the program.

"We are the only Wisconsin cheese company with six Master Cheesemakers," says Jamie Wichlacz, marketing public relations manager, BelGioioso Cheese Inc. "We think that's pretty special, and are proud to have so many dedicated to their craft. They are educating themselves and in turn making our cheeses and our production methods even better."

BelGioioso's first Master Cheesemaker was Gianni Toffolon, vice president of production, who graduated in the class of 2005 with certification in Fontina and Parmesan. Originally trained in Italy, Toffolon already was skilled in the Italian cheesemaking traditions, but he was interested in learning more about the science behind cheesemaking.

"My take on cheesemaking, and in life itself, is there is never an end to learning. Any time there is an opportunity to learn, you take it," Toffolon says.

"There was an enormity of passionate, knowledgeable professors that know that (scientific) side. It opens your mind to more possibilities in cheesemaking, and now I understand the how and why behind the process."

Toffolon notes that the Master Cheesemaker training both helped him improve the quality and troubleshoot any problems in the cheese he currently made, as well as helped him make decisions when it came to developing new products.

Toffolon now acts as a mentor to others looking to receive their Master Cheesemaker license, and he has written letters of recommendation for all those at BelGioioso who have gone through the program.

"I said, 'you're here, you're intelligent, go for it,' and all who go through it have said the same thing. They said 'thank you, we feel we are much better now, more informed and more productive,'" he says. "I think it's a wonderful opportunity in Wisconsin, an advantage for Wisconsin to have such a program."

Fanning says WMMB and CDR have been seeing growing interest in the Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker program, and the graduating classes have been pretty large the last several years.

"Some people are put on a waitlist, so many who want to start have to come back the next year," she says. "It's interesting seeing some of the Masters mentor through the next generation, coming along as new Masters." CMN

Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker program announces its graduating class for 2017

MADISON, Wis. — The Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker program, now in its 23rd year, has announced seven graduating Master Cheesemakers this year, including six new Masters and one returning Master.

New graduates this year include two from BelGioioso Cheese Inc., Green Bay, Wisconsin: Josh Krause, with certifications in Parmesan and Romano, and Steve Bierhals with a certification in Parmesan (Grana). New Master Cheesemakers graduating this year with certifications in Colby and Monterey Jack include Scott Barker of Cedar Grove Cheese, Plain, Wisconsin, and Ryan LaGrandeur of LaGrandeur's Hillside Dairy, Stanley, Wisconsin. New graduate Tom Dahmen of Chula Vista Cheese/V&V Supremo, Browntown, Wisconsin, earned certifications in Oaxaca and Queso Quesadilla, while Rob Richter of Great Lakes

Cheese, Seymour, Wisconsin, is newly graduated with certifications in Blue and Gorgonzola. Tom Torkelson of Nasonville Dairy, Marshfield, Wisconsin, is a returning Master Cheesemaker graduating with certifications in Gouda and Cheddar to add to his existing certifications in Brick and Muenster.

The Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker program was established in 1994 with the goal of providing an advanced education program for experienced cheesemakers through joint sponsorship with the Wisconsin Center for Dairy Research (CDR), University of Wisconsin Extension and the Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board (WMMB). The program is the only one of its kind in the United States and is open to Wisconsin licensed cheesemakers with 10 or more years of experience.

Turn to MASTERS, page 50

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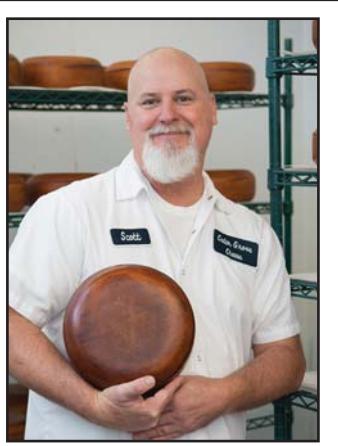
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2017 WISCONSIN MASTER CHEESEMAKERS



MASTERS

Continued from page 49



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Scott Barker

Cedar Grove Cheese
Certified in Colby,
Monterey Jack

Nearly 20 years ago, Scott Barker accepted an entry-level position in the dairy industry, and within a year, he was working in cheesemaking operations. A few years later, he was part of a team that won several medals at the World Championship Cheese Contest. Today,

Barker works as a cheesemaker and quality and production manager at Cedar Grove Cheese and is honored to join the ranks of the Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker program where he has earned certification in Colby and Monterey Jack.

"Becoming a Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker has been one of my goals since the beginning," Barker says. "Never have I been more proud to accomplish a goal."



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Steve Bierhals

BelGioioso Cheese Inc.
Certified in Parmesan (Grana)

Growing up in Pulaski, Wisconsin, Steve Bierhals always knew he wanted to work in the dairy industry. By the time he was 20, he was working at the local cheese plant and exploring the many facets of making cheese.

"I've always loved the challenges presented by cheesemaking," says Bierhals, now a cheesemaker and plant manager at BelGioioso Cheese.

Bierhals has accomplished one of those challenges by completing the Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker program and earning his Masters in Parmesan (Grana). For Bierhals, specializing in this cheese is very meaningful as the make procedure was taught to him by his mentor at BelGioioso, Gianni Toffolon, who is also a Master Cheesemaker.

"Cheesemaking is just one of those things," Bierhals says. "It becomes a part of you, it grows on you, and for me it keeps me focused on being the best that I can be."



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Tom Dahmen

Chula Vista/V&V Supremo
Certified in Oaxaca,
Queso Quesadilla

As a young child, Tom Dahmen grew up above a dairy cooperative and spent a great deal of time working in the cheese plant with his dad who

Turn to DAHMEN, page 51 ⇔

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2017 WISCONSIN MASTER CHEESEMAKERS

DAHMEN

Continued from page 50

inspired him to become a cheesemaker. Although Dahmen always felt his heart was in cheesemaking, he decided to explore other options like business management while in college. Eventually he gravitated back to the cheese plant.

"Maybe it's true what they say that cheesemaking is in the blood," says Dahmen, now a cheesemaker and plant manager at Chula Vista/V&V Supremo. "People told me I would be back and they were right."

In an effort to honor his father's scientific approach to cheesemaking and their time together, Dahmen decided to continue his education through the

Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker program, and this year, he is celebrating his first certification in Oaxaca and Queso Quesadilla.



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Applications now being accepted for Wisconsin Master Cheesemakers

MADISON, Wis.—The Wisconsin Center for Dairy Research (CDR) is accepting applications for the Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker Program.

The Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker Program was established in 1994 by CDR and the Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board (WMMB) as an advanced education program for experienced cheesemakers.

In order to be accepted into the program, a cheesemaker must currently be making cheese in a Wisconsin plant, have held a Wisconsin cheesemaker's license for a minimum of 10 years and have participated in the CDR Cheese Technology Short Course and another CDR course before applying to the program. Each candidate also must participate in the program's quality assurance component of plant and product inspection.

The purpose of the program is to provide a formal sequence of courses that will equip each cheesemaker with the knowledge and skills needed to be competitive in the marketplace both nationally and internationally. The program, the only one of its kind in the United States, offers experienced cheesemakers who pass the extensive courses and training the opportunity to earn the Master's designation, which includes the use of the WMMB-developed Master's Mark on their products. A cheesemaker can choose to be certified as a Master in up to two cheeses at a time and is required to have made those cheese varieties for at least five years prior to beginning the program.

An application for the Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker class of 2020 is available on the CDR website at <https://www cdr wisc edu mastercheesemaker programapplication>.

Applications for both new and returning Masters will be accepted through May 15, 2017. For more information visit the CDR webpage or contact Marianne Smukowski at msmuk@cdr.wisc.edu. CMN



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Josh Krause

*BelGioioso Cheese Inc.
Certified in Parmesan,
Romano*

A fourth-generation cheesemaker, Josh Krause developed a passion for the art of cheesemaking as a boy working with his father in the factory on weekends. As a freshman in college, he started working at BelGioioso, which refueled the fire he had for cheesemaking. Nearly two decades later, Krause still is enamored with the art and carrying on his family tradition. Though his family made Cheddar, he always loved Italian-style cheeses, learning to make Parmesan and Romano cheese at BelGioioso. He now has completed his Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker certification in both cheeses.

"Cheesemaking really holds a special place in my heart," he says. "I fell in love with it as a kid and now I just can't see myself doing anything else."

Turn to CHEESEMAKERS, page 52 ⇨

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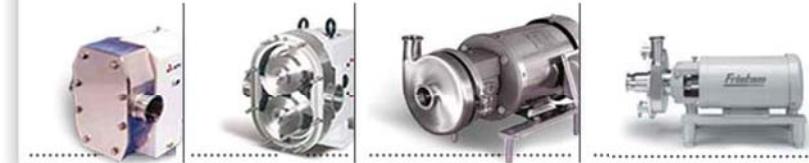
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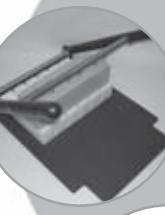


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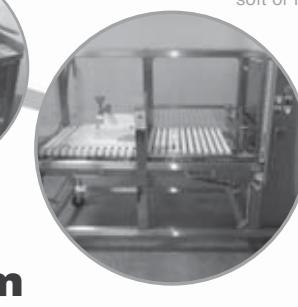


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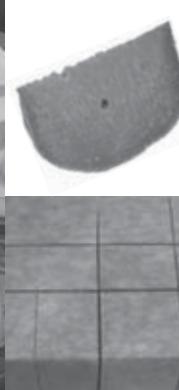
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2017 WISCONSIN MASTER CHEESEMAKERS



CHEESEMAKERS

Continued from page 51



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Ryan LaGrander

*LaGrander's Hilside Dairy
Certified in Colby,
Monterey Jack*

Ryan LaGrander always felt at home near the vat. Having grown up above a cheese plant and working alongside his grandpa and dad at their plant, LaGrander learned to dress hoops, clean the plant and make cheese. Over the years, his passion for cheese continued to grow.

"Cheesemaking is all I've really ever known," LaGrander says. "It's a unique lifestyle. In fact, it's really not just a job;

it's a way of life."

LaGrander is proud to continue the family tradition of making quality cheese, especially American-style cheeses, which is why he chose to earn his Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker certification in Colby and Monterey Jack.

"I feel that becoming a Master Cheesemaker is another step toward continuing to meet and exceed our customers' expectations," he says.

two staples at Great Lakes Cheese.

"The challenges in making Blue and Gorgonzola are what ignites the passion," Richter says. "Even after more than 16 years of making cheese, I still have questions and am still learning every day."



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Rob Richter

*Great Lakes Cheese
Certified in Blue,
Gorgonzola*

The first cheesemaker in his family, Rob Richter entered the dairy industry quite by chance. A fortuitous bike ride in 1999 introduced him to Errico Auricchio of BelGioioso Cheese and his first job in the dairy industry. Through hands-on experience and classes at CDR, Richter became an experienced cheesemaker. Today, nearly 20 years later, he is a Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker at Great Lakes Cheese, having earned a certificate in both Blue and Gorgonzola,

Tom Torkelson

*Nasonville Dairy
Certified in Gouda, Cheddar,
Brick, Munster*

Growing up on a dairy farm, Tom Torkelson found his passion for cheesemaking at an early age. A 2008 graduate of the Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker program with certifications in Brick and Muenster, he graduates this year for a second time with certifications in Gouda and Cheddar. Driven by research, development and innovation, Torkelson found a good fit in the Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker program.

"To me, this isn't just a job," says Torkelson, who currently works at Nasonville Dairy as a cheesemaker and innovator. "Even when I'm on vacation I find myself in the local grocery store looking at cheese varieties." CMN

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Vandersterre Groep acquires Grozette

BODEGRAVEN, Netherlands — The Vandersterre Groep Bedrijven, a privately-owned cheese company headquartered in Bodegraven, Netherlands, recently announced its intention to take a majority interest as well as incumbent management of another Dutch cheese company, Grozette of Woerden, Netherlands.

The Vandersterre Groep is focused primarily on selling cheese to market traders, cheese shops, retailers, out-of-home customers and wholesalers. It also exports cheese to more than 70 countries. Since 2012, Vandersterre also has been co-shareholder in Kaamps Cheese BV, which produces a wide range of high-end specialty cheese products in Deurningen, Netherlands.

Grozette produces cheese products for sprinkling, such as grated cheese, cheese shavings, cheese cubes and dried cheese powder. The company will continue to carry out its activities independently under the daily supervision of current management. CMN

NEWS/BUSINESS

GAO, senators urge addressing of fragmentation in federal food safety oversight system

WASHINGTON — The Government Accountability Office (GAO) in a recent report recommends that the appropriate entities within the Executive Office of the President (EOP), in consultation with stakeholders, develop a national strategy to guide the federal food safety oversight system and address ongoing fragmentation.

The safety and quality of the U.S. food supply, both domestic and imported, are governed by a "highly complex system" stemming from at least 30 federal laws that are administered by 16 federal agencies, GAO notes. The agencies with primary responsibility for food safety oversight are FDA and USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS).

The federal food safety oversight system is supplemented by states, localities, tribes and territories, which may have their own laws and agencies to address food safety and quality. In all, more than 3,000 non-federal agencies perform the great majority of government food safety activities, the report says.

For more than four decades, GAO has reported on the fragmented federal food safety oversight system. For example, in the past, the GAO reported that FDA has primary responsibility for regulating frozen cheese pizza manufacturers, FSIS has primary responsibility for regulating makers of frozen pizzas with meat and multiple additional federal agencies play roles in regulating the components of either type of pizza. In its prior work, GAO also has identified options for reducing fragmentation and overlap in food safety oversight, including alternative organizational structures.

These options include establishing a single food safety agency, a food safety inspection agency, a data collection and risk analysis center, and a coordination mechanism led by a central chair.

At a two-day meeting GAO hosted last June, 19 food safety and government performance experts agreed that there is a compelling need to develop a national strategy to provide a framework for strengthening the federal food safety oversight system and addressing fragmentation. Experts identified and described the following five key elements that should be included in a national strategy for food safety oversight:

- Purpose: The starting point for developing a national strategy includes defining the problem, developing a mission statement and identifying goals, GAO says.

- Leadership: The national strategy should establish sustained leadership to achieve progress in food safety oversight. The leadership should reside at the highest level of the administration and needs to have authority to implement the national strategy and be accountable for its progress.

- Resources: The national strategy should identify staffing and funding requirements and the sources of funding

for implementing the strategy.

- Monitoring: The national strategy should establish milestones that specify time frames, baselines and metrics to monitor progress.
- Actions: In addition to long-term actions, the national strategy should include short-term actions, such as improving training for food safety officials, to gain traction on improving the food safety systems. Actions should focus on preventing, rather than reacting to, outbreaks of foodborne illnesses, GAO says.

To view the report, visit <http://gao.gov/products/GAO-17-74>.

In response to the GAO report, four U.S. senators urged President Trump to

consider implementing the GAO's recommendations and "work with Congress to improve the efficiency, uniformity, integrity and responsiveness" of the food safety system.

U.S. Sens. Kirsten Gillibrand, D-N.Y., Richard Durbin, D-Ill., Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., and Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn., in a recent letter urge the Trump administration to review the food safety and inspection system and call on the administration to establish a national strategy to improve food safety inspection activities across agencies and create a governmentwide performance plan to measure efforts to ensure the U.S. food supply remains one of the safest in the world.

"This fragmented federal food safety system has raised concerns for decades. The GAO has long reported that the system is in need of transformation and has resulted in inconsistent oversight, ineffective coordination and inefficient use of resources," the senators write.

The GAO report "reinforces the urgent need to improve the food safety inspection system and opportunities to enact meaningful steps toward regulatory reform," they add. "We urge you to implement GAO's recommendations and work with Congress to improve the efficiency, uniformity, integrity and responsiveness of the food safety system to ensure Americans' continued confidence in the safety of their food." CMN



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NEWS/BUSINESS

With Vincent at helm, WMMB seeks to spotlight Wisconsin dairy, connect with consumers

By Alyssa Mitchell

MADISON, Wis. — America's Dairyland has much to be proud of when it comes to Wisconsin Cheese. Just this past month, the state received top honors in the biennial U.S. Championship Cheese Contest. Wisconsin cheesemakers took the top three champion spots, with the title of Grand Champion Cheese going to Reserve Black Pepper BellaVitano made by Sartori Co., Plymouth, Wisconsin.

With this latest recognition, Wisconsin has won top honors at the country's three major cheese competitions over the past year. Little Mountain from Roelli Cheese, Shullsburg, Wisconsin, earned Best of Show at the American Cheese Society Competition last July, and Grand Cru Surchoix made by Emmi Roth USA, Fitchburg, Wisconsin, won the 2016 World Championship Cheese Contest, marking the first time a U.S. cheese had taken the world title in almost 30 years.

"This winning streak is a testament to the tradition, innovation and commitment to excellence that Wisconsin dairy farmers and cheesemakers

exemplify," says Suzanne Fanning, vice president of national product communications for the Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board (WMMB). "It's further proof that Wisconsin not only makes the most cheese in the country, but the very best cheese as well. This starts with producing the finest milk and maintaining the highest standards from the farm to the aging caves and beyond."

WMMB is a non-profit organization funded entirely by Wisconsin's dairy farm families. The organization's goal is to increase the sale and consumption of Wisconsin milk and dairy products.

Its 25 dairy farmer board members are elected by their peers for three-year terms. WMMB's farmer-directors have direct involvement in planning and monitoring the organization's marketing and promotional programs that are conducted by a staff of marketing, research and communications professionals.

At the helm of the organization is new CEO Chad Vincent, formerly chief marketing officer at Sartori Co. He joins WMMB after longtime CEO James Robson announced his

resignation last spring.

Vincent is a seasoned executive with experience successfully taking startups, turnarounds, family-owned brands and Fortune 50 divisions to record levels of sales and profitability. He brings to WMMB extensive dairy marketing and branding experience from his seven years at Sartori as well as prior executive positions with H.J. Heinz, Miller Brewing Co., Fiskars Brands and other consumer products and beverage companies. He began his new position at WMMB in December.

"The board was really impressed with his experience, and we are excited to see how he will improve upon the fantastic work our team has been doing," says Connie Seefeldt, WMMB board chair who also sits on the board of Dairy Management Inc. (DMI), which manages the national dairy checkoff program.

Seefeldt says she believes Vincent will help WMMB enhance its already strong promotional work and help strengthen partnerships with processors, farmers, industry partners and consumers.

Since joining WMMB in December, Vincent says he has been working to understand the people, programs and audiences involved with the organization, including the staff, board, dairy farmers, cheese companies, other industry groups and consumers. He has met one on one with all 58 WMMB team members, and has reviewed all departments and programs to get a feel for where the organization is investing its time and resources and seeing the greatest return.

This has included time with board members on their farms to build relationships and learn what is most

important to farmers in their districts, he notes. He also has spent time with cheese and dairy companies to learn more from "the users of WMMB's services" on how well they think programs are working and where things may be improved.

One of the key tools WMMB provides Wisconsin cheesemakers is the Wisconsin Cheese logo. More than a logo, it is a symbol of quality, Vincent says.

"Perception testing shows when cheese is identified as 'Wisconsin cheese,' consumers rate it significantly higher than cheese from other states in the attributes of 'tastes good,' 'trustworthy,' 'wholesome,' 'quality' and 'authentic,'" he says. "Additional testing showed a 5.9-percent increase in sales with items that had the logo and the Wisconsin verbiage. That's why it's important to build the Wisconsin story and let all our cheese companies benefit from being part of that great story."

Vincent says one of his missions is to make sure Wisconsin cheese companies understand all the support WMMB offers so they are able to fully leverage it as a resource.

He also wants to engage with organizations like DMI, the Milk Processor Education Board, Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association and others to build tighter alliances and ensure farmer funds are being optimized.

"Close alignment with DMI and external groups can help ensure clear and consistent national communications and efficient use of funds," Vincent says. "I'm focused on improving integration and processes across all departments so that we

Turn to VINCENT, page 68 ⇡

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NEWS/BUSINESS

IDFA to postpone annual legislative fly-in

WASHINGTON — The International Dairy Foods Association (IDFA) says it has decided to postpone its annual legislative fly-in, known as Advocacy Days, which had been scheduled for June 13-14.

"Our members play an important role in advocating on Capitol Hill for policies that will enable their companies to prosper, grow and create jobs," says Dave Carlin, senior vice president for legislative affairs and economic policy, IDFA. "As the Trump administration's policy agenda continues to evolve, we realized that holding one legislative fly-in in mid-June wasn't the right ap-

proach this year."

IDFA is considering scheduling a few strategically timed fly-ins during the year to deploy the association's greatest policy asset — visits by IDFA members with members of Congress — when they are needed most, Carlin says.

"At key decision points in the legislative process, we think it makes more sense to invite members to town to advocate and educate on a specific policy priority, such as international trade, the 2018 Farm Bill or expanding milk options in schools," Carlin says. "In this rapidly evolving policy environment, one size does not fit all." CMN

MMPA recognizes Kroger Co. of Michigan, announces milk donation in Kroger's honor

LANSING, Mich. — Michigan Milk Producers Association (MMPA) recently honored The Kroger Co. of Michigan with the inaugural Valued Partner Award at MMPA's 101st annual state delegate meeting.

In conjunction with the award, MMPA announced the donation of 150 gallons of milk per day for one year — a total of 54,750 gallons — to recognize the 50th anniversary of Kroger's Michigan Dairy plant.

"MMPA is proud to honor the Kroger Co. of Michigan," says Ken Nobis, president, MMPA. "It is not just the supplier-customer relationship between MMPA and Kroger that is key, it is our shared values on joint initiatives that make us proud to work with Kroger. From youth development programs to dairy promotion to crisis response, Kroger has stood by our side for 50 years and counting."

MMPA dairy farms have supplied Kroger's Michigan Dairy plant in Livonia, Michigan, since it first opened in 1967, and the two organizations have sustained a partnership that extends into a variety of initiatives, MMPA says.

Annually, Kroger welcomes a group of youth on MMPA's 4-H Milk Marketing Tour to the Michigan Dairy plant to help the students learn more about the dairy supply chain. MMPA and Kroger also have partnered in dairy promotion programs through the "Pure Michigan" campaign and in-store promotions featuring MMPA farms.

Last year, MMPA and The Kroger Co. of Michigan partnered on a milk donation initiative to support Flint, Michigan, residents following the Flint water crisis.

"Throughout the Michigan Dairy's 50-year history, we are grateful for our relationship with MMPA and its dairy farmer members to produce high-quality products for our Kroger stores," says Regina Kopera, site leader of Kroger Michigan Dairy. "The Kroger Co. of Michigan is honored to be recognized for this award ... and proud to support the 150 gallon per day for one year milk donation."

At the 100th annual state delegate meeting last year, MMPA announced a donation of 100 gallons of milk per day for one year to the Food Bank Council of Michigan.

"The 100 gallon per day donation in recognition of MMPA's 100th anniversary was so successful and well received that our board of directors voted to repeat it this year and add 50 gallons per day donation in recognition of Michigan Dairy's 50th anniversary," Nobis says.

The milk donation of 54,750 gallons will be contributed to the Food Bank Council of Michigan and distributed to its regional food banks that serve all 83 Michigan counties. Processing and packaging of more than 18,000 gallons of the donation will be provided by the Michigan Dairy plant in Livonia.

Kroger is recognizing the Michigan Dairy's 50th anniversary this year with an event this August and in-store promotions on its dairy products. CMN

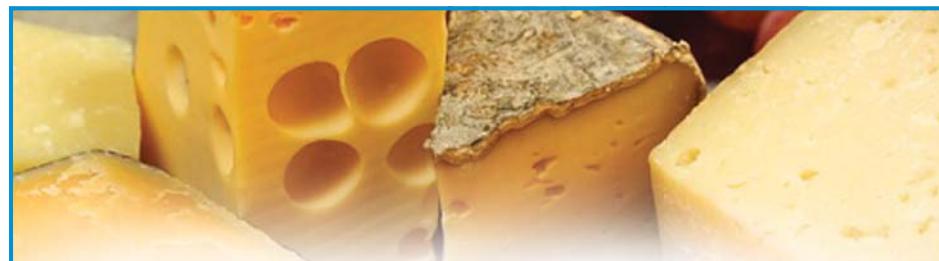
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Ag Inspirations founder Kim Brenner is featured in WMMB social media initiative

MADISON, Wis. — The Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board (WMMB) and Discover Wisconsin have teamed up to shine the spotlight on the state's dairy industry through a series of social media videos. The first video, which launched March 15 at facebook.com/discoverwisconsin, features Kim Bremmer, a Greenwood, Wisconsin, resident and the owner and founder of Ag Inspirations.

The mission of the "America's Dairyland" social media series is to highlight the faces that represent Wisconsin's dynamic dairy industry, WMMB says.

"This "America's Dairyland" series offers an opportunity to meet the people who call Wisconsin home and strive to educate, advocate and make the milk used for Wisconsin dairy and cheese," says Patrick Geoghegan, senior vice president of communications, WMMB. "Wisconsin is full of people who are passionate about the dairy industry, and those showcased in this series are just a few of the wonderful people connected to America's Dairyland."

Bremmer launched Ag Inspirations as a vehicle for farmers to share their

stories and to better connect people with where their food comes from. Bremmer, in addition to being the owner and founder of the company, is a self-described dairy enthusiast and science junkie. As both a speaker and blogger, Bremmer covers issues relevant to today's dairy farmers; topics range from GMOs to antibiotic use on farms.

"No two farms in Wisconsin are the same, and yet they are all so important," Bremmer says. "It's their diversity that is a major cornerstone of the dairy industry's success."

WMMB and Discover Wisconsin are set to release two more videos as part of the America's Dairyland social media series. A story about the Spierings — a young family in Wisconsin that faced adversities following the establishment of their farm in 2013 — debuts this month. In May, the series will premiere a story about Juan Quezada, who joined Milk Source in Kewaunee, Wisconsin, as a milker in the 1990s and climbed the ranks to director of safety, recruiting and training. CMN

NMPF offers FARM module on sustainability

ARLINGTON, Va. — The National Dairy Farmers Assuring Responsible Management (FARM) program, sponsored by the National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF), Dairy Management Inc. and the Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy, has opened participation in its third component, FARM Environmental Stewardship (ES).

The ES module joins the FARM program's two other pillars, FARM Animal Care and FARM Antibiotic Stewardship. The voluntary FARM ES program aims

to help dairy producers augment their environmental management efforts by identifying ways to improve their on-farm sustainability, according NMPF.

FARM ES provides a comprehensive estimate of the greenhouse gas emissions and energy use per pound of milk produced on dairy farms by asking producers a limited set of questions. The tool is based on a life-cycle assessment of fluid milk conducted by the Applied Sustainability Center at the University of Arkansas, incorporating existing data from more than 500 dairy farms across the nation, NMPF says.

By tracking advances in dairy production efficiency, farmers can use FARM ES to assure dairy customers and consumers of their commitment to ongoing environmental progress, NMPF says. Producers also can use the results to identify opportunities for changes that could increase their farm's sustainability and reduce their cost of production.

Dairy cooperatives and farmers wishing to use the ES module can opt in through the existing FARM program database, which allows FARM evaluators to see the assessment in the existing web and mobile applications.

FARM has created a random sampling protocol for the organizations that choose to use the ES module. This voluntary protocol allows FARM program milk handlers to randomly select farms for an assessment and provides instructions for how to document and promote the resulting improvements in their dairy supply chain.

The FARM program has released several documents, videos and trainings to educate those interested in participating in the FARM ES program, which can be found at nationaldairyfarm.com/environmental-stewardship. CMN

NEWS/BUSINESS

Hi-Tech Pharmaceuticals to reopen facility

NORCROSS, Ga. — Hi-Tech Pharmaceuticals Inc., based in Atlanta, has an agreement in principle with Kefam Inc. to purchase the former Dean Foods Fairmont Products facility in Belleville, Pennsylvania.

The Dean Foods facility, located at 15 SKishacoquillas St., Belleville, Pennsylvania, 17004, was a dairy processor that served the mid-Atlantic region and had annual revenues of around \$30 million, according to Hi-Tech Pharmaceuticals Inc. Fairmont marketed and distributed milk products, whey, cheese, cottage cheese, sour cream, soft-serve ice cream mixes and yogurt.

When the Texas-based Dean Foods Co. closed its Fairmont Products dairy processing plant in Belleville, Pennsylvania in fall 2008, it affected local dairy farmers who supplied milk to the plant, according to Hi-Tech Pharmaceuticals. Hi-Tech hopes its will be able to begin purchasing milk from local farmers and begin processing in the coming months, while also bolstering the company's presence in Pennsylvania where it has a pharmaceutical plant as well, the company says.

As part of the realignment, Hi-Tech plans on making a multi-million dollar investment to increase capacity and expand receiving at its Belleville plant through improvements in plant infrastructure, the company says. Improvements will include new milk silos, new cheese vats, a new vat room and upgraded whey receiving.

Glanbia Nutritionals and Nutrition 21 extend partnership

CARLSBAD, Calif. — Glanbia Nutritionals and Nutrition 21 LLC recently announced the extension of their long-time partnership to co-market Nutrition 21's ingredient Velositol. Glanbia's sales organization is the exclusive distributor of Velositol and will support Nutrition 21 in North America, offering Velositol to the dietary supplement and functional food industries.

Glanbia says a 2-gram dose of Velositol has been clinically shown to double muscle protein synthesis, which is a key to muscle growth and recovery. Velositol can be reformulated into a variety of supplement protein product applications, including powders, beverages, functional foods, weight gainers and lean mass gainers.

"Extending our strategic partnership with Nutrition 21 to co-market Velositol along with Nitrosigine bonded arginine silicate is a welcomed addition to Glanbia's portfolio of bioactives and proteins," says Ram Nimmagudda, senior director performance and wellness bioactives for Glanbia Nutritionals. "This will provide our sports nutrition customers with even greater opportunities to create innovative new protein products." CMN

In addition, the company expects to be able to handle milk trucks rolling into the five-stall receiving bays of the plant 24/7, delivering more than 1 million pounds of milk each day, according to the company.

Situated within Kishacoquillas Valley of Mifflin County in Pennsylvania, the plant will receive about 70 to 75 percent of its milk supply from within a 50-mile radius, Wheat says.

Once arriving at the plant, milk will be processed into a variety of cheeses, such as Parmesan, Romano and Mozzarella. The hard Italian-style cheeses will be cured and used for grated, fresh grated and shredded formats. The Mozzarella styles will be utilized for further manufacturing, handled in 500-pound barrels and marketed to any number of customers, the company says.

The whey protein leftover from the cheesemaking process will be further concentrated into liquid whey protein concentrates of 34-percent and 80-percent. Additionally, permeate that will be separated from the whey stream will be dried and used for food and animal feeds, with a fair amount of this material to be exported internationally, according to the company.

Through "avant-garde" technological processes and modern facilities, the company says it will process milk and whey into various value-added byproducts and dairy ingredients, which will be used in a multitude of food, industrial, nutraceutical and agricultural applications. The Belleville plant also will be a bottler of liquid nutraceuticals, ready-to-drink beverages and more, according to Hi-Tech.

For more information, visit hitechpharma.com. CMN

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Appel Farms begins producing cheese in new consolidated manufacturing plant

By Stephanie Awe

FERNDALE, Wash. — Appel Farms, a third-generation, family-owned dairy farm and cheese manufacturing business in Ferndale, Washington, recently began production in its new manufacturing plant.

The new facility completely replaced the company's prior plant, which had consisted of a series of buildings, according to Marlies Appel, office manager and daughter of John Appel, co-owner and head cheesemaker.

The company was founded by Jack Appel, father of John and his brother, Rich, who is head of the dairy farm side of the business, Marlies Appel says. Jack Appel, who emigrated from Holland and had a dream of becoming a dairy farmer, bought the farm in 1967.

Jack Appel had grown up in the city and learned from a Dutch farmer how to make cheese — skills he kept up as a hobby. However, it was not until after purchasing the Washington farm that the cheesemaking business started.

At the time, a German man had heard there was a Dutch cheesemaker nearby and visited Appel's Washington farm, asking him to make Quark, a German soft cheese. This request kicked off Appel's cheesemaking business, Marlies Appel says.

The company now produces various cheeses, including Quark, Gouda, Cheddar and Paneer, an East Indian-style cheese.

The new 12,800-square-foot manufacturing plant, built by Faber Construction, Lynden, Washington, has helped streamline cheesemaking production at the company. Before, the company had little room for growth and was "busting at the seams," Marlies Appel says. The new plant now provides about double the production and aging space.

The new plant incorporates improved ventilation and higher ceilings, as well as viewing windows that overlook the Cheddar and Gouda vat, where customers can see the cheesemaking process, Appel says.

Equipment from the company's previous buildings was brought into the facility, although new equipment may be added in coming years, she says.

Looking to the future, she says the company hopes to gradually grow production, but the priority is to first acclimate to the new plant and regain consistency.

"It really is just an incredibly humbling thing because (the new plant is) never something we thought we'd get to experience," she says. "We're so thankful." CMN

Land O'Lakes reports Q4, full-year earnings

ARDEN HILLS, Minn. — Land O'Lakes Inc. recently reported its fourth quarter and full-year 2016 financials, posting record earnings for the year ending Dec. 31.

The cooperative reported a record \$320 million in net earnings on \$13.2 billion in sales, and it returned a record \$187 million in cash to its member-owners. This compares to net earnings of \$304 million and cash to its member-owners of \$161 million in 2015.

"We are pleased with another record year, particularly under current conditions, and appreciate the dedication of our workforce and the support of our farmer owners," says Land O'Lakes Inc. President and CEO Chris Policinski.

For the fourth quarter ending Dec. 31, 2016, the company reported \$3.3 billion in sales, which were even with 2015, and \$73 million in net earnings, compared to a record \$116 million in the fourth quarter of 2015.

Coming off a record year in 2015, Land O'Lakes says, it also achieved record performance in 2016 with growth in each of its core businesses despite challenging market conditions.

Land O'Lakes' Dairy Foods segment reported 2016 net sales of \$3.8 billion compared to \$4.0 billion in 2015. Pretax earnings for Dairy Foods totaled \$70.1 million in 2016, down from \$83.1 million in 2015. The cooperative says it achieved record branded butter volume, record foodservice volume and strong earnings performance despite the impact of low commodity markets and record milk production in the East. CMN

NEWS/BUSINESS

Price disparity widens for California butter

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — During the August 2015-July 2016 period, the weighted average California butter price was 12.11 cents lower than the Chicago Mercantile Exchange (CME) butter price — more than double the difference during the same period a year earlier, according to data recently released by the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA).

During the 12-month period ended July 2015, California weighted average butter prices averaged 5.0 cents below CME prices.

The weighted average California butter prices represent the calendar monthly price per pound received by each plant and then weighted by sales volume. Data were collected and audited from seven California butter plants. The CME butter prices are the

simple average of the daily butter price per pound, released by the CME, using the 26th of the prior month through the 25th of the current month.

In the two years reported, California prices were lower than CME prices in 21 out of the 24 months. The biggest gap was in November 2015 when the California weighted average price was \$2.5420 and CME butter prices averaged \$2.8217 — a 27.97-cent difference, according to CDFA.

November 2014, December 2014 and January 2015 were the three months in which California prices were higher. The differences were 8.12 cents, 7.52 cents and 0.53 cents, respectively. CMN

Number of milk samples testing positive for drug residues increases

WASHINGTON — The number of milk samples testing positive for drug residues increased in fiscal year 2016, according to the National Milk Drug Residue Data Base Fiscal Year 2016 Annual Report recently released by FDA.

Out of 3.58 million samples in fiscal 2016 (Oct. 1, 2015-Sept. 30, 2016), 618 samples tested positive. By comparison, in fiscal 2015, 579 out of 3.62 million samples tested positive. However, the number of positives in fiscal 2016 is still less than 703 positives out of 3.68 million samples in fiscal 2014.

The Grade A Pasteurized Milk Ordinance (PMO) requires that all bulk milk tankers and/or all raw milk supplies that have not been transported in bulk milk tankers, regardless of final use, be sampled and analyzed for animal drug residues before the milk is processed. Any bulk milk tanker and/or raw milk supply that has not been transported in a bulk milk pickup tanker found positive is rejected for human consumption.

In fiscal 2016, 3.66 million tests were conducted on 3.58 million samples. The majority of the tests, 3.16 million were conducted on bulk milk pickup tankers, where 351 positives (0.011 percent) were found. Producer samples had the highest rate of positives (0.064 percent) with 261 positive samples out of 407,731 tests. There were no positive samples among the 38,563 tests of pasteurized fluid milk and milk products. Tests in the “other” category resulted in seven more positives.

The beta lactam drug category was the largest drug category tested. According to the report, 3.52 million tests resulted in 612 positive samples. During the fiscal year, six samples tested positive for sulfonamides and one sample tested positive for tetracyclines. CMN

South Africa prohibits select cheese names

PRETORIA, South Africa — South Africa's Trade Minister Rob Davies recently published a final prohibition on the use of certain words, including cheese names, under the Merchandise marks Act. The final notice applies to words in connection with any trade, business, profession or occupation, or in connection with a trademark, mark or trade description applied to goods, other than those used by the European Union or proprietors of prior identical or similar marks already in use.

In 2014, South Africa and six other African nations (Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia and Swaziland) concluded negotiations for an Economic

Partnership Agreement (EPA) with the European Union (EU). As result of provisions on geographical indications, many cheeses sold in the South African market could only originate in the EU, with the exception of some existing South African products negotiated under a grandfather provision. The EPA was signed in June 2016, and once ratified, it will replace South Africa's existing Trade, Development and Cooperation Agreement with the EU.

According to the final notice of prohibition issued in late 2016, 33 European cheese names will be protected, including Asiago, Fontina, Gorgonzola, Parmigiano Reggiano, Queso Manchego and Taleggio. CMN

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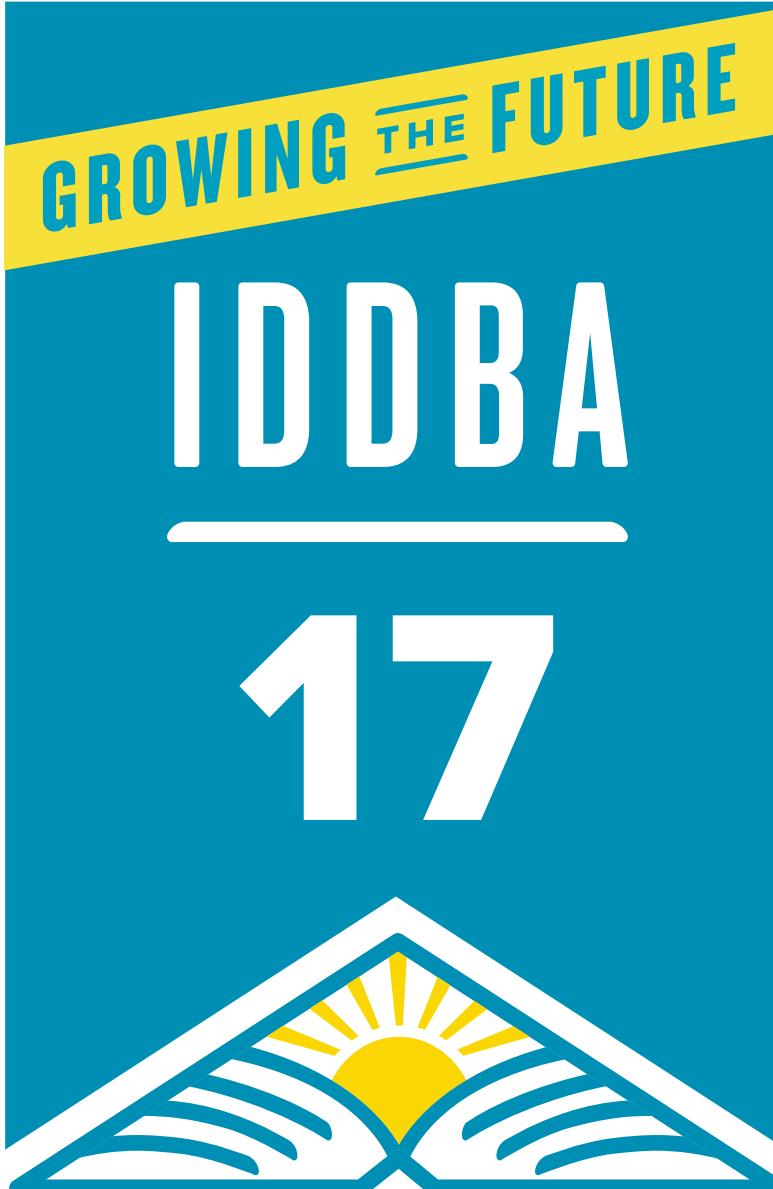
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NEWS/BUSINESS



Appeals court rules Ocheesee Creamery can label additive-free product as 'skim milk'

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. — Ocheesee Creamery, Grand Ridge, Florida, can legally use the words "skim milk" to describe its product, the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled last month.

The ruling overturns a decision by a federal judge who sided with the Florida Department of Agriculture, which said Ocheesee Creamery couldn't label its skim milk as "skim milk" because the

state defines the product as skim milk with vitamin A added.

The state instead said that if the company wanted to sell the product, it should label it as "imitation" skim milk.

Ocheesee Creamery is a small dairy creamery located on its owners' farm in rural Calhoun County, Florida. The creamery prides itself on selling only all-natural, additive-free products, and says it does not want to replace the lost vitamin A that is removed by the skimming process, noting vitamin A is fat-soluble and is thus removed with the cream.

Ocheesee Creamery sold its skim milk in Florida for almost three years, beginning in 2010, the appeals court notes. In October 2012, the state of Florida issued two stop sale orders with respect to the creamery's skim milk, stating the milk lacked vitamin A.

The creamery filed a complaint in November 2014, contending the state's refusal to allow it to call its product "skim milk" amounted to censorship in violation of the First Amendment, the appeals court says.

The district court granted summary judgment in favor of the state a year ago, reasoning that it is inherently misleading to call a product "skim milk" if that

product does not have the same vitamin content as whole milk.

The sole issue on appeal, the appeals court says, is whether the state's actions prohibiting the creamery's truthful use of the term "skim milk" violate the First Amendment. The appeals court rules that they do.

In its decision, the appeals court notes, "It is undoubtedly true that a state can propose a definition for a given term. However, it does not follow that once a state has done so, any use of the term inconsistent with the state's preferred definition is inherently misleading."

"This decision is a total vindication for Ocheesee Creamery and a complete rejection of the Florida Department of Agriculture's suppression of speech," says Justin Pearson, a senior attorney at the Institute for Justice, which is representing Ocheesee Creamery.

"I simply want to tell the truth about what is in the products I sell, and I did not like that the government wanted me to lie," says Mary Lou Wesselhoeft, owner, Ocheesee Creamery. "(This) good news is proof that it is important to stand up for your rights when the government wants you to do something that is wrong." CMN

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GREEN BAY, Wis. — Dairy Business Milk Marketing Cooperative (DBMMC) has joined a national organization dedicated to bridging the communication gap between animal agriculture and customers.

The Animal Agriculture Alliance, a 30-year-old nonprofit group, provides a united voice for all of animal agriculture.

Hundreds of individuals, companies and associations across the food chain participate.

"We are proud to partner with the Animal Agriculture Alliance to represent the dairy community," says John Pagel, a Wisconsin dairy farmer and president of DBMMC. "It is vital that we collaborate with others in agriculture as we face the challenges ahead. Our members will benefit by being part of an organization that works to help those throughout the food chain understand modern dairy farming."

The Alliance's motto is "Connect. Engage. Protect." The group connects key food industry stakeholders to resources that help them face emerging issues. It promotes customer choice by helping food chain influencers better understand modern animal agriculture.

The Alliance will provide important resources to DBMMC, such as support for on-farm security and crisis management planning, information about organizations looking to attack animal agriculture, and reports and graphics to help share animal agriculture's story.

"We're excited to welcome Dairy Business Milk Marketing Cooperative to the alliance and look forward to continuing to build relationships in the dairy sector," says Kay Johnson Smith, president and CEO of the alliance. "Our valuable resources will help DBMMC and its member-owners secure their farms and share their stories, and DBMMC's support will help us fulfill our mission and secure the future of animal agriculture." CMN

NEWS/BUSINESS

European Commission's Short-Term Outlook predicts cheese production will increase

BRUSSELS — A reduction in the European Union's milk supply at the end of 2016 contributed to a significant recovery in EU milk prices, according to the latest Short-term Outlook for EU agricultural markets published by the European Commission.

The EU raw milk price gained more than 7 euros per 100 kilograms in five months to reach 33.05 euros per 100 kilograms in December 2016, 8 percent above the previous year and close to the 2011-2015 average milk price, the outlook says. The rise in price was driven by the seasonal decline in EU milk production, a reduction in milk production in the last quarter of 2016, lower milk collection in South America, New Zealand and Australia, a sustained increase in EU demand, remunerative prices for butter, and a strong world import demand for cheese.

The outlook says in 2017, several factors could weigh on milk and dairy product prices, including the upcoming seasonal peak in EU milk collection, the sizable dairy herd at the end of 2016, higher expected 2017 EU milk deliveries, the continuous increase in U.S. supply, an expected recovery in milk collection in New Zealand, and accumulated skim milk powder (SMP) stocks. In 2017, EU milk collection is projected to be 0.6 percent above 2016.

In 2016, the EU market was characterized by strong consumption of cheese, butter and whole milk powder (WMP), significant rise in exports of fresh dairy products, cheese and butter, high public buying-in of SMP and a strong drop in SMP exports, the outlook reports.

In February 2017, cheese prices were back to 2011-2015 historic levels at 2,740 euros per metric ton for Cheddar, thanks to good export and domestic demand, along with the reduced EU milk supply, the outlook says. In 2016,

cheese exports reached 800,000 metric tons, 11 percent above 2015 and above the 2013 export level when Russia was the main EU customer. Shipments to the United States remained stable and represented 18 percent of EU cheese exports. Increases registered in exports to Japan, Saudi Arabia, South Korea and Australia. In 2017, cheese exports could increase further by 3 percent, the outlook predicts. The report adds that in 2018, assuming that the Russian import ban is removed, exports could grow by 75,000 metric tons.

In 2016, EU per capita cheese consumption increased for the third year in a row to 17.7 kilograms. This generated a 1.4-percent rise in production to 9.7 million metric tons and allowed for a stock decrease. In 2017 and 2018, the outlook says cheese production is expected to increase further by around 2 percent.

EU butter prices increased for the second year in a row in 2016, reaching a record price level of 4,300 euros per metric ton in December 2016. In 2016, EU butter production increased by 2.7 percent to 2.4 million metric tons. At 211,000 metric tons, 2016 butter and butteroil exports were 23 percent above 2015. In 2017, demand is expected to drive a further increase in production (+1.2 percent), a lower increase from previous years due to a limited milk production growth and assumed stagnation in milkfat content. As a consequence, the increase in EU butter exports is expected to be limited to 10 percent.

In 2016, SMP production rose 4 percent to 1.6 million metric tons. Over 2016, EU exports of SMP decreased by 17 percent. The outlook says in 2017, EU SMP could be back on the world market thanks to competitive prices.

WMP production in 2016 increased by close to 4 percent compared to

2015 due to strong domestic use, the outlook reports, while EU exports decreased by 5 percent. In com-

ing years, domestic use rather than exports is expected to support a small increase in production. CMN

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ProAmpac achieves SQF certifications

CINCINNATI — ProAmpac, a global flexible packaging company, recently announced that its facilities in Westfield, Massachusetts, and Hanover Park, Illinois, have been awarded Level 2 Food Safety Management Certifications by the Safe Quality Food (SQF) Program.

With prior certification of its Neenah, Wisconsin, and Terrebonne, Quebec, operations, ProAmpac now has four large-scale manufacturing facilities with Level 2 certifications from the SQF program.

"SQF certification is critical to ensuring our customers have an environment that produces safe products," says Rob Manning, vice president of quality, ProAmpac. "ProAmpac is proud to have a system in place for monitoring, validating and improving the manufacturing of flexible packaging materials and plans to acquire additional SQF facility certifications in 2017." CMN

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Kraft Heinz Co. reports full-year financials

CHICAGO — The Kraft Heinz Co. recently reported its fourth quarter and full-year 2016 financial results that the company says reflect significant gains from cost savings, the redemption of preferred stock and lower taxes versus the prior year period.

"We finished 2016 consistent with our expectations and with good momentum heading into 2017," says Bernardo Hees, CEO, Kraft Heinz. "Looking forward, our objectives and opportunities are clear. But we need to sharpen our focus on profitable sales and further improve our capabilities and execution to deliver another year of strong, sustainable growth in 2017."

The company says it now expects its multi-year integration program to deliver \$1.7 billion in cumulative, pre-tax savings by the end of 2017, up from \$1.5 billion previously. The program now is forecast to result in \$2.0 billion of pre-tax costs, up from \$1.9 billion previously, and \$1.3 billion of capital expenditures, up from \$1.1 billion previously.

Net sales for the fourth quarter were \$6.9 billion, down 3.7 percent compared to net sales for the year-ago period, including a negative 4.6 percentage point impact from a 53rd week of shipments in 2015 and an unfavorable 0.7 percentage point impact from currency. Organic net sales increased 1.6 percent versus the year-ago period. Pricing decreased 0.1 percentage points as price increases to offset input cost inflation in "Rest of World" markets as well as gains in the United States were more than offset by the timing of promotional activities versus the prior year in Canada. Volume/mix increased 1.7 percentage points with positive contributions from all business segments.

Net income attributable to common shareholders increased to \$944 million, and diluted earnings per share (EPS) increased to \$0.77, while adjusted EPS increased 46.8 percent versus the year-ago period to \$0.91. Adjusted EBITDA (earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization) increased 3.3 percent versus the year-ago period to \$1.9 billion.

U.S. net sales were \$4.8 billion, down 3.1 percent versus the year ago period, including a negative 4.8 percentage point impact from the 53rd week of shipments in 2015. Organic net sales increased 1.7 percent driven by net pricing gains of 0.3 percentage points and an increase in volume/mix of 1.4 percentage points. Volume/mix gains reflected strong growth in coffee as well as innovation across the macaroni and cheese portfolio that were partially offset by lower shipments in foodservice and cold cuts.

U.S. segment adjusted EBITDA for the quarter increased 13.3 percent versus the year-ago period to \$1.5 billion, despite an approximate 4.5 percentage point negative impact from a 53rd week of shipments in 2015. Growth reflected gains from cost savings initiatives and positive net pricing that were partially offset by the timing of overhead expenses compared to the prior year period. CMN

MMPA returns \$1.6 million in patronage refunds to members

NOVI, Mich. — The Michigan Milk Producers Association (MMPA) recently paid \$1.6 million in cash patronage refunds to its dairy farmer member-owners. This cash allocation represents 100 percent of farm supply earnings and 25 percent of milk marketing earnings. All members who marketed milk through MMPA for fiscal year 2016 received a portion of the allocation.

MMPA members received other cash payments in April 2016 of \$4 million through retirement of half of the cooperative's 2007 equities. With the current payment of \$1.6 million, cash payments in the last 10 months total more than \$5.6 million.

"The nearly \$6 million in patronage refunds and equity retirements we've recently returned to our member-owners speak to the financial viability of MMPA," says Joe Diglio, MMPA general manager. "The earnings generated by the cooperative demonstrates our commitment to returning value back to its dairy farmer member-owners."

Cash patronage funds and equity allocations are based on the amount of milk each individual member farm marketed and on the supplies purchased through the cooperative during the year in which the earnings were achieved. Under the current board policy, the non-cash balance of the equity allocation will be revolved back to members in future years. CMN

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NEWS/BUSINESS



Weighted average hauling charge for May 2016 increased for the Upper Midwest order

MINNEAPOLIS, Minn. — The weighted average hauling charge on the Upper Midwest federal milk marketing order in May 2016 was 17.17 cents per hundredweight, up from 15.64 cents per hundredweight in May 2015, according to a recent study from the Upper Midwest market administrator's office.

"Milk Hauling Charges in the Upper Midwest Marketing Area May 2016"—a study written by Dr. Corey Freije, an agricultural economist with the market administrator's office in Minneapolis—breaks down and categorizes hauling charges based on state, county and producer size groups for May 2016.

The payroll data for producers who were associated with the Upper Midwest marketing order were examined. For 2016, 12,813 dairy producers were associated with the market, the study says.

The hauling charges data received by the Upper Midwest federal order office often represents a flat fee charged by the handler, the study notes. This flat fee structure leads to a decreasing average hauling charge when viewed on a per-hundredweight basis.

The possibility also exists that the hauling charge relationship for large producers may differ on a handler-by-handler basis, the study adds. This relationship may mean the producer pays all charges external to the handler's payroll or may haul his or her own milk.

Previous analysis has indicated that hauling charges are a function of producer pounds, the farm's distance to plants, the farm's distance

to population centers, competition among handlers and the concentration of dairy farms in the local market, the study notes.

According to this study, by size group, weighted average hauling charges in May 2016 ranged from a high of 54.99 cents per hundredweight for producers with an average monthly delivery of 30,457 pounds of milk to a low of 11.94 cents per hundredweight for producers with an average monthly delivery of 1.2 million pounds of milk.

For the largest producers, the 83 producers with an average monthly delivery of 7.96 million pounds of milk, the weighted average hauling charge in May 2016 was 14.77 cents per hundredweight, the study says.

North Dakota has the highest average hauling charge, at 41.62 cents per hundredweight, with a low number of farms, the longest distance from high demand areas and less handler competition, the study found.

Wisconsin, by contrast, has the lowest average hauling charge, 13.64 cents per hundredweight, with a high number of farms and close proximity to high demand areas, the study says.

More than 80 percent of the milk delivered on the Upper Midwest order in May 2016 was from Wisconsin and Minnesota. This predominance for Wisconsin and Minnesota indicates that their weighted averages will pull the overall average for the order down relative to North and South Dakota, the study notes.

Wisconsin and Minnesota also have close proximity to the majority of the population centers and processing plants, the study adds,

noting the relationship between farm location and distances to competing dairy plant manufacturing operations does not explain all of the variation in average hauling charges.

The study found that even though a specific dairy producer may be located a long distance from the Upper Midwest market's largest fluid milk disposition area, it doesn't necessarily mean that this producer will pay the market's highest rate per hundredweight for hauling.

The study recognizes that other factors exist, including the fact that a dairy producer's herd size or milk volume influences the producer's cost of hauling, the study notes.

The study also acknowledges that there are several major factors causing differences in hauling charges between individual producer sizes. The most obvious factor responsible for influencing the producer's hauling rate per hundredweight, by herd size range, is that many Upper Midwest handlers charge a fixed hauling dollar value to dairy producers, regardless of volume of milk the

particular producer is marketing, the study says.

Therefore, as one of these producer's production increases, his or her hauling charge per hundredweight automatically fall will, the study notes.

A small percentage of producers on the Upper Midwest order have a zero hauling charge listed in handlers' payroll records, the study says.

The study also found that reasons for this lack of deduction include use of waiving the hauling charge as a milk procurement tool, hauling for the producer may be self-funded separate from the handler or the handler may pay for the hauling via a third-party hauler that isn't reflected in the payroll records.

The study found that producers with zero hauling charges are spread among all the size categories, with more producers not paying hauling in the more plentiful small size categories.

To view the study, visit www.fmma30.com/StaffPapers/StaffPaper-17-01.pdf. CMN

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NEWS/BUSINESS



Baked, buttery flavors named most innovative at IDFA Ice Cream Technology Conference

WASHINGTON — Sweet Me Strawberry Rhubarb Cobbler Ice Cream, Honey Roasted Peanut Butter Ice Cream and Cool Mint Sandwiches were named the most innovative ice cream products at the International Dairy Foods Association's (IDFA) annual Ice Cream Technology Conference last month in Henderson, Nevada. The Innovative Ice Cream Flavor Competition, which showcases the creativity of U.S. ice cream makers and flavorings suppliers, captured several upcoming flavor trends in the ice cream and frozen dessert industry.

"Contrasting flavors of warm cobblers, cakes and cookies in cool creations were clear favorites in this year's competition, followed by frozen treats inspired by dessert butters and honey spreads," says Cary Frye, IDFA vice president of regulatory and scientific affairs and the conference lead. "Unusual smoky and spicy flavors also made a popular emergence, as well as other creative takes on caffeinated drink favorites like coffee and tea."

The contest, sponsored by *Dairy Foods* magazine, drew 29 total entries. The nearly 140 ice cream industry professionals attending the conference

tasted, judged and selected the winners. IDFA and *Dairy Foods* presented first-, second- and third-place awards in three categories.

• Most Innovative Ice Cream Flavors

Sweet Me Strawberry Rhubarb Cobbler is a vanilla-flavored ice cream with vanilla bean specks swirled with a strawberry-rhubarb variegated and cobbler topping pieces. Entered by Kemps LLC, it earned first place in the most innovative ice cream flavor category. Second-place honors went to Dulce De Leche Cheesecake, a sweet caramel cheesecake ice cream swirled with a caramel ribbon and chunks of creamy cheesecake, submitted by The Ice Cream Club. Windmill Cookie Butter Ice Cream, a cookie-butter flavored ice cream with crunchy cookie pieces spiced with nutmeg, cinnamon, clove and ginger, earned third place in the competition. It was submitted by Hudsonville Creamery and Ice Cream Co. LLC.

• Most Innovative Prototype Flavors

Honey Roasted Peanut Butter Ice Cream was named the most innovative prototype flavor. This flavor, submitted by Denali Ingredients LLC, is a honey peanut butter ice cream with milk chocolate-flavored flakes and a

honey-roasted peanut butter swirl. Raspberry Amaretti, a blend of raspberry and amaretto cookie swirls in a velvety cream cheese ice cream, earned second place. It was submitted by Star Kay White Inc., a supplier of flavor ingredients to the ice cream and dairy industry. Natural Sweet & Sour Cherry Berry Lemon Blast, which features sweet cream ice cream with tart, lemon-textured flakes and twin ribbons of textured variegates of sweet and sour cherry and blue raspberry, took third place. It was submitted by Sensory Effects Flavor Systems, which manufactures and supplies custom flavor-delivery systems.

• Most Innovative Novelties

Perry's Ice Cream Co. Inc. submitted Cool Mint Sandwiches, a novelty with mint ice cream sandwiched between two chocolate cookie wafers, which took top

honors in the most innovative novelty category. Birthday Cake Cone, a flavor that tastes like a slice of frosted birthday cake in a cone with confetti sprinkles on top, took second place. It was submitted by Rich Ice Cream Co.

In addition to tasting and judging new products, Ice Cream Technology Conference attendees learned more about the forces changing ice cream labeling, as well as how to meet consumer demands for clean labels and market to the millennial generation. Experts discussed procedures for maintaining strong food safety programs and explored formulations for alternative sweetener options for reduced-sugar and vanilla ice creams.

The 2018 conference will be held April 10-11 at the Sanibel Harbour Marriott Resort in Fort Myers, Florida. CMN

Arla, G. Willi-Food extend their agreement

YAVNE, Israel — G. Willi-Food International Ltd., an Israeli-based company specializing in the development, marketing and international distribution of kosher foods, recently announced that its wholly-owned subsidiary, Gold Frost Ltd. (Goldfrost), has entered into an extension of its exclusive distribution agreement with Danish dairy company Arla Foods amba for one year, from Dec. 29, 2016, through Dec. 31, 2017.

Under the extension, Arla has granted Goldfrost an exclusive non-transferable right to import, export, market and distribute in Israel cheese and butter products manufactured by Arla. Goldfrost's exclusivity is subject to its purchase of certain minimum quotas of Arla products. Additionally, Arla has the right to terminate the agreement under certain circum-

stances should Willi-Food CEO Iram Gravier cease to be involved in Goldfrost's business.

"We are pleased that Arla, one of the biggest producers of dairy products in the world, has demonstrated its confidence in us," Gravier says. "After the company built an experienced new managerial team, Arla has agreed to provide us with an additional year of exclusivity in distributing their cheese and butter products in Israel."

Willi-Food is engaged directly and through its subsidiaries in the design, import, marketing and distribution of more than 600 food products worldwide. As one of Israel's leading food importers, Willi-Food markets and sells its food products to more than 1,500 customers in Israel and around the world, including large retail and private supermarket chains. CMN

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National Sales Manager – Dairy Ingredients

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Lab Manager

Pennland Pure is an aggressive, east coast company with many opportunities of advancement looking for a dynamic individual to fill the Lab Manager position. The Lab Manager will report to the QA Director and will have primary accountability for developing and managing the plant QC environment for the cheese procurement and packaging operation. This position will lead the plant in the implementation of Lanco Quality Systems and will develop and continuously improve plant procedures for monitoring and ensuring conformance to specifications for incoming raw materials as well as for finished product. This position also creates and monitors documentation required for SQF Safe Quality Foods certification.

- Develop and ensure implementation of food safety and monitoring programs to meet corporate and regulatory standards. This individual is ultimately responsible for food safety and food quality
- Manage Lab Department
- Oversee and monitor quality programs and all prerequisite programs (i.e. HACCP, GMP, Positive Release, Pest Control, sanitation, etc.)
- Focus on SQF programs for food safety, regulatory and quality programs, which include implementation, employee training and documentation
- Compliance and record keeping for all mandated quality checks, testing, sampling & sanitation activities
- Assists in leading company audits by the USDA, FDA, Customers and SQF. This includes preparation and corrective actions required
- Focus on CAPA programs including General, CCP, Hold and Customer Complaints
- Tracking/review quality customer complaints including root cause and corrective measures
- Recommends or develops tools to improve quality programs and quality tracking
- Budget responsibilities for Lab department
- Stays current with process-related industry standards
- Leads and mentors quality assurance team members
- Embrace a forward thinking attitude toward sanitation, microbiological control and food safety; monitor and audit sanitation process regularly
- Develop and conduct at a minimum annually, various employee training related to quality and food safety expectations/programs of the quality management system (i.e. GMP, HACCP, Allergen, SQF, CCP, etc.)
- Manage quality assurance procedures to ensure accurate raw materials and finished product traceability. Provides training for employees. Assists in trace exercises twice per year or as needed
- Develop and implement SOP's to ensure products are packaged to all applicable standards
- Work with the purchasing, scheduling, warehouse, and operations departments to manage cheese requirements for production, as needed
- Work with the procurement department and vendors to maintain/improve cheese quality
- Responsible for Positive Release program. Determine disposition of products based on food safety documentation and microbiological results
- Assist and monitor Sanitation crew effectiveness through equipment and environmental sampling and routine plant audits
- Any other duties as assigned by QA Director
- Promotes and adheres to all policies and procedures relating to Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP's), food safety and regulatory compliance

Position Requirements:

- Knowledge and use of process improvement and quality management methods, tools, and technology used to create and support defect-free, application software or business operations processes for which the quality program will be focused
- Knowledge and experience conducting risk analyses; quality assessments, audits and/or studies; and implementing successful process improvement programs
- Skill in analysis, solid decision-making and problem solving
- Ability to succeed in an agile work environment where cross-functional teams work closely together to ensure requirements are met or exceeded
- Ability to work collaboratively with others to achieve the company and project goals
- Ability to influence and motivate employees
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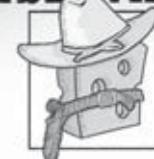
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• STORAGE 13

NEWS/BUSINESS

Arla Foods announces \$360 million in new investments for worldwide production sites

VIBY, Denmark — Arla Foods has announced that this year it expects to invest 335 million euros (\$360 million) in its production sites around the world to support its Strategy 2020 by moving more milk from bulk into branded retail sales and foodservice. The investment is nearly a 50 percent increase compared to last year's plan, and Arla says it is one of the highest ever single-year supply chain investment forecasts in company history.

Most of the investments focus on production upgrades that will increase profitability of products sold in core markets like Germany, the United Kingdom, Denmark, Sweden, the Netherlands and

Finland as well as on production sites that supply dairy products to emerging markets outside the European Union.

Arla says about 18 million euros of this year's investments will go into expanding and developing its production for foodservice customers. One example is a 13 million euro investment in Denmark's Rodkaersbro Dairy, one of the leading Mozzarella processors in the world. Arla says by investing in new world-class technology, it will be able to improve quality and expand Mozzarella production for the international pizza industry.

The Denmark Protein site near Videbaek, Denmark, which produces protein, lactose and other value-added

whey-based ingredients for the global food industry, will receive the biggest investment in 2017 — approximately 30.5 million euros. The money will be spent on general upgrades and expansion of production facilities, including improvements of the site's protein and lactose processing.

The company also aims to build on its market positions in spreadable and cream cheese in Northern Europe, the Middle East and the United States, and this year is investing more than 12 million euros in its cream cheese site in Holstebro, Denmark, to introduce innovative packaging designs. The first phase of this project is expected to be

complete by the end of 2017, with phase two to follow in 2018.

In the United States, Arla this year will invest 2 million euros in its Hollandtown, Wisconsin, cheese production site for various minor upgrade projects. In addition, Arla will make significant investments in marketing and innovation for the U.S. market.

Across all sites, 22 million euros will be spent on continued rationalization of production as part of Arla's ongoing commitment to maintaining low operational costs. The 2017 investment forecast also includes 150 projects at a total investment of 5 million euros aimed at improving Arla's energy efficiency. CMN

Mlekpol receives loan for powder plant in Poland

LUXEMBOURG — The European Investment Bank (EIB) recently announced it is lending 50 million euros (\$52 million) to dairy cooperative Mlekpol, Poland's largest dairy manufacturer, for the construction of a powdered dairy production plant in Eastern Poland.

Mlekpol will use the loan to construct a new milk processing facility to allow for more efficient production of higher value-added dairy products. The estimated production capacity is 3 million liters of milk and whey per day. The plant is set to launch in 2018, with full production capacity expected to be reached by mid-2019.

The new powdered dairy products production facility will manufacture specialized products such as high-purity whey, milk protein and high-quality baby food, and will employ about 160 people. The total investment cost is estimated to be more than 90 million euros (\$94 million).

"Development of the Mlekpol Dairy Cooperative is the priority of our business strategy. The construction of the powdered dairy products production plant in Mrągowo is a big step in this direction," says Edmund Borawski, board chairman of Mlekpol Dairy Cooperative in Grajewo, Poland. "Thanks to the support of the European Commission and the co-financing of the investment under the so-called Juncker Plan by the European Investment Bank, we are taking this step more confidently."

The EIB financing for the 2,200-employee cooperative is guaranteed under the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI), part of the European Commission's Investment Plan for Europe.

"Expanding and modernizing Europe's agricultural production facilities requires sustained investment. That is where the EFSI can play a crucial role," says Jyrki Katainen, European Commission vice president responsible for jobs, growth, investment and competitiveness. CMN

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NEWS/BUSINESS



WMMB's Mission:
To help grow demand for Wisconsin milk by providing programs that enhance the competitiveness of the Wisconsin Dairy Industry.

WISCONSIN MILK MARKETING BOARD
Wisconsin Milk Processors

Photo by Alyssa Mitchell/Cheese Market News

WISCONSIN MILK MISSION — The Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board (WMMB) strives to grow demand for Wisconsin cow's milk by providing programs that enhance the competitiveness of the Wisconsin dairy industry. In his new role as CEO, Chad Vincent seeks to make even more of an impact on the industry by better integrating efforts, connecting with consumers and implementing new initiatives to provide a stronger focus and clear mission, as well as enhancing branding to reflect that mission.

VINCENT

Continued from page 54

are tightly aligned and focused with our programs as we work together to reach our objectives."

He notes that he believes WMMB could do a better job of embellishing existing programs with stronger internal communications and a heavy push in emphasis on social and influencer consumer marketing. He notes working with Fanning, who joined WMMB in January, can help to achieve this goal with her history of driving consumer conversations, building a passionate fan base and leveraging that fan base to help drive business objectives. Fanning is past

president of The Word of Mouth Marketing Association and has achieved record results in sales, public relations, social media and consumer/influencer engagement for several global brands, including Spectrum Brands and Fiskars.

Seefeldt reiterates that WMMB would like to become more involved in social media and technology, with increased consumer engagement. She touts DMI's Consumer Confidence initiative as an example of successful consumer outreach to spread a positive message about Wisconsin — and U.S. — dairy products.

"We don't need to reinvent the wheel," she says, noting WMMB seeks to utilize DMI's tools and connections and bring a Wisconsin focus.

Vincent echoes this as part of his mission.

"We have great stories to tell, and consumers are hungry to understand where their food is coming from," he says. "We are so on trend with what is wanted today — natural, wholesome, local, clean, healthy, pure and farmers; Wisconsin and Wisconsin cheese are fertile ground for us. We have a huge and passionate fan base, so we are going to work hard to build a unique and meaningful relationship with them."

Seefeldt adds that moving forward, the WMMB board seeks to refine the organization's strategic vision and enhance the message about the use of technology in the dairy industry.

For the vast majority of people and consumers, technology is great, Vincent notes.

"Technology is positive. We all can't wait for the latest breakthroughs and wonderful products," he says. "For some reason, when it comes to farms and agriculture technology, consumers are not connecting the dots."

While the dairy industry has made incredible advances in sustainability, environment, planting and harvesting, there are small and very vocal groups that to date have pushed a negative dialogue, he notes.

"It's very frustrating. Our farmers spend their lives doing great and noble work, feeding us all so we can do different jobs and careers," he says.

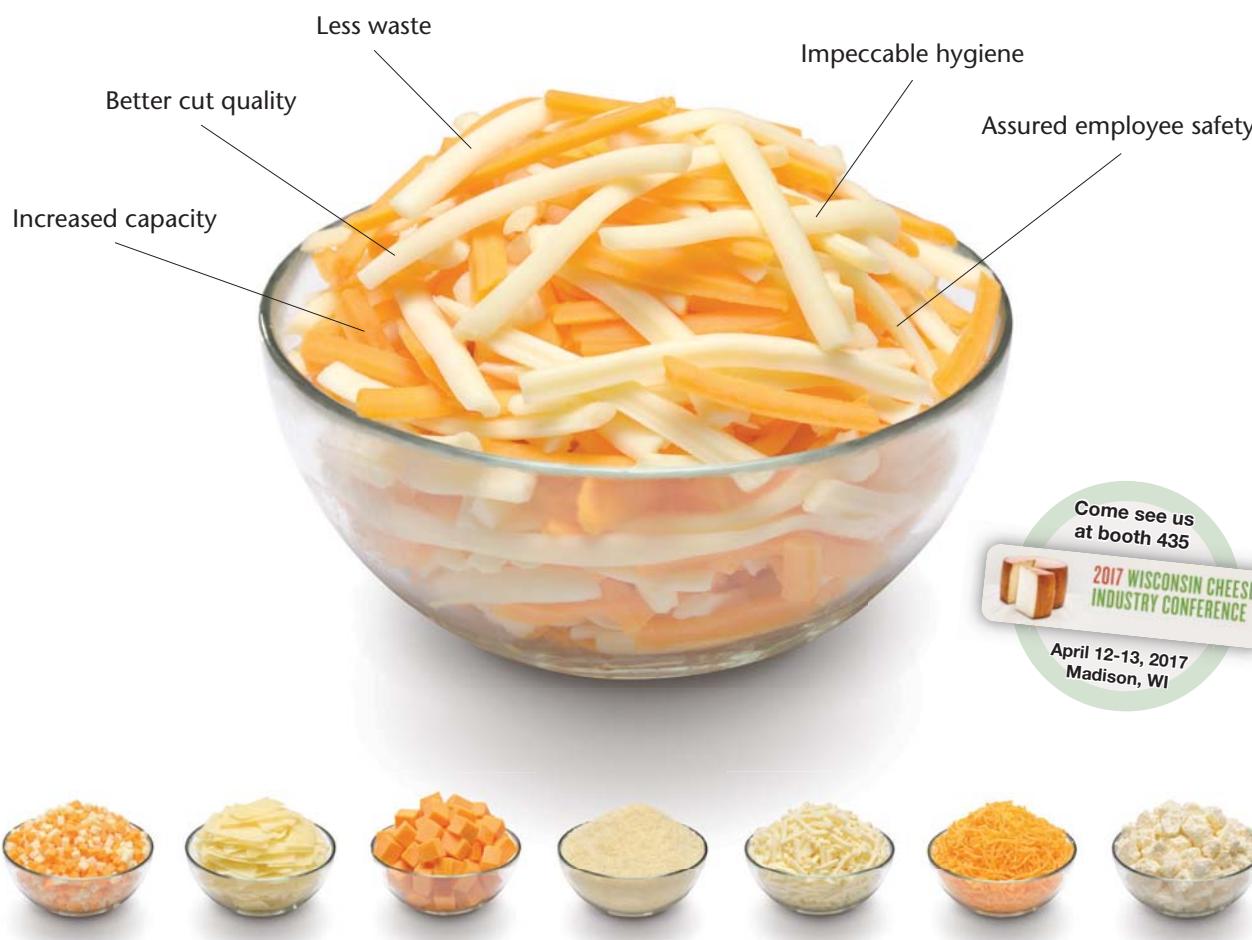
Vincent notes Wisconsin currently leads the nation in the number of on-farm bio-energy systems with 35 methane digesters installed and more planned. These turn manure into renewable bio-energy.

"We hope to be able to tell these important stories about everything that our dairy farmers are doing for us," he says. "Consumers need to know how hard they work to provide wholesome, natural products for us. We also need to show the benefits of dairy in a diet, and hopefully dispel some of the negative myths along the way."

"We have a lot of work to do, but the vision is starting to come together, and we are all invigorated by the possibilities," he adds. CMN

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