



2025

ANNUAL REPORT

LETTER FROM CHAD...

Dear Wisconsin Dairy Farmers,

As I look back on the past year, my team and I are grateful for the opportunity to serve you. The strength of Wisconsin's dairy industry comes from your dedication to caring for your cows, land, and communities each and every day. Our responsibility at Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin (DFW) is to support that work by building markets for our products, trust in dairy and dairy farming, and driving demand for your milk.

This past year, your investment guided our efforts around three external priorities:

- **Elevate Wisconsin Cheese** – We expanded awareness and demand for Wisconsin Cheese through digital campaigns, earned media, influencer partnerships, and consumer experiences that celebrated the craftsmanship and quality behind every product made with your milk.
- **Increase Distribution, Trial, and Sales of Wisconsin Dairy** – We increased visibility and strengthened partnerships through retail programming, trade shows, buyer missions, and international export efforts to get more Wisconsin dairy products into the hands of more consumers at home and abroad to help drive sales for our farmers and processors.
- **Build Trust in Wisconsin Dairy** – We highlighted your commitment to the land, cows, and community by sharing farmer stories with legislators, consumers, and youth. This work ensures consumers feel good about choosing Wisconsin dairy, which directly supports demand for your milk.

This Annual Report is also part of our promise to you for transparency in how your checkoff dollars are managed and clarity regarding how programs are executed to grow demand for your milk today while preparing for tomorrow.

Looking to fiscal year 2026 and our theme of “Framing the Future,” I am optimistic. With your continued commitment and the guidance of our elected Board of Directors, we will keep building trust, strengthening markets, and driving demand for Wisconsin dairy.

Thank you for allowing us the privilege of serving you. It is your hard work that makes everything we do possible, and together, we continue to build a strong future for Wisconsin dairy.

Sincerely,

Chad Vincent
CEO, Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin



OUR FY2025 GOALS



WISCONSIN CHEESE AFFINITY

ELEVATE PERCEPTIONS OF THE PROUDLY WISCONSIN CHEESE BRAND

- Elevate Wisconsin Cheese image and affinity by implementing a robust digital plan to engage key Food Fanatic (FF) messaging in all elements, primarily via social media, SEO, and earned media.
- Invest in paid media partnerships with key Food Fanatic publications/broadcasts to create seamless integrations of our brand content that elevate brand perception and drive engagement.
- Deepen engagement with influencers/evangelists through our Cheeselandians.
- Generate \$50M+ in earned media (>50-1 return) by connecting with at least 70% of our targeted FF media list - Informing, motivating, and encouraging deeper storytelling of Wisconsin's artisan cheesemaking.
- Continue to tighten alignment of marketing communications and channel to create stronger integrated and unified efforts.
- Execute brand experiences that reach at least 15,000+ FF's and people through direct engagement delivering impactful brand presence at meaningful and major events.



DISTRIBUTION, TRIAL, AND SALES

INCREASE IN-MARKET VISIBILITY AND SALES WITH AND THROUGH OTHERS

- Grow strategic international opportunities through partnerships, trade shows, in-market activations, and marketing. In-market retail programming in Mexico, partner with USDEC/DATCP/ and USDA FAS to execute in-country as well as in-WI missions.
- Deliver annual plans for integrated programs, buyer missions and trade shows with top 125 retail accounts. Execute 2 national grocery promotions at 10,000+ retail outlets.
- Continue to work with processors to deliver more with major programs like trade shows, buyer missions, and virtual buyer missions. Provide value-added consultation with marketing and sales strategy/ execution. Continue to get the Badge on more retail and private label cheeses.
- Expand Cheese State University with professional cheese specialists to enhance WI knowledge, revamp in-state visit execution.



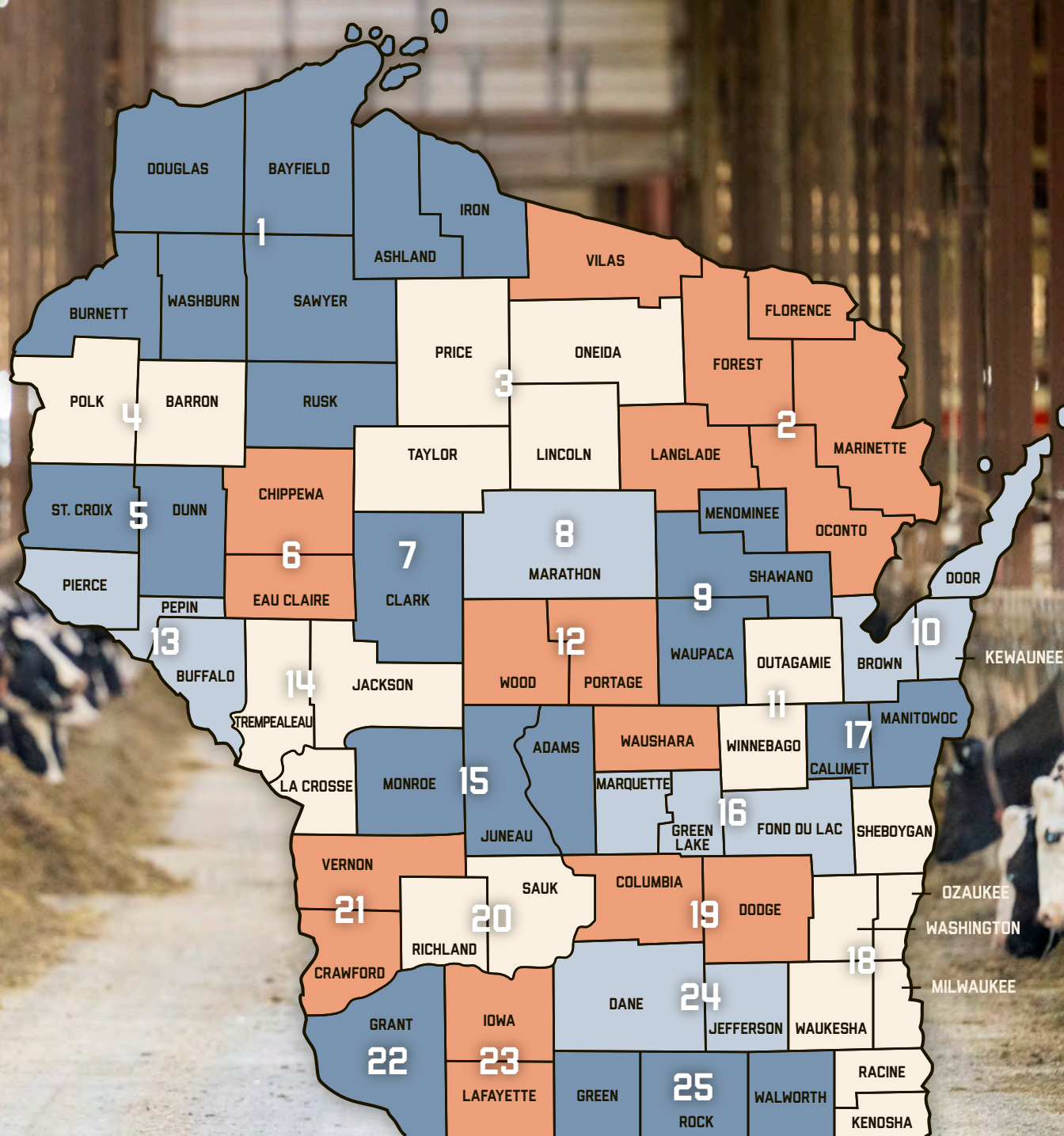
BUILD TRUST IN WISCONSIN

GROW IN- STATE TRUST

- Showcase Wisconsin Dairy Farmer sustainability stories through paid and owned media with consumers and legislators to help them understand and support farmers' efforts. Develop and use the new creative (It's What We Do) to help deliver the sustainability messaging.
- Partner with industry to help build and train for messaging; share, and expand our farmer sustainability stories; media train at least 30 dairy farmers.
- Educate school youth through effective and cost-effective programming, and increase June Dairy Month earned media by 10%.
- Build Industry Relations capability with elected officials, delivering the importance of dairy and ag messaging. Deeper and wider partnerships with leading dairy and ag organizations.

We strive to be tireless advocates for Wisconsin dairy farmers and drive demand for Wisconsin dairy products.

**Sign up for the
Power of Promotion
digital newsletter
at Wisconsindairy.org**



	DISTRICT 1 Brenda Schloneger <i>bschloneger@wisconsindairy.org</i>		DISTRICT 6 Ali Straschinske <i>astraschinske@wisconsindairy.org</i>		DISTRICT 11 Dan Hinz <i>dhinz@wisconsindairy.org</i>		DISTRICT 16 Janet Clark* <i>jclark@wisconsindairy.org</i>		DISTRICT 21 Gail Klinkner* <i>producer@wisconsindairy.org</i>
	DISTRICT 2 Carolyn Alsteen <i>calsteen@wisconsindairy.org</i>		DISTRICT 7 David Bangart <i>dbangart@wisconsindairy.org</i>		DISTRICT 12 Steve Pankratz <i>producer@wisconsindairy.org</i>		DISTRICT 17 Mitch Kappelman <i>mkappelman@wisconsindairy.org</i>		DISTRICT 22 Ann Kieler <i>akieler@wisconsindairy.org</i>
	DISTRICT 3 Gary Kohn <i>gkohn@wisconsindairy.org</i>		DISTRICT 8 Jessica Pralle-Trimner <i>jpralletrimner@wisconsindairy.org</i>		DISTRICT 13 Jonathon Hallock* <i>jhallock@wisconsindairy.org</i>		DISTRICT 18 Rick Roden <i>rroden@wisconsindairy.org</i>		DISTRICT 23 Jody Miller <i>jmiller@wisconsindairy.org</i>
	DISTRICT 4 Andrew Christenson* <i>achristenson@wisconsindairy.org</i>		DISTRICT 9 Jeff Betley* <i>jbetley@wisconsindairy.org</i>		DISTRICT 14 Annaliese Wegner <i>awegner@wisconsindairy.org</i>		DISTRICT 19 Mark Crave* <i>mcrave@wisconsindairy.org</i>		DISTRICT 24 Virgil Haag <i>vhaag@wisconsindairy.org</i>
	DISTRICT 5 Kay Zwald* <i>kzwald@wisconsindairy.org</i>		DISTRICT 10 Tasha Schleis <i>tschleis@wisconsindairy.org</i>		DISTRICT 15 Sandy Madland* <i>smadland@wisconsindairy.org</i>		DISTRICT 20 Jessica Kelley <i>jkelly@wisconsindairy.org</i>		DISTRICT 25 Kristen Metcalf <i>kmetcalf@wisconsindairy.org</i>

***Executive Committee Members, FY 2025**

Each member of the Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin Board of Directors is elected to a three-year term. These directors guide the organization's financial affairs, formulate and set DFW's policies, approve the organization's mission and strategy, and serve on one of two main committees. All directors must be active dairy producers who sell milk into commercial channels and live in the district where they are nominated.

Access [WisconsinDairy.org](https://www.wisconsinmilk.com) for current FY 2026 representation.

Seats in districts 1, 4, 7, 10, 13, 16, 19, 22, and 25 will be open for nominations in March of 2026.

WISCONSIN MILK MARKETING BOARD, INC.
DAIRY FARMERS OF WISCONSIN

STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION
June 30, 2025 and 2024

	2025	Restated 2024
ASSETS		
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 3,970,320	\$ 4,918,771
Short term investments - corporate bonds	2,097,239	4,177,814
Short term investments - certificates of deposit	1,410,866	1,186,795
Accrued interest receivable	112,768	88,378
Assessments receivable	2,442,147	2,538,067
Accounts receivable	29,209	163,682
Grants receivable	0	100,000
Inventory	396,100	493,548
Prepaid expenses	1,207,610	1,002,849
Total current assets	11,666,259	14,669,904
LONG-TERM INVESTMENTS		
Treasury notes	1,152,609	741,503
Corporate bonds	11,819,581	10,319,038
Certificates of deposit	2,251,716	2,411,366
Total long-term investments	15,223,906	13,471,907
PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT, NET	1,619,671	1,225,941
OTHER ASSETS		
Operating lease right-of-use assets	9,767	13,588
Website domain	300,000	300,000
Website development costs, net	395,364	277,687
Total other assets	705,131	591,275
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>\$ 29,214,967</u>	<u>\$ 29,959,027</u>
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Accounts payable	\$ 2,006,679	\$ 3,139,239
Construction payable	53,321	176,591
Accrued expenses and other liabilities	548,338	453,026
Accrued wages	320,424	276,042
Contract liabilities	65,658	72
Operating lease liabilities	9,767	13,588
TOTAL LIABILITIES	3,004,187	4,058,558
NET ASSETS, without donor restrictions	<u>26,210,780</u>	<u>25,900,469</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	<u>\$ 29,214,967</u>	<u>\$ 29,959,027</u>

WISCONSIN MILK MARKETING BOARD, INC.
DAIRY FARMERS OF WISCONSIN

STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES
Years ended June 30, 2025 and 2024

	2025	Restated 2024
CHANGES IN NET ASSETS WITHOUT DONOR RESTRICTIONS		
Revenues, gains and losses:		
Assessments	\$ 31,997,022	\$ 32,125,638
Grants	0	36,713
Investment return, net	1,066,886	868,102
In-kind contributions	57,680	27,298
Other	36,125	133,885
Realized loss on property and equipment disposals	(217)	(643)
Total revenues, gains and losses	33,157,496	33,190,993
Expenses:		
Program services:		
Channel management	15,430,164	14,309,640
Marketing and communications	15,755,191	16,317,274
Total program expenses	31,185,355	30,626,914
Supporting services:		
Administration	1,661,830	1,549,375
Total expenses	32,847,185	32,176,289
Change in net assets without donor restrictions	310,311	1,014,704
Net assets, without donor restrictions, beginning	25,900,469	24,885,765
Net assets, without donor restrictions, ending	<u>\$ 26,210,780</u>	<u>\$ 25,900,469</u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.



#1

DRIVE AFFINITY FOR WISCONSIN DAIRY PRODUCTS
WITH AN EMPHASIS ON IMPROVING PERCEPTION OF
WISCONSIN CHEESE (90/90/10) RULE.

**ELEVATE WISCONSIN
CHEESE IMAGE
AND AFFINITY BY
IMPLEMENTING A
ROBUST DIGITAL PLAN
TO ENGAGE KEY FOOD
FANATIC MESSAGING
IN ALL ELEMENTS,
PRIMARILY VIA SOCIAL
MEDIA, SEO, AND
EARNED MEDIA.**



SUMMARY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

We developed a new, strategically focused digital strategy that captivated over 2.2 million website visitors, earned 5.7 million video views, and 820,000 social media engagements. We drove a 51.5% year-over-year increase in top-ranking SEO keywords. Through dynamic social content, culinary publications like Grate. Pair. Share., and targeted advertising, we are turning Food Fanatics into loyal brand advocates—showing that our content resonates deeply and converts meaningfully. Our efforts propelled WisconsinCheese.com to the #1 Google ranking for “cheese”, cementing our leadership in digital cheese culture.

SOCIAL MEDIA

At Wisconsin Cheese, we share a common belief with Food Fanatics: Great cheese makes the world a better, happier, tastier place. To bring this message to life, we embraced a strategic content mix we call **KIST**—25% **K**nowledge, 25% **I**nspiration, and 50% **S**tory**T**elling. Knowing that 68% of consumers purchase food because of something they’ve seen on social media, we used that approach in a big way on our social media channels. After extensive, low-cost testing, we leveraged creative assets developed around KIST over the past two years to connect with our core audience. In FY25 we published **OVER 1,000 SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS** across Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook, generating **16 MILLION TOTAL VIDEO VIEWS** and over **945,000 ENGAGEMENTS**. In addition, recognizing a surge of interest in food-related content on Pinterest, we also revitalized the Wisconsin Cheese Pinterest page with a new strategic direction, refreshed visuals, and a seasonal lineup of spring and summer recipes, giving new life to our existing Grate. Pair. Share. culinary content.

Our initial test results were overwhelmingly positive. Food Fanatics appreciated our content across various platforms and content types. The conversations we sparked were positive, dispelling any initial concerns about the appropriateness of our content for TikTok. Through this process, we also identified further optimization opportunities that will enhance our future efforts. Our targeted audience strategy proved effective, allowing us to connect deeply with our desired demographic.

Looking ahead, we’ve optimized our approach to ongoing paid advertising by focusing on higher-performing content and refreshing captions. This shift has yielded results that not only matched our test campaign benchmarks but also improved in several areas. Our Monger Reviews continue to be a hit, consistently aligning with our core metrics. Furthermore, the engagement and video view metrics reinforce our earlier conclusions: Food Fanatics are eager to receive our ads in their newsfeeds, engaging with them as if they were organic content. This strategy is successfully converting Food Fanatics into dedicated followers and fans. Our retargeted audience pool has grown significantly, now encompassing **OVER FOUR MILLION USERS ACROSS META PLATFORMS AND 2.5 MILLION ON TIKTOK**, comprised of those who have expressed interest in our brand through interactions with our ads, social media posts, or visits to our website.

CULINARY

This year, our Grate. Pair. Share. magazine, saw its popularity soar across all five seasonal issues: Harvest, Holiday, Winter, Spring, and Summer. This fan-favorite magazine achieved **2.92 MILLION IMPRESSIONS**, with an **AVERAGE READ TIME OF OVER THREE AND A HALF MINUTES**—3:32 to be precise—well above industry standards. In our commitment to culinary excellence, we developed 16 magazine articles, 79 new pieces of culinary content, including 54 recipes and 25 pairings. Feedback has been positive, with 105 new recipe reviews on WisconsinCheese.com averaging 4.7 out of 5 stars, and 97 of those reviews scoring four stars or higher. Additionally, our e-newsletter reached an audience of **OVER 142,000 SUBSCRIBERS**, keeping them engaged with our latest offerings.

SEO AND WEB

We have **ACHIEVED THE #1 SPOT WHERE IT COUNTS MOST—ON GOOGLE PAGE RANKINGS**. When you search for “Wisconsin cheese”, WisconsinCheese.com proudly stands on the first page. This year, our average position on the Search Engine Results Page (SERP) **IMPROVED BY 32.6% COMPARED TO LAST YEAR**. Our SEO efforts have paid off, with our action pages ranking for a total of 321 tracked keywords on pages 1-3 of Google as of June 2025, marking a 25.9% increase year over year from 265 keywords. This success is primarily attributed to our strategic addition of FY25 keywords for tracking in 2024. Our website **ATTRACTED 2.5 MILLION VISITORS** TO WISCONSINCHEESE.COM. With a keen eye on global demand, we introduced a new Exports page to showcase our offerings. Furthermore, our website served as a platform for integrated campaigns across the organization, including highlights from the Wisconsin Art of Cheese Festival and the Kentucky Derby Rinds and Roses event. Overall, it has been a year of growth, engagement, and culinary creativity, positioning us firmly at the forefront of the cheese industry.



Grate.Pair.Share.



#1

DRIVE AFFINITY FOR WISCONSIN DAIRY PRODUCTS
WITH AN EMPHASIS ON IMPROVING PERCEPTION OF
WISCONSIN CHEESE (90/90/10) RULE.

**INVEST IN MEDIA
PARTNERSHIPS WITH
KEY FOOD FANATIC
PUBLICATIONS/BROADCASTS
TO CREATE SEAMLESS
INTEGRATIONS OF OUR
BRAND CONTENT THAT
ELEVATE BRAND PERCEPTION
AND DRIVE ENGAGEMENT.**



SUMMARY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

We strategically invested in premium media partnerships that seamlessly integrated Wisconsin Cheese into the preferred media outlets of Food Fanatics, reaching over 20 million engaged consumers across top-tier platforms like Food Network, Eater, Saveur, and Taste. From a 13.6 million reach through Food Network's holiday issue to a 92 Net Promoter Score (NPS) experiential event with Eater and podcast storytelling with Taste, each activation elevated brand perception and deepened emotional connection. These collaborations delivered millions of organic impressions, experiences, and content that positioned Wisconsin Cheese as a cultural and culinary icon.

PARTNERSHIPS

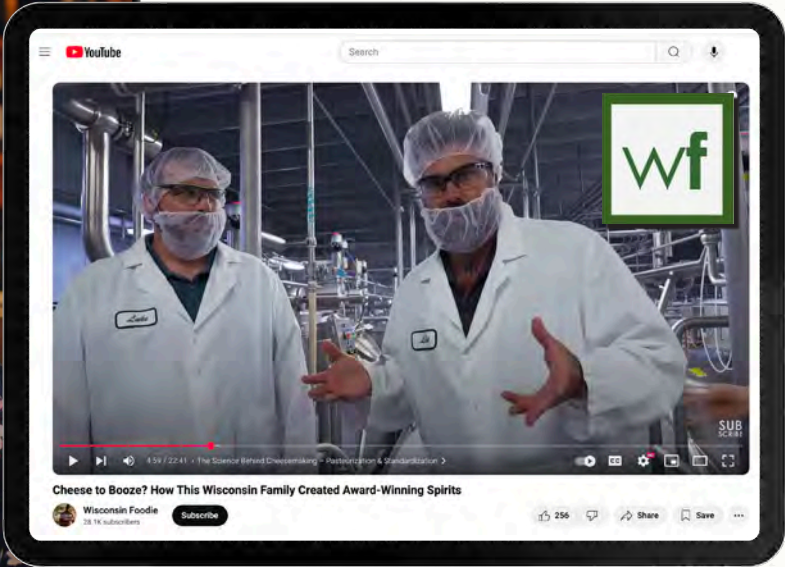
FOOD NETWORK (TV and Print): This year, our custom print insert in the highly coveted holiday issue showcased holiday cheese and inspiring Master Cheesemaker stories during one of the busiest buying seasons, **REACHING AN AUDIENCE OF 13.6 MILLION**. Our custom video series captivated viewers with the stories of Wisconsin cheesemakers, achieving remarkable engagement. Our advertising content resonated with this audience, leveraging our existing assets to maximize impact.

EATER: We teamed up with Eater to deliver an impactful experiential event in Los Angeles that achieved **OVER 3.6 MILLION ORGANIC IMPRESSIONS** and a stellar Net Promoter Score (NPS) of 92! This event fostered hundreds of personal connections while featuring custom video content shared across social channels, amplifying our reach and influence.

SAVEUR: Our collaboration with Saveur allowed us to tap into the hearts of Food Fanatics through engaging holiday entertainment articles and social content, **REACHING AN AUDIENCE OF 2.2 MILLION FOLLOWERS**. We took it a step further by creating a custom Wisconsin Cheese painting, prominently displayed on the back cover and utilized to promote the upcoming 2025 Wisconsin Art of Cheese Festival, blending culinary art with our cheese heritage.

WISCONSIN FOODIE: We proudly shared the stories of Wisconsin cheese and dairy with **OVER 1 MILLION VIEWERS ACROSS THE MIDWEST AND BEYOND** through their YouTube channel, showcasing **MORE THAN 14 EPISODES** that highlighted our vibrant cheese culture and its passionate makers.

TASTE: Our partnership with Taste resulted in the creation of two podcast episodes that delved into the rich stories and personalities behind Wisconsin cheese. These episodes attracted **OVER 6,000 DOWNLOADS** and even more listens. Our collaboration extended to social content, a dedicated web page, and email newsletters, resulting in **500,000 IMPRESSIONS IN TOP MARKETS** such as NYC, San Francisco, LA, and Boston, spreading the love for Wisconsin cheese far and wide.



#1

DRIVE AFFINITY FOR WISCONSIN DAIRY PRODUCTS
WITH AN EMPHASIS ON IMPROVING PERCEPTION OF
WISCONSIN CHEESE (90/90/10) RULE.



DEEPEN ENGAGEMENT WITH INFLUENCERS AND EVANGELISTS THROUGH OUR CHEESELANDIANS.

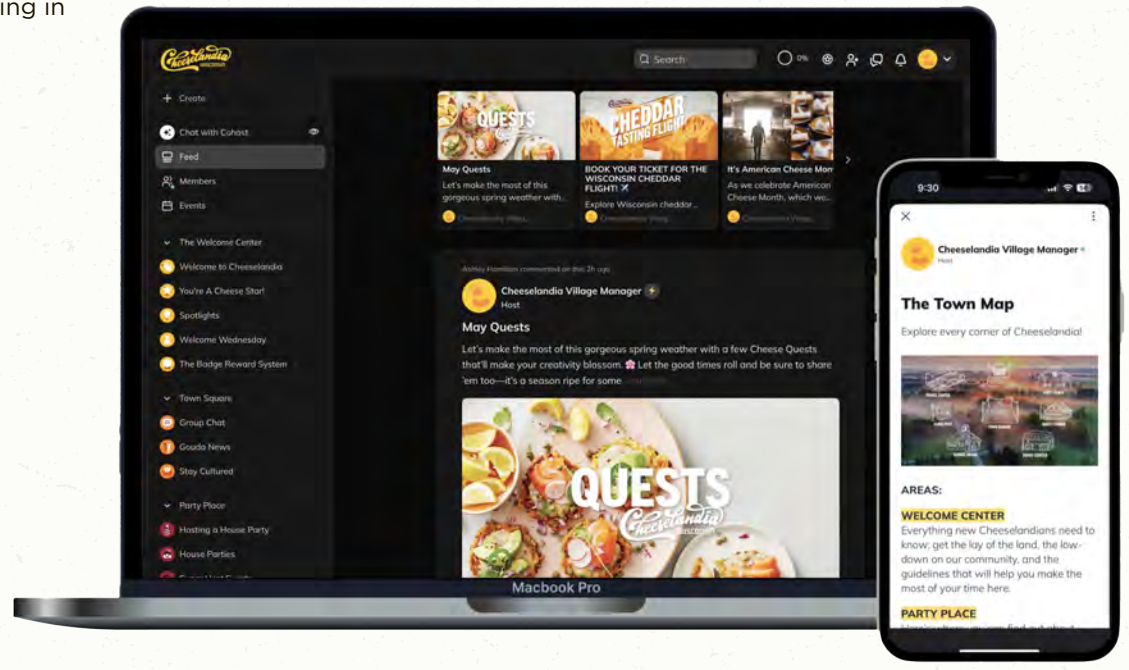
SUMMARY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

We significantly increased brand advocacy with a 40% surge in our Cheeselandia community, driven by peer recommendations and a redesigned app that sparked a 15% boost in engagement. Through hundreds of quests, Super Host events, and thousands of monthly conversations, Cheeselandians have become passionate champions, fueling deeper awareness and unwavering loyalty for Wisconsin Cheese with genuine, grassroots enthusiasm.



CHEESELANDIA FAN COMMUNITY

Membership has **GROWN 40% IN FY25** with many newcomers joining the community after a recommendation from a Cheeselanderian. A redesigned app **INCREASED ENGAGEMENT BY OVER 15%**. Attendance at virtual and School of Cheese events remains strong at 500+ and programming was focused on expanding Cheeselanderians' knowledge of cheesemaking, cheesemakers and dairy culture in Wisconsin. Hundreds of completed Cheeselandia Quests, House Parties and Super Host Events afforded them the opportunity to share their love of Wisconsin Cheese with their friends and family, resulting in **THOUSANDS OF MONTHLY CONVERSATIONS ABOUT WISCONSIN CHEESE** in the last fiscal year.



#1

DRIVE AFFINITY FOR WISCONSIN DAIRY PRODUCTS WITH AN EMPHASIS ON IMPROVING PERCEPTION OF WISCONSIN CHEESE (90/90/10) RULE.

GENERATE \$50M+ IN EARNED MEDIA (>50-1 RETURN) BY CONNECTING WITH AT LEAST 70% OF OUR TARGETED FOOD FANATIC MEDIA LIST—INFORMING, MOTIVATING, AND ENCOURAGING DEEPER STORYTELLING OF WISCONSIN'S ARTISAN CHEESEMAKING.

SUMMARY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

We generated over \$70 million in earned media—delivering a 70:1 return—by strategically connecting with more than 70% of our targeted Food Fanatic media list and driving deeper, more compelling storytelling around Wisconsin's artisan cheesemaking. Through 6,000+ placements across top outlets like Bon Appétit, Food & Wine, and Epicurious, and campaigns like National Cheese Lover's Day and the Kentucky Derby, we sparked national buzz reaching 7.5 billion consumers. Our strategic PR efforts not only informed and motivated, but solidified Wisconsin Cheese as a leader in the culinary conversation.

Forbes

LIFESTYLE > DINING

There's A Cheese Festival In Wisconsin With A Next-Level Cheese Ball

By [Jenn Rice](#), Contributor. ⓘ Jenn Rice is a nomadic journalist who covers fo... [Follow Author](#)

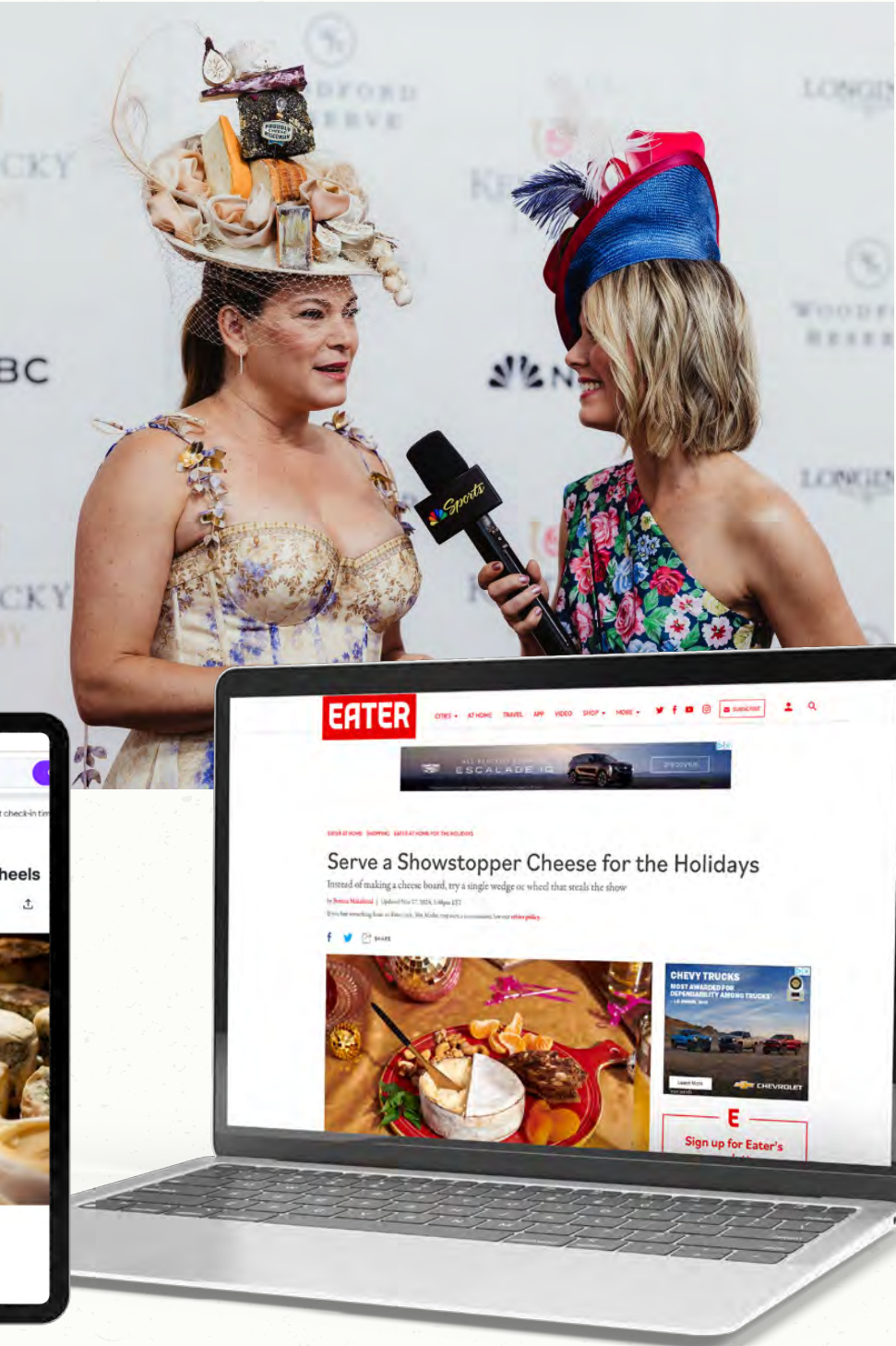
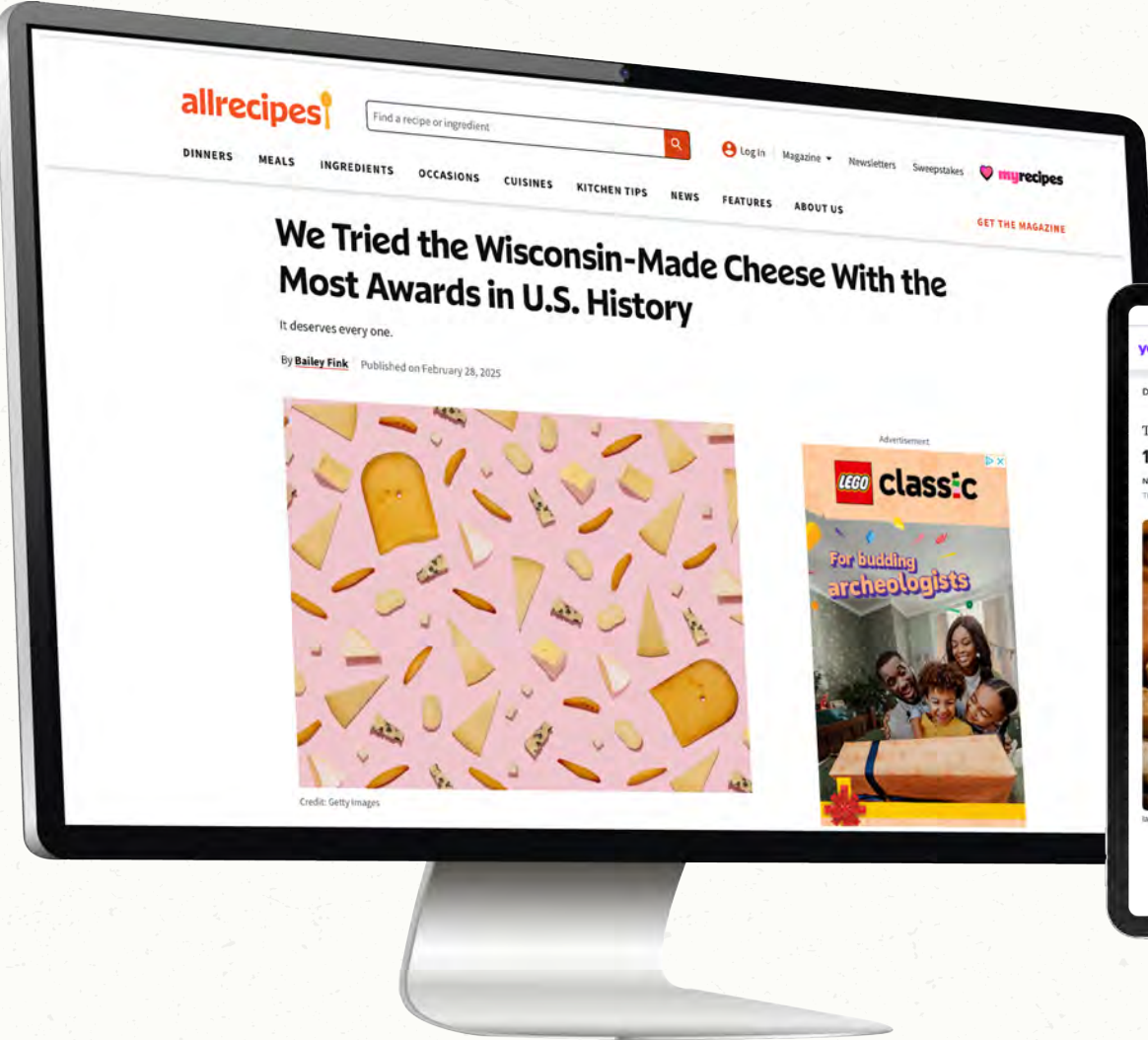
May 06, 2025 at 02:51pm EDT

[Share](#) [Save](#) [Comment 0](#)



PUBLIC RELATIONS

We can't keep quiet—we absolutely love Wisconsin Cheese, and it's time the world knows it, too! As of early June, we've **GENERATED \$70 MILLION IN ADVERTISING VALUE EQUIVALENCY (AVE)** through carefully crafted pitches that secured placements in highly desirable food publications, while also reaching broader outlets to share our Wisconsin Cheese stories. Our earned placements have achieved a "Very Good" impact score, reflecting our strategic focus on impressions, sentiment, key markets, target publications, Proudly Wisconsin Cheese (PWC) storytelling, message penetration, placement type, visual branding, link inclusion, and overall value. This year, we introduced the 2025 Trends Report and showcased our upcoming activations at our NYC desksides, where we **CONNECTED WITH OVER 150 WRITERS FROM 20 DIFFERENT MEDIA OUTLETS**, including Bon Appétit, Food & Wine, Serious Eats, and Epicurious. Our regional broadcast earned media segments and national satellite media tours further enhanced our reach, resulting in **MORE THAN 45 MILLION IMPRESSIONS, OVER 3,000 PLACEMENTS, AND AN AD EQUIVALENCY VALUE EXCEEDING \$1.7 MILLION**. Notably, our National Cheese Lover's Day campaign connected with over 500 million people through PR and social media, generating over 14,000 interactions. The Kentucky Derby media campaign alone drove over \$15 million in AVE, solidifying our presence in the culinary landscape.



#1

DRIVE AFFINITY FOR WISCONSIN DAIRY PRODUCTS
WITH AN EMPHASIS ON IMPROVING PERCEPTION OF
WISCONSIN CHEESE (90/90/10) RULE.



RINDS & ROSES

**CONTINUE TO TIGHTEN
ALIGNMENT OF MARKETING
COMMUNICATIONS AND
CHANNEL TO CREATE
STRONGER INTEGRATED
AND UNIFIED EFFORTS.**

SUMMARY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In FY25, we delivered truly unified, cross-channel impact by tightly aligning our marketing, communications, and retail efforts—most notably through the Kentucky Derby activation, which paired in-store sampling at Kroger-Murray's with national media exposure. Our "Welcome to Wisconsin" campaign exemplified seamless collaboration, combining a national satellite media tour with retail promotions to drive consumers directly to purchase. From point-of-sale materials to social media and PR, our integrated approach consistently amplified the Proudly Wisconsin Cheese brand across every touchpoint.



CROSS-FUNCTIONAL
ALIGNMENT

One example of our unified integrated efforts in FY25 was the Kentucky Derby. Beyond the excitement at Churchill Downs, our Channel team took the Kentucky Derby brand activation to a retail promotion in partnership with Kroger-Murrays. Themed “Kentucky Derby Perfect Bites” featuring Wisconsin cheese were sampled in 15 stores surrounding Louisville, **RESULTING IN A 46% INCREASE IN WISCONSIN CHEESE SALES.** Additionally, our “Welcome to Wisconsin” national retail promotion saw collaboration between Channel and Communications through a satellite media tour that aired on local TV stations and nationwide, encouraging viewers to seek out Wisconsin cheese promotions at their local retailers. Throughout the year, our PR team consistently highlighted the Proudly Wisconsin Cheese badge and specific retailer mentions in media coverage. Our Grate. Pair. Share. magazine was distributed to key cheesemongers and retail buyers, complemented by recipes featured in point-of-sale materials at retail locations. We also engaged in both paid and organic social media collaborations with cheese and dairy companies, sharing these recipes and articles to amplify their marketing efforts.



ON-SITE



FOODSERVICE



PR



RETAIL



DIGITAL



COMMUNITY



SOCIAL

#1

DRIVE AFFINITY FOR WISCONSIN DAIRY PRODUCTS
WITH AN EMPHASIS ON IMPROVING PERCEPTION OF
WISCONSIN CHEESE (90/90/10) RULE.

**EXECUTE BRAND
EXPERIENCES THAT
REACH AT LEAST 15,000+
FOOD FANATICS AND
PEOPLE THROUGH DIRECT
ENGAGEMENT, DELIVERING
IMPACTFUL BRAND
PRESENCE AT MEANINGFUL
AND MAJOR EVENTS.**

SUMMARY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In FY25, we exceeded our goal by 20% by directly engaging over 18,000 Food Fanatics through immersive brand experiences at major events like the 151st Kentucky Derby, where live sampling and red-carpet presence delivered over \$15 million in earned media. Signature events like the Cheese Fair Off the Square and our sold-out Top Chef Brunch deepened consumer affinity, generated local buzz, and delivered real sales, while the Wisconsin Art of Cheese Festival launch ignited national excitement with ticket buyers from 30 states so far. Each activation strengthened Wisconsin Cheese's cultural relevance and impact—on the ground and across digital and PR channels.



EVENTS AND EXPERIENCES

In FY25, our events and experiences **CONNECTED WITH OVER 18,000 PEOPLE** in person, with a strong focus on engaging Food Fanatics, while many more were reached through PR and digital extensions. Among the highlights, our involvement in the 151st Kentucky Derby was a success. Through a multi-channel approach, we created a vibrant presence over the three-day weekend, reaching more than 10,000 attendees through live sampling and brand activations. The largest sampling effort took place at Churchill Downs, accessible to all attendees, and celebrity Gail Simmons helped drive **OVER \$15 MILLION IN EARNED MEDIA** for the entire Derby campaign. Her on-screen engagement further amplified attendance at our activation. We also showcased Wisconsin Cheese at the Barnstable Brown Gala, where we provided a cheese cart sampling experience for celebrities and elite Derby attendees.

Our Cheese Fair Off the Square and Top Chef Brunch saw participation from 15 companies sampling and selling products alongside the iconic Dane County Farmers Market, resulting in **\$15,000 IN CHEESE SALES AND ATTRACTING OVER 7,000 ATTENDEES**. This event generated local media buzz and has become a signature event for DFW. We capitalized on the popularity of Wisconsin's season of Top Chef by hosting a sold-out brunch that ignited love and affinity for Wisconsin Cheese both in person and on social media, even earning an award!

Additionally, we launched the Wisconsin Art of Cheese Festival, which will fully come to life in FY26. This year's launch saw **OVER HALF OF THE EVENTS SELL OUT BY THE END OF MAY**, generating considerable PR and social media excitement that sets the stage for an even bigger second year. Ticket sales have already come from 30 states, putting us **ON TRACK TO MEET OR EXCEED OUR 2023 RESULTS**. Finally, at the American Cheese Society Conference, we reached our core audience through a custom-tailored event that brought together makers, mongers, farmers, and more, with over 300 attendees—nearly half of the entire conference.



#2 INCREASE VISIBILITY, DISTRIBUTION, TRIAL, AND SALES OF WISCONSIN CHEESE IN THE U.S. AND ABROAD, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH CHEESE COMPANIES, MAJOR/INFLUENTIAL RETAILERS, AND RESTAURANT CHAINS.

GROW STRATEGIC INTERNATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS, TRADE SHOWS, IN-MARKET ACTIVATIONS AND MARKETING. IN-MARKET RETAIL PROGRAMMING IN MEXICO, PARTNER WITH USDEC/DATCP AND USDA FAS TO EXECUTE IN-COUNTRY AS WELL AS IN-WISCONSIN MISSIONS.



SUMMARY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In FY25, we significantly expanded Wisconsin Cheese's global footprint, activating in over 50 countries through high-impact trade shows, strategic partnerships, and in-market retail programs—including new efforts and tactics in Mexico at City Market, Fresko, and La Comer. Collaborating with USDEC, USDA, and WEDC, we executed eight international buyer missions and helped introduce more than 150 new SKUs worldwide, and 100+ in China via e-commerce. From France to the Philippines and Australia to Argentina, Wisconsin Cheese is becoming a beloved global brand—driven by strategic marketing and storytelling, world-class product, and boots-on-the-ground engagement.

EXPORTS

It’s a Wisconsin Cheese world after all... or at least it’s becoming one! This year, our Exports team made significant strides in showcasing Wisconsin Cheese at five prestigious international trade shows, including SIAL Paris, Gulfood, Food & Hospitality Asia, Thaifex Anuga, and Seoul Food & Hotel. These events allowed us to connect with key buyers and importers from vital regions around the globe, amplifying the reach of Wisconsin Cheese. In collaboration with partners such as USDEC, USDA, and the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC), the team embarked on outreach trips to Australia, Central America, and China, where they engaged with prominent retailers, foodservice buyers, and importers in emerging markets. Many of these new contacts will be joining our upcoming buyer missions, paving the way for future partnerships.

Our Exports team also planned and executed **FIVE INTERNATIONAL BUYER MISSIONS**, bringing together buyers, importers, and retailers from countries including the UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Thailand, China, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Australia, Mexico, Vietnam, the Philippines, Morocco, and Taiwan. These efforts resulted in the introduction of **OVER 150 NEW ITEMS IN INTERNATIONAL MARKETS**. Beyond trade shows and buyer missions, we conducted comprehensive cheese sensory and education training for five importers and retailers in Thailand, reaching over 150 cheese buyers and sellers. Our promotional campaigns, such as “Cheese is My Love Language” and “Taste of USA,” further enhanced our visibility in these key markets.

To optimize our operations, we expanded our internal accounting system to include new export capabilities, significantly improving our account management and support efficiency. Our geotargeted international media plan during SIAL Paris and the IDF World Dairy Summit generated **OVER 3 MILLION IMPRESSIONS WITH OUR DUAL-LANGUAGE ADS** (French and English), effectively driving awareness of how Wisconsin dairy farmers nurture their land, animals, and communities.

In Mexico, we conducted retailer events in three key retail stores—City Market, Fresko, and La Comer—alongside HEB Mexico retail programs. This initiative expanded the distribution of Wisconsin cheeses in major retail locations in Mexico City and Monterrey, solidifying our presence in this vibrant market.

The reach of Wisconsin Cheese now spans numerous global markets, including the MENA region with nine countries (UAE, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Yemen, Oman, and Israel), 13 countries in Asia (China, Japan, Indonesia, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore, Laos, Burma, and Cambodia), and 11 countries in Europe (France, Germany, Italy, Finland, Portugal, the Netherlands, Spain, Denmark, Ireland, the UK, and Austria), with potential for even more expansion. We are also making inroads in Oceania, with a presence in Australia and New Zealand, as well as North America, including Canada, Mexico, and Puerto Rico, and Central and South America with 12 countries, such as Guatemala, Panama, Costa Rica, Honduras, Belize, Colombia, Peru, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Jamaica, and the Virgin Islands.

As we continue to expand our global footprint, the future looks brighter than ever for Wisconsin Cheese on the international stage!



#2

INCREASE VISIBILITY, DISTRIBUTION, TRIAL, AND SALES OF WISCONSIN CHEESE IN THE U.S. AND ABROAD, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH CHEESE COMPANIES, MAJOR/INFLUENTIAL RETAILERS, AND RESTAURANT CHAINS.

DELIVER ANNUAL PLANS FOR INTEGRATED PROGRAMS, BUYER MISSIONS, AND TRADE SHOWS WITH TOP 125 RETAIL ACCOUNTS. EXECUTE TWO NATIONAL GROCERY PROMOTIONS AT 10,000+ RETAIL OUTLETS.

SUMMARY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In FY25, we collaborated with 138 retailers and distributors, executed over 1,000 campaigns, and helped drive a 6% growth in Wisconsin specialty cheese sales, outpacing the category nearly threefold. Our national “Share the Joy” and “Welcome to Wisconsin” promotions alone reached over 10,000 retail outlets, showcasing Proudly Wisconsin Cheese coast to coast through partners like Kroger and Safeway. From 31 high-impact buyer missions to major trade show presence and in-store activations, the team continues to solidify Wisconsin Cheese as a retail force and category growth leader.



CHANNEL

This year, the Regional Marketing Managers (RMM) collaborated with 138 retailers and distributors across the United States to elevate the visibility and sales of Wisconsin's artisan and specialty cheeses. The results? A **6% GROWTH IN WISCONSIN-IDENTIFIED SPECIALTY CHEESE VOLUME, OUTPACING THE OVERALL SPECIALTY CHEESE CATEGORY**, which grew by just 2%. This performance means Wisconsin cheese is growing at a rate 15 times faster than its non-Wisconsin counterparts.

Our RMM team employed a mix of strategies, including digital and print advertising, in-store sampling events, and display contests, along with social media efforts and strategic point-of-sale promotions. In total, they **EXECUTED OVER 1,000 IMPACTFUL RETAILER CAMPAIGNS AND PROMOTIONS**. Highlights included two major national campaigns: “Share the Joy” during the winter holidays, which featured 84 retail partners, and “Welcome to Wisconsin” in May for American Cheese Month, reaching over 106 retailers and distributors. Notably, these promotions featured retailers like Kroger, Albertsons/Safeway, and Ahold USA, ensuring that **PROUDLY WISCONSIN CHEESE WAS SHOWCASED IN MORE THAN 10,000 RETAIL LOCATIONS NATIONWIDE**.

Our Channel team also made its mark by participating in five national trade shows, including the Private Label Manufacturers Association (PLMA) and the Summer Fancy Food Show. These events connected key trade decision-makers with 48 Wisconsin cheese companies, fostering invaluable relationships. Additionally, our RMMs and Channel Marketing team hosted **OVER 31 LIVE BUYER MISSIONS, BRINGING NEARLY 300 INFLUENTIAL DECISION-MAKERS** into Wisconsin to tour cheesemaking facilities and engage with local dairy farms. These missions have proven instrumental in securing new distribution channels and enhancing the reputation of Wisconsin cheese among retail and foodservice partners.



#2 INCREASE VISIBILITY, DISTRIBUTION, TRIAL, AND SALES OF WISCONSIN CHEESE IN THE U.S. AND ABROAD, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH CHEESE COMPANIES, MAJOR/INFLUENTIAL RETAILERS, AND RESTAURANT CHAINS.

CONTINUE TO WORK WITH PROCESSORS TO DELIVER MORE WITH MAJOR PROGRAMS LIKE TRADE SHOWS, BUYER MISSIONS, AND VIRTUAL BUYER MISSIONS. PROVIDE VALUE-ADDED CONSULTATION WITH MARKETING AND SALES STRATEGY/EXECUTION. CONTINUE TO GET THE BADGE ON MORE RETAIL AND PRIVATE LABEL CHEESES.

SUMMARY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In FY25, we partnered with Wisconsin dairy companies through strategic support, marketing, and high-impact programs, including 115 trade show booths, 9,200 retail demos, and six “Taste and Learn” sessions. We expanded the Proudly Wisconsin Cheese badge to 134 companies, adding 555 new products and amplifying brand visibility. Our efforts helped to drive growth, awareness, and deeper integration of Wisconsin cheese nationwide.



DAIRY COMPANY COMMUNICATIONS (DCC)

As our primary point of contact with Wisconsin dairy processors, the DCC team works to further deepen and strengthen relationships, engaging processors with DFW programming and providing support to help increase demand for Wisconsin milk. In FY25, the team reached out to 142 companies and assisted 134 companies in qualifying to add the Proudly Wisconsin Cheese badge to **555 NEW PRODUCTS** and related marketing.

DCC also plays a critical role in connecting processors to buyers and ensuring quality participation in our buyer missions and trade shows. As part of our initiatives, we welcomed four new companies to our buyer missions and five new participants at trade shows.

Additionally, DCC supports Wisconsin dairy companies' own marketing efforts featuring the badge. We facilitated **9,200 RETAIL DEMOS AND 115 TRADE SHOW BOOTHS**, supporting 76 Wisconsin cheese and dairy companies in their marketing and sales endeavors. This year, the DCC Team aided entry in award competitions that reinforced our “Most awarded cheese in the world” marketing message and status. To further foster awareness, the DCC Team hosted six “Taste and Learn” sessions with individual cheese companies for all staff to learn more about the company’s story, product offerings, and tasting notes in order to better integrate them into our Channel programs and Marketing activations.



#2

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EXPAND CHEESE STATE UNIVERSITY WITH PROFESSIONAL CHEESE SPECIALISTS TO ENHANCE WISCONSIN KNOWLEDGE, REVAMP IN-STATE VISIT EXECUTION.

SUMMARY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

By expanding Cheese State University (CSU) with expert cheese specialists and revamping in-state visit execution, we've propelled Wisconsin cheese education to new heights—surpassing 1,000 Scholars, increasing conversion rates to 31%, and igniting over 250,000 consumer conversations annually. With job confidence among students soaring by 123% and national retailers like Whole Foods embedding CSU into their Certified Cheese Professional (CCP) training, CSU's impact is both measurable and transformational.



CHEESE STATE UNIVERSITY

The CSU community continues to flourish, with enrollment projected to exceed 3,200 students by year-end. This growth includes 10 key retailers who embraced our group study programming, resulting in over 250 new Cheese State Scholars. Our **TOTAL NUMBER OF SCHOLARS HAS NOW SURPASSED 1,000, DEMONSTRATING A SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN OUR ENROLLEE CONVERSION RATE FROM 25% TO 29%.**

A recent survey revealed that students participating in CSU **REPORTED A 39% INCREASE IN JOB SATISFACTION AND A 123% BOOST IN JOB CONFIDENCE**—proving that our training programs are indispensable tools for retailers. Our students are driving over 250,000 conversations about Wisconsin cheese at the consumer point-of-sale each year, showcasing their passion and knowledge.

We hosted five virtual Study Hall classes, attracting over 500 attendees and selling out our final event in just six minutes. Our in-state education week for Whole Foods and Murray’s positively impacted more than 100 influential cheesemongers during their visit to Wisconsin.

As one student reflected, “The more I learn about Wisconsin, the more in love I feel.” Another noted, “I don’t know of any other state that coordinates, funds, and delivers high-quality professional learning—while promoting in-state makers—like Cheese State U. Kudos to Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin!” **WHOLE FOODS MARKET HAS INTEGRATED CSU INTO ITS CCP TRAINING CURRICULUM**, enhancing team members’ foundational cheese knowledge and boosting their confidence.



#3

IN WISCONSIN, BUILD TRUST IN WISCONSIN DAIRY, PRIMARILY THROUGH SUSTAINABILITY. SECONDLY, IMPROVE AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING OF DFW WITH FARMERS AND INDUSTRY.

SHOWCASE WISCONSIN DAIRY FARMER SUSTAINABILITY STORIES THROUGH MEDIA WITH CONSUMERS AND LEGISLATORS TO HELP THEM UNDERSTAND AND SUPPORT FARMERS' EFFORTS. DEVELOP AND USE NEW CREATIVE—"IT'S WHAT WE DO"—TO HELP DELIVER THE SUSTAINABILITY MESSAGING.



SUMMARY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

We brought Wisconsin dairy farmers' environment, animal care, and community stories to life through our "It's What We Do" campaign—reaching 1.7 million unique viewers and generating 7.4 million video views across social media. Our new creative, used by both DATCP and international partners, drove nearly 2 million video views and 60,000 website visits in a single week, proving the power of authentic storytelling to inspire consumer and community support.

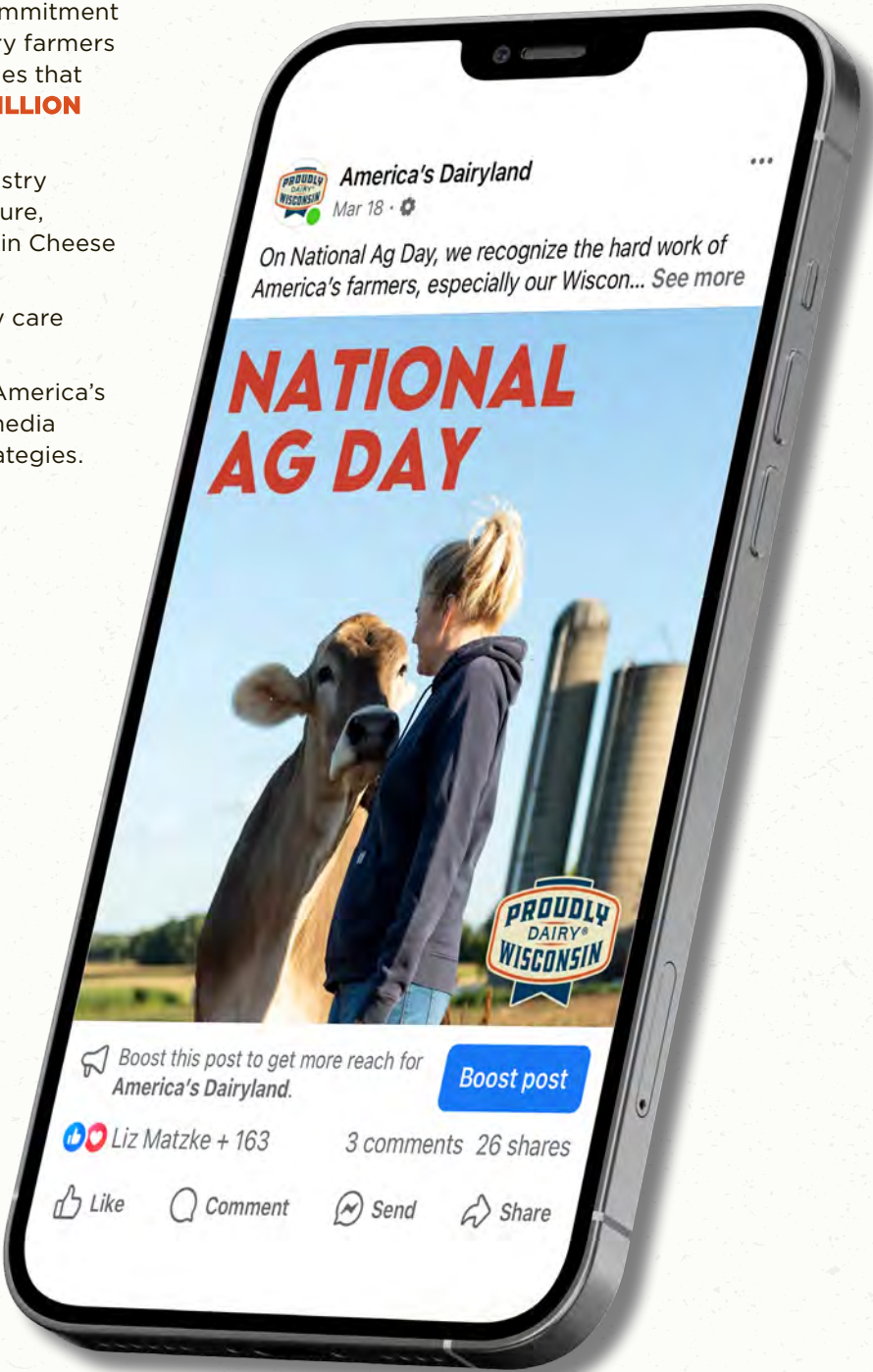
SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES—IT’S WHAT WE DO

This year, we launched our comprehensive sustainability website at www.wisconsin dairy.org/sustainability to serve as a hub for our commitment to caring for Wisconsin. Our “It’s What We Do” messaging campaign featured two videos showcasing the dedication of Wisconsin dairy farmers and highlighting sustainable practices from multigenerational farms. Through a social media strategy, we shared authentic farmer stories that resonate with consumers, reaching **1.7 MILLION UNIQUE VIEWERS WITHIN THE FIRST EIGHT MONTHS**. Our posts **GARNERED 7.4 MILLION VIEWS**, amplifying our message across platforms like YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook.

We harnessed the spirit of Wisconsin Badger fans by connecting farmer stories to our sponsorship, while also partnering with key industry organizations to raise awareness of our farmers’ narratives. Our “It’s What We Do” video became a tool for the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) at industry events, both domestically and internationally, and was showcased at the Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association (WCMA) sustainability conference.

June Dairy Month featured **56 WISCONSIN DAIRY FARM FAMILIES** sharing their on-farm sustainability practices, showcasing the daily care they implement on their farms. These stories reached over **16 MILLION CONSUMERS**, helping build trust for Wisconsin dairy.

The impact of our sustainability video was profound, with **1.97 MILLION VIEWS AND 8.72 MILLION IMPRESSIONS** from our ads. Our America’s Dairyland Facebook page saw a surge of engagement, with 321 new followers, 465 comments, and 700 shares. Our SIAL Paris social media video ad alone achieved 1.3 million views and drove 60,000 website visits in just seven days, thanks to our deliberate geotargeting strategies.



#3 IN WISCONSIN, BUILD TRUST IN WISCONSIN DAIRY, PRIMARILY THROUGH SUSTAINABILITY. SECONDLY, IMPROVE AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING OF DFW WITH FARMERS AND INDUSTRY.

PARTNER WITH INDUSTRY TO HELP BUILD AND TRAIN FOR MESSAGING, SHARE, AND EXPAND OUR FARMER SUSTAINABILITY STORIES AND MEDIA TRAIN AT LEAST 30 DAIRY FARMERS.



SUMMARY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

We exceeded our goal by media training 67 Wisconsin dairy farmers and activating storytelling tools like the “Farmer Feature” series and development of the M.I.L.K. points framework—ensuring consistent, compelling messaging across platforms. Through strategic partnerships and over 65 facilitated interviews, we expanded farmer voices to new audiences, reaching more than 3 million households and boosting TV viewership by 9%. This unified approach is empowering farmers and board members alike to champion Wisconsin dairy with clarity and impact.

FARMERS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

In FY25, we **TRAINED 67 WISCONSIN DAIRY FARMERS ACROSS SIX LOCATIONS**, connecting with an average of 30 dairy farmers daily at trade show activations. Our “Farmer Feature” initiative on social media successfully built community and promoted our “It’s What We Do” messaging. By facilitating over 65 interviews set to go live in June 2025 for June Dairy Month (JDM), we fostered relationships with farmers who had not previously engaged with DFW. During the WIAA events, we shared farmer stories that **REACHED OVER THREE MILLION HOUSEHOLDS, RESULTING IN A 9% INCREASE IN TELEVISION VIEWERSHIP AND PROMOTING POSITIVE DAIRY MESSAGING.**



M.I.L.K. POINTS–UNIFIED STORYTELLING

In response to the board request for tools to tell a cohesive story about Wisconsin’s dairy checkoff, we developed the M.I.L.K. points program. This comprehensive framework will guide new DFW board members in understanding our mission and operations, covering essential elements such as the 90/90 rule and our charter’s restrictions. The M.I.L.K. points delve into four key areas: Marketing, International, Local, and Keys to the Future, providing a clear structure for storytelling. This initiative equips board members with tools like booklets, one-pagers, redesigned business cards with QR codes, and a dedicated web page for farmers. As we move forward, all farmer communications will be built around this innovative infrastructure.

IT’S ALL ABOUT THE



MARKETING

INTER-
NATIONAL

LOCAL

KEYS
TO THE
FUTURE



#3

IN WISCONSIN, BUILD TRUST IN WISCONSIN DAIRY, PRIMARILY THROUGH SUSTAINABILITY. SECONDLY, IMPROVE AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING OF DFW WITH FARMERS AND INDUSTRY.

EDUCATE SCHOOL YOUTH THROUGH EFFECTIVE AND COST-EFFECTIVE PROGRAMMING AND INCREASE JUNE DAIRY MONTH EARNED MEDIA BY 10%.



SUMMARY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

We energized youth engagement through innovative, cost-effective programs like the Dairy Escape Room—reaching 5,000 students—and a 30% growth in our Adopt a Cow program, now impacting 55,000 students. With \$100K awarded to 35 school districts through our Dairy Optimization Initiative, we kept dairy top of mind for 33,000 students while increasing June Dairy Month (JDM) earned media by over 10% through strategic school-centered storytelling and high-impact events like the WIAA State Tournaments.

ENGAGING THE NEXT GENERATION

One of our most exciting initiatives this year was the launch of the Dairy Escape Room, a STEM-focused educational resource that attracted **OVER 300 DOWNLOADS AND ENGAGED 5,000 STUDENTS** with updated sustainability lessons. Our **ADOPT A COW PROGRAM GREW BY 30%, REACHING 55,000 STUDENTS**, while **OUR CHOCOLATE MILK MINI-GRANTS IMPACTED 10,000 STUDENTS THROUGH 17 AWARDED GRANTS**. We initiated interviews during the WIAA State Tournaments to promote sustainability messaging and the nutritional value of milk, while **OUR DAIRY OPTIMIZATION INITIATIVE AWARDED OVER \$100K TO 35 SCHOOL DISTRICTS, BENEFITING 33,000 STUDENTS** and keeping dairy relevant in schools.





**DISCOVER
TASTE
SUPPORT
WISCONSIN
DAIRY**



SUPPORT LOCAL DAIRY FARMERS
JUNE DAIRY MONTH
LEARN MORE



#3

IN WISCONSIN, BUILD TRUST IN WISCONSIN DAIRY, PRIMARILY THROUGH SUSTAINABILITY. SECONDLY, IMPROVE AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING OF DFW WITH FARMERS AND INDUSTRY.

BUILD INDUSTRY RELATIONS CAPABILITY WITH ELECTED OFFICIALS, DELIVERING THE IMPORTANCE OF DAIRY AND AG MESSAGING. DEEPER AND WIDER PARTNERSHIPS WITH LEADING DAIRY AND AG ORGANIZATIONS.



SUMMARY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

We strengthened industry relations by engaging key officials and participating in major events like Ag Day and DC Cheese Day to highlight the results of the Dairy Impact Study as well as dairy's economic impact in Wisconsin and beyond. Through strategic partnerships with the Wisconsin Farm Bureau, UW-River Falls, and crisis workshops, we built resilient alliances and delivered unified messaging.

STRENGTHENING INDUSTRY RELATIONS

This year, we engaged the Wisconsin Congressional Delegation and key members of the Wisconsin State Legislature to discuss the economic impact of agriculture and the power of DFW branding. As the lead organization of the Wisconsin dairy crisis preparedness team, which includes representatives from major dairy organizations in the state, DFW hosted three workshops with assistance from a leading agricultural and food agency to enhance industry crisis preparedness and messaging. This kind of collaboration helps our state maintain not only its readiness, but also reinforces Wisconsin's position as a leader for the dairy industry at large. We participated in the inaugural Ag Showcase during Wisconsin Ag Day at the Capitol, highlighting the results of the new Dairy Economic Impact Study. Finally, we collaborated with UW-River Falls to expand education and training opportunities in dairy.



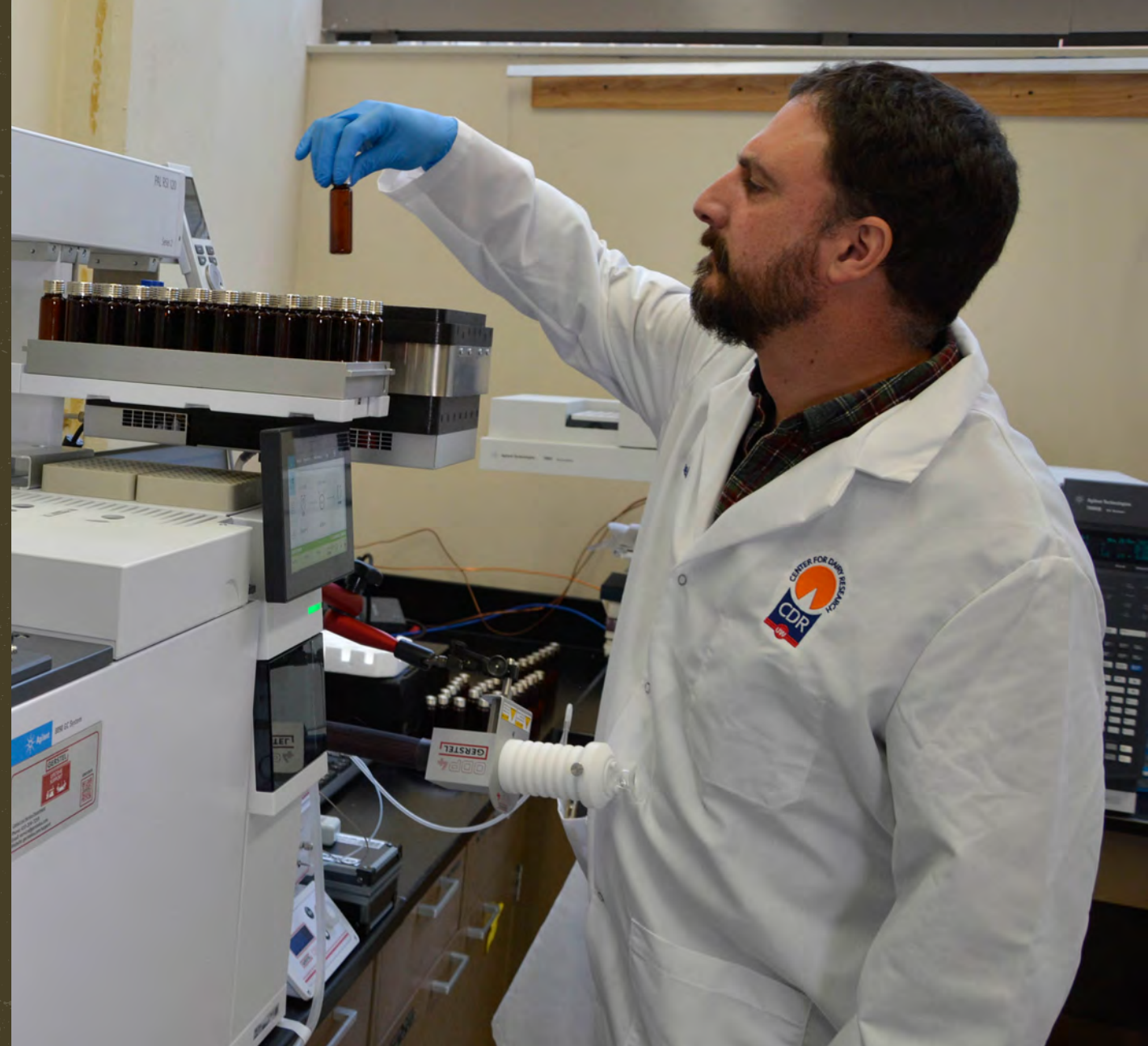
#3

IN WISCONSIN, BUILD TRUST IN WISCONSIN DAIRY, PRIMARILY THROUGH SUSTAINABILITY. SECONDLY, IMPROVE AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING OF DFW WITH FARMERS AND INDUSTRY.

SUPPORT DAIRY INNOVATION, PRODUCT, AND PROCESS DEVELOPMENT.

SUMMARY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

We helped drive dairy innovation forward by supporting 443 company collaborations—including 226 dairy processors—and facilitating 183 pilot plant trials that advanced cutting-edge product and process development. With over 1,000 participants trained through Center for Dairy Research (CDR) short courses and seven new Wisconsin Master Cheesemakers® certified in 2025, we continue to elevate Wisconsin as the national leader in dairy excellence. We also helped initiate a new program, supporting UW River Falls' cheesemaking and talent development.



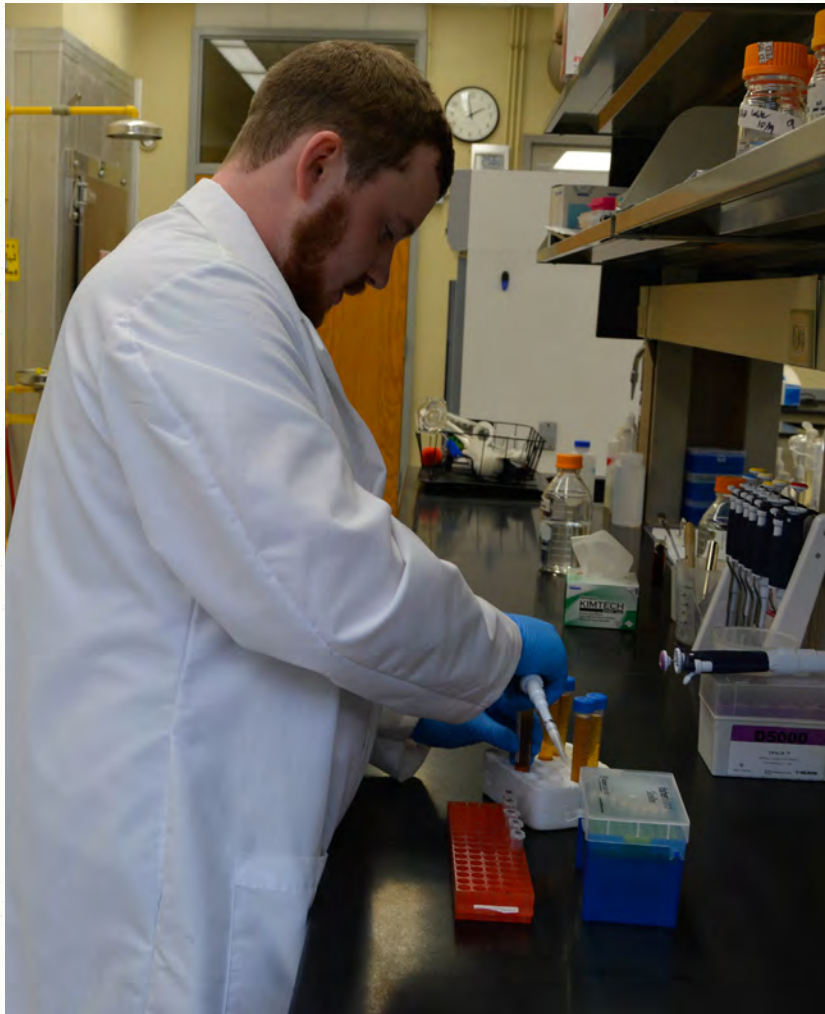
CENTER FOR DAIRY RESEARCH (CDR)

CDR continues to be a beacon of innovation, engaging in over **1800 INDUSTRY INTERACTIONS** in 2024, with 76% of projects, trials and training with Wisconsin and CDR Industry Team members.

State of the art upgrades include new equipment for the filtration, concentration, fermentation, separation, and drying of milk; a new aseptic line for shelf-stable, dairy-based beverages, and 10 ripening rooms for specialty cheeses, each with its own set of environmental controls that create specific conditions, such as temperature, humidity, and airflow for aging any kind of cheese. Sensory booths and services at CDR also allow industry partners to assess various attributes of dairy products using expert panels and consumer testing groups to maintain the demand for high-quality dairy foods and bring new products to the market.

CDR hosted national industry partners, including USDEC, DMI, UDIA, and leadership from several other state and national dairy organizations, and works with DFW on international buyer mission visits.

SHORT COURSES ATTRACTED 1,057 PARTICIPANTS and included **41 TOTAL DAIRY FOOD TRAINING COURSES** including science education, technical applications, and advanced processing techniques. Since the inception of the Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker® program, 111 cheesemakers have obtained Master certification, with 61 currently making cheese in Wisconsin. Notably, in 2025, we welcomed seven new Master Cheesemakers®, including Marieke Penterman, the fourth woman to attain this honor.



**FARMER FOUNDED,
FARMER LED.**

**ALIGN PROGRAMS
WITH BOARD-
APPROVED
STRATEGY AREAS.**



SUMMARY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

We rigorously align all programs with our board-approved strategy across four major focus areas—modifying or eliminating initiatives that don't drive core objectives. Through transparent reporting, regular reviews, and organization-wide engagement, we ensure every effort directly supports our mission. This disciplined approach, backed by active board collaboration and staff involvement, keeps us agile, accountable, and focused on delivering results for Wisconsin dairy farmers.

**FARMER FOUNDED,
FARMER LED.**

**UTILIZE MARKET
RESEARCH TO
IMPROVE KNOWLEDGE
OF FOOD FANATICS.**

SUMMARY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

By leveraging market research, we deepened our understanding of Food Fanatics—boosting brand awareness among Heavy Specialty Cheese Buyers from 41% to 48%. Our insights revealed that while specialty cheese makes up just 27% of Wisconsin's production, it drives over 50% of our brand equity. With trust in Wisconsin dairy farmers soaring to 88%—well above the national average—we've reinforced consumer confidence and solidified our impact across the state and beyond.



MARKET RESEARCH INSIGHTS

This year, we refreshed our brand tracker to better understand perceptions of Wisconsin specialty cheese. Key findings revealed that **WHILE 27% OF WISCONSIN'S CHEESE PRODUCTION IS SPECIALTY, IT DRIVES OVER 50% OF OUR BRAND EQUITY**. Our needs-based consumption study identified dessert as a primary opportunity for increasing specialty cheese consumption, while a digital ethnography explored:

BRAND AWARENESS GROWTH

AWARENESS AMONG FOOD FANATICS IS AT 51%, WITH A REMARKABLE JUMP FOR HEAVY SPECIALTY CHEESE BUYERS—GROWING FROM 41% LAST YEAR TO AN IMPRESSIVE 48% THIS YEAR.

This upward trend signifies our increasing impact and presence in the market.

TRUST IN WISCONSIN DAIRY FARMERS

TRUST IN WISCONSIN DAIRY FARMERS STANDS AT AN IMPRESSIVE 88%, SIGNIFICANTLY SURPASSING THE NATIONAL AVERAGE OF 79%.

This strong trust reflects the genuine connection and confidence that consumers have in our local dairy community.

POSITIVE PERCEPTION AMONG WISCONSINITES

Wisconsinites hold dairy farmers in high regard, with perceptions exceeding national averages in several key areas:

- Safety of Products: A resounding **85% OF WISCONSINITES BELIEVE THAT PROVIDING SAFE PRODUCTS IS A STRENGTH OF DAIRY FARMERS**, compared to just 69% nationally.
- Nutritional Value: Similarly, **85% RECOGNIZE DAIRY FARMERS FOR PROVIDING NUTRITIOUS PRODUCTS**, outpacing the 72% national average.
- Humane Treatment of Animals: **65% OF WISCONSINITES SEE TREATING ANIMALS HUMANELY AS A STRENGTH**, compared to 53% nationally.
- Transparency in Practices: **64% VALUE THE TRANSPARENCY OF DAIRY FARMERS REGARDING THEIR PRACTICES**, significantly higher than the 48% national average.
- Dairy Impact Study Insights: Our recent Dairy Impact Study among Wisconsin residents shows significant growth in key attributes from 2023 to 2025:
 - The percentage of individuals who identify as active supporters of the Wisconsin dairy industry has increased from 72% to 81%.
 - Those who believe that the dairy industry enhances their quality of life rose from 66% to 78%.

These positive findings showcase the strength of our brand, the trust in our dairy farmers, and the increasing recognition of the vital role the dairy industry plays in the lives of Wisconsinites. Together, we are making a lasting impact.



A man in a dark jacket and cap stands in the center of a large barn doorway, silhouetted against a bright sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a strong lens flare. The barn interior is dimly lit, with rows of cows visible in stalls on either side of the doorway. In the foreground, a hand is visible, pointing towards the man in the doorway, as if framing the scene. The overall mood is contemplative and hopeful.

FY26

FRAMING THE FUTURE

CHARTING OUR NEXT 10-YEAR JOURNEY:

- Envisioning 2036: Where Our Aspirations Will Lead Us
- Mapping Our Path: Developing Steps That Will Guide Us Forward
- Boldly Navigating Toward Our Future



wisconsindairy.org
wisconsincheese.com

Wisconsin Dairy:



America's Dairyland:



Wisconsin Cheese:

