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NEWS RELEASE

March 1, 2019

WCMA Applauds Governor Evers' Support of Dairy Processing Industry in State Budget Proposal

MADISON, WI – The Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association (WCMA) applauds Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers' budget proposals related to the state's dairy processing industry.

"Wisconsin has a rich tradition of cheesemaking and, with targeted investments, stands to have a bright future as a global leader in dairy processing of all kinds," said John Umhoefer, WCMA Executive Director. "We thank Governor Tony Evers for listening to WCMA members as they've shared their goals for growth and innovation and for the partnership he's offered via his budget proposal."

WCMA strongly supports the following elements of the 2019-21 Executive Budget:

- An increase in funding for dairy processor grants, issued by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP) for innovation, modernization, and food safety projects, from \$200,000 to \$400,000 annually;
- An allocation of \$200,000 to support the Wisconsin Initiative for Dairy Exports program, designed to help build Wisconsin's dairy brand in international markets and increase dairy exports;
- Adjustments to DATCP expenditure authority which allow the reclassification of staff positions for the retention of key, high quality personnel;
- Full funding for the Department of Natural Resources; and
- A sensible, sustainable funding source for much-needed transportation investments across the state.

"Agriculture is a backbone economy for Wisconsin, but the past few years have posed new challenges, both for processors and for our partners in the farming community," said Umhoefer. "We are optimistic that state support – along with business ingenuity and hard work – will usher us into the next chapter of growth."

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Media Note: For more than 125 years, the Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association has served as the voice of cheese and dairy manufacturers, processors, and marketers. Today, WCMA represents 105 dairy processing companies and cooperatives operating across the United States and around the world, backed by more than 500 companies that supply equipment and services to the industry. Learn more at WisCheeseMakers.org.