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Dairy Business Association: Export program would boost Wisconsin dairy community

Advocacy group praises Assembly for supporting \$5 million investment

MADISON, Wis. — The Dairy Business Association (DBA), Wisconsin’s leading dairy advocacy group, praised the state Assembly’s passage today of a bill aimed at increasing the state’s exports of dairy, meat and other agricultural products by 25 percent within five years.

Assembly Bill 314, which passed unanimously 95-0, creates a program at the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) and invests \$5 million toward the goal, with half the expenditure committed to dairy. DATCP would work with the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation.



“This new collaborative approach to agricultural exports is forward-thinking and creates opportunities,” DBA President Amy Penterman said. “It is an investment not only in our dairy farmers and processors but our rural communities as well.”

Wisconsin exported \$3.37 billion worth of agricultural and food products to 145 countries in 2020, according to DATCP. A third of the total went to Canada.

“It’s great to see the widespread support for this ambitious program,” Penterman said. “We are encouraged that legislators recognize its importance.”

[The bill](#) was authored by Sen. Joan Ballweg, R-Markesan, and Rep. Tony Kurtz, R-Wonewoc.

Gov. Tony Evers proposed a similar export program last session and in his 2021-23 budget.

The bill moves next to the Senate, which had voted in favor in June but must reconsider the legislation because of changes since then. The measure has received unanimous support in both the Senate Agriculture and Tourism Committee and the Joint Committee on Finance. Final approval would be needed from Evers.

“With unanimous support in the Assembly, we hope the Senate will take action soon and send this crucial bill to Governor Evers for his signature,” Penterman said.

BY THE NUMBERS

\$3.37 billion: Value of Wisconsin’s exported agricultural and food products in 2020

145: Countries that imported those products

\$263 million: Value of those exports in the category of dairy, eggs and honey

\$45.6 billion: Value of dairy’s economic activity in Wisconsin annually, nearly half of all ag revenue

7%: Dairy's share of Wisconsin's overall economy

Sources: [DATCP](#), [University of Wisconsin-Madison](#)

Images:

[Amy Penterman photo](#)

[DBA logo](#)

[DBA testimony at Committee on Joint Finance hearing Oct. 19](#)

[Assembly Bill 314](#)

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Dairy Business Association @DairyForward praises Assembly approval of Wisconsin ag exports bill aimed at 25% growth in 5 years <https://bit.ly/2Zm2mBG>

About DBA:

The Dairy Business Association is Wisconsin's leading dairy advocacy group, championing smart and sensible regulations affecting the dairy community. The nonprofit organization is comprised of farmers, milk processors, vendors and other business partners who work collaboratively to ensure that dairy farms of all sizes have the support they need to keep America's Dairyland strong. More information: www.dairyforward.com