



# Dairy Business Innovation Alliance

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## NEWS RELEASE

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### DBIA Awards \$4.6M in Grants to Midwest Dairy Processors

MADISON, WI – The Dairy Business Innovation Alliance (DBIA), a partnership between the Center for Dairy Research (CDR) and the Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association (WCMA), has selected 42 small and medium-sized dairy businesses across the Midwest to receive approximately \$4.6 million in grants through the Dairy Business Innovation Alliance (DBIA). Seven companies are receiving DBIA's Dairy Industry Impact grants, and 35 businesses have been awarded Dairy Business Builder grants. Overall, DBIA received 98 applications for over \$10 million in requested funds.

“These projects are a testament to the innovative spirit of the Midwest’s dairy farmers and processors, and their dedication to pursue solutions that elevate not only their businesses, but the industry as a whole,” said WCMA Executive Director John Umhoefer.

“This program continues to help dairy processors and farmsteads innovate and grow their businesses. These funds also help to improve their resilience and support important opportunities like exports and sustainability,” said CDR Director John Lucey.

The Dairy Industry Impact grant program is targeted to help dairy businesses develop an idea or tackle a challenge with the potential to advance the dairy industry as a whole. In this offering, DBIA solicited projects related to exporting and sustainability. Seven companies have been selected and will receive a total of approximately \$600,000 in reimbursable grants.

The Dairy Industry Impact grant recipients are:

- **Burnett Dairy Cooperative of Grantsburg, WI:** Burnett Dairy Cooperative, a 129-year-old cooperative located in Northern Wisconsin, is actively exploring sustainable solutions for managing wastewater at their Cady Cheese facility. This award will enable Burnett Dairy Cooperative to continue researching innovative and environmentally responsible wastewater utilization options.

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**Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri,  
Nebraska, Ohio, South Dakota & Wisconsin**



- **Cereal Byproducts Company of Mount Prospect, IL:** Cereal Byproducts distributes and manufactures multiple commodities, ingredients, and products that are used in food, pet food, and animal feed applications. Their footprint in the agricultural industry dates back to 1917. This award will allow Cereal Byproducts' manufacturing site to process more raw materials in a shorter period of time, while also lowering their energy consumption.
- **Lamers Dairy of Appleton, WI:** Lamers Dairy is a fifth generation, family owned and operated dairy processor that has been providing dairy products to families in Wisconsin since 1913. This award will help Lamers Dairy purchase a grease trap interceptor to help ensure operational compliance, safeguard the employment of staff members, and secure the viability of their small family farm producers for future generations.
- **Moulin Rouge, LLC of Chippewa Falls, WI:** This project will determine the business feasibility of several smaller Wisconsin cheese companies working collaboratively to sell and distribute cheeses in strategic export markets. Developing a new commonly-owned business that shares selling and distribution resources will improve their ability to compete more effectively for export customers. The project will identify the specific market, financial, and operational requirements for the new business entity's success.
- **Organic Valley – CROPP Cooperative of La Farge, WI:** CROPP Cooperative is the largest organic farmer-owned cooperative in the U.S., representing over 1,600 farms across 29 states, and the maker of one of the nation's leading organic brands - Organic Valley. This project will convert Organic Valley's butter packaging to an at-home compostable film, supported by a shelf-life study to ensure product stability and a comprehensive marketing campaign to educate consumers on its sustainability benefits.
- **Redhead Creamery, LLC of Brooten, MN:** Redhead Creamery is a farmstead cheese and whey-based spirits producer crafting artisan products directly on their family dairy farm. This award will help Redhead Creamery install a smart CIP and valve automation system, reducing water, chemical, and energy usage while improving efficiency and preventing product loss.
- **Semifreddo LLC of Grand Rapids, MI:** Semifreddo produces artisanal Italian frozen desserts for retail, wholesale, and events. This award will support the installation of a walk-in freezer, allowing Semifreddo to scale production, improve operating efficiency, and serve more customers throughout Michigan and beyond.

The Dairy Business Builder grant program is targeted at small-to-medium size farmers or processors that are diversifying on-farm activity, creating value-added products, enhancing dairy by-products, or creating or expanding export programs. In total, 35 dairy businesses will be receiving grants worth more than \$4 million.

The Dairy Business Builder grant recipients are:

- **Amazing Ice Cream LLC, DBA Third Coast Frozen Distillery of Port Washington, WI:** Third Coast Frozen Distillery creates pre-made ice cream drinks for wholesale to bars, restaurants, supper clubs, and events. This award will help with the purchase of a pallet jack/forklift-accessible freezer and a filler for their continuous ice cream machine.

- **Annie G's Dairy of Ann Arbor, MI:** Annie G's Dairy is a family-owned, value-added business operating alongside the family's 100-cow robotic dairy farm in rural Michigan. Annie G's small farm business model supports healthy, happy cows producing high quality, A2A2 whole milk and builds community ties through direct farm to customer sales. This award will support Annie G's continued production of whole creamline milk and additional sales of cream and drinkable yogurts.
- **Baetje Farms of Bloomsdale, MO:** Baetje Farms is an artisan creamery making world renowned cheese in Bloomsdale, MO specializing in French inspired cheeses. This award will help Baetje Farms purchase a refrigerated vehicle to distribute their cheese to new markets.
- **Bekkum Family Farms LLC, DBA Nordic Creamery of Westby, WI:** Nordic Creamery is a small, family run dairy located in the heart of Wisconsin's Driftless region that specializes in small batch artisan cheese and butter. This award will help Nordic Creamery shift some of their products into direct-to-consumer packaging, allowing them to reach new markets and expand sales.
- **Bold Spoon Creamery of Park Hills, MO:** Bold Spoon Creamery is a premium artisanal ice cream manufacturer based in Park Hills, MO, producing from a commercial kitchen on Bold Spoon Farm. This award will support their next phase of growth by enabling them to significantly scale production through the purchase of large-scale equipment, expand into new geographic markets, and grow into additional business segments.
- **Capriole, Inc. of Greenville, IN:** Capriole has been making award-winning products since 1988. This award will help carry the family-run creamery into the future by providing the foundation for larger-scale production in its existing facility.
- **Chocolate Shoppe Ice Cream Company, Inc. of Madison, WI:** Chocolate Shoppe Ice Cream is a Wisconsin-based, family-owned and operated company crafting super-premium ice cream since 1962 - made with real ingredients, shared with joy, and loved by the communities they serve. This award will help Chocolate Shoppe purchase equipment to increase production capacity and efficiency.
- **Crave Brothers Farmstead Cheese of Waterloo, WI:** Crave Brothers Farmstead Cheese is a family owned and operated Wisconsin dairy farm and cheese factory producing award-winning fresh mozzarella, oxaca, and mascarpone. This award will help purchase additional processing equipment to increase production capacity and support continued business growth.
- **Fellwock Family Creamery of Monet, MO:** Fellwock Dairy is a fourth-generation family farm owned by Mark and Johna Fellwock. The creation of Fellwock Creamery will allow the next generation to remain involved in the farm while helping expand into handcrafted cheeses, premium ice cream, and bottled milk. This award will help Fellwock Creamery purchase valuable pieces of equipment such as a pasteurizer, cheese vat, and chiller so they can begin producing high quality dairy products for their community and beyond.

- **Foremost Farms USA of Middleton, WI:** Foremost Farms USA, a dairy cooperative celebrating its 30th anniversary in 2025, specializes in producing high-quality aged cheddar, mozzarella, provolone, and butter. This award will enable the cooperative to invest in advanced milk standardization technology, enhance product yield, improve consistency, and support continued innovation in its dairy processing operations.
- **Grison Creamery LLC of Ava, MO:** Grison Creamery was founded in 1997 by Swiss immigrants Heinz and Vroni Buff. Their son Adrian trained as a cheesemaker in Switzerland and started making cheese using milk from their dairy in 2018. This award will allow the creamery to purchase new equipment, which will alleviate labor pressures and allow for more cheese to be produced and sold in different markets.
- **H&H Creamery LLC of Bruce, SD:** H&H Creamery will be a new dairy processing facility that will utilize milk from the owners' family farm to create dairy products for their local communities. This award will help H&H Creamery as they begin this new journey of dairy processing with the purchase of key components including a pasteurizer, bottler, and ice cream maker.
- **Harmony Cheese LLC of Edgar, WI:** Harmony Cheese is a newly revitalized cheese producer with nearly 100 years of cheese-making history with unique varieties currently in production. This award will enable Harmony to upgrade their packaging equipment to improve product shelf life, enhance food safety, and bring visual appeal to a whole new level.
- **Henning Cheese of Kiel, WI:** Henning Cheese is a fourth-generation family cheese company that manufactures a variety of cheeses along with curds and whips. This award will allow Henning Cheese to expand production and to package their curds and whips into smaller retail and snack size packages to help grow a burgeoning market and reach new customers.
- **Hidden Springs Creamery LLC of Westby, WI:** Hidden Springs Creamery is a family owned and operated farmstead sheep cheese operation that produces multiple award winning hard and soft sheep milk cheeses and a sheep milk ricotta. This award will help Hidden Springs streamline the production of Driftless, their flagship cheese, by adding equipment that will decrease draining time by a full workday and provide a more consistent product.
- **Holland's Family Cheese LLC of Thorp, WI:** Marieke Gouda is a family-owned and woman-owned farmstead cheese operation that specializes in raw milk gouda using an authentic, Old World technique. This award will help Marieke Gouda purchase labeling equipment which will allow them to work more efficiently and produce more of their award-winning premium gouda.
- **ICD Holdings LLC, DBA Clementine's Ice Cream of St. Louis, MO:** Clementine's Ice Cream is a St. Louis-based microcreamery, featuring "Naughty" (alcohol-infused) and "Nice" flavors, as well as non-dairy options. This award will help Clementine's scale up production output to service more ice cream parlors.
- **JB's Barnyard of Evansville, IN:** JB's Barnyard, proudly founded by husband-and-wife duo Jared and Briley, manufactures premium 16 percent butterfat ice cream in Southern Indiana. This award will provide JB's Barnyard with the funding needed to expand their wholesale distribution market with the addition of larger freezer storage and manufacturing equipment.

- **Lonely Loon LLC, DBA Superior Creamery of Grand Marais, MN:** Superior Creamery is the northernmost small-batch ice cream shop in Minnesota, tucked away on the North Shore of Lake Superior. This award will allow the family-owned and operated business to expand their freezer capacity and grow production capacity to support existing and new markets.
- **Mayer Farms Beef LLC of Slinger, WI:** Mayer Farms Beef, LLC represents the sixth and seventh generations of the Mayer family's proud farming legacy in eastern Wisconsin. What began generations ago as a traditional dairy farm has grown into a diversified agricultural enterprise deeply rooted in stewardship, innovation, and local connection. This award will allow the Mayer family to expand their offerings to farmstead ice cream and reach new markets.
- **Moundview Dairy of Platteville, WI:** Moundview Dairy specializes in crafting authentic Hispanic cheeses, with a special emphasis on their Paisa brand queso blanco. This grant will enable Moundview Dairy to purchase two 1,500-gallon tanks to increase their storage capacity for by-products such as salted whey.
- **Oxheart Farm LLC of Hager City, WI:** Oxheart Farm produces grassfed milk, yogurt and soft serve, mixed vegetables, and pastured pork and beef for sale through Community Supported Agriculture and other direct market channels. This award will allow Oxheart Farm to utilize more of the milk their cows produce, provide more of their customers with the weekly milk supply they are seeking, and increase the efficiency and long-term sustainability of their farmstead creamery business.
- **Pine River Dairy of Manitowoc, WI:** Pine River Dairy is a fourth-generation manufacturing facility that produces a variety of butter products, including award-winning flavored butters, and currently serves a growing customer base that values locally sourced, premium dairy. This award will help Pine River Dairy purchase new butter packaging equipment that will allow for increased production, enhanced product quality, and expanded market outreach.
- **Prairie Ag Concepts, DBA Prairie Fruits Farm and Creamery of Champaign, IL:** Prairie Fruits Farm and Creamery is a small-scale goat dairy and creamery located in Central Illinois. This award will enable Prairie Fruits Farm and Creamery to upgrade their aging rooms, allowing them to produce more cheese under more controlled conditions.
- **Rokeyroad Creamery LLC of Sabetha, Kansas:** Rokeyroad Creamery was established in December 2023 and opened for business in August 2025. They produce ice cream, cheese curds, cheese, and milk. This award will help Rokeyroad Creamery increase sales through more automated cheese cutting, milk carton labeling, and product delivery.
- **Seiler Dairy Creamery of Valley Center, KS:** Seiler Dairy Creamery is a new farmstead creamery concentrating on high-quality fluid milk and cheese products for consumers in Wichita, Kansas. This award will help provide valuable equipment and training to serve as the foundation of the business.
- **Shatto Farms, Inc. of Osborn, MO:** Shatto Milk Company is a third-generation, family-operated century farmstead. They specialize in white and unique flavors of milk, cheese, butter, and ice

cream and have won multiple awards for their products. This award will allow Shatto Milk Company to expand their milk sales by selling milk products to schools and correctional institutions.

- **Smith Brothers Creamery of McConnelsville, OH:** Smith Brothers Creamery LLC was started by three brothers who wanted to sustain their family dairy farm amid a shrinking local dairy economy. The creamery specializes in flavored fluid milk products, and this award will help them purchase the equipment needed to expand their market into ice cream products and create more local jobs.
- **Sweet Temptations of Spring Lake, MI:** Sweet Temptations is a producer of homemade ice cream, caramel corn, and peanut brittle. This award will help Sweet Temptations upgrade their ice cream manufacturing equipment, increasing production efficiency and supporting continued growth.
- **Tulip Tree Creamery of Indianapolis, IN:** Tulip Tree Creamery is an artisan creamery in Indianapolis, Indiana. This award will help Tulip Tree significantly increase their sales and production and improve their production and cost efficiency.
- **Udder Buddies LLC of Lonsdale, MN:** Udder Buddies crafts small-batch ice cream with milk that comes directly from co-owner Kevin's multigenerational family dairy farm. This award will help Udder Buddies acquire a refrigerated box truck and mobile carts, so they can move frozen product more efficiently and help bring their ice cream to new markets.
- **Uplands Cheese of Dodgeville, WI:** Uplands Cheese is a family-owned dairy farm and cheesemaker in southwestern Wisconsin. This award will help modernize their cheese plant and upgrade their food safety programs.
- **Westby Cooperative Creamery of Westby, WI:** Westby Cooperative Creamery is the only company in Wisconsin producing cottage cheese. This award will support the modernization of their 100-year-old factory where they also produce sour cream, dips, and yogurt. To continue their growth and commitment to food safety and quality, Westby Cooperative Creamery will install one 30,000-gallon milk silo and one 10,000-gallon cream silo allowing for more effective cottage cheese production with organic and conventional milk supplies.
- **Weyauwega Star Dairy, Inc. of Weyauwega, WI:** Weyauwega Star Dairy is a fourth-generation cheese manufacturing facility specializing in a variety of fresh and aged artisan cheeses. This award will help Weyauwega Star Dairy purchase a chiller system, a part of a Reverse Osmosis system project, which will allow them to increase the value of the whey produced during cheesemaking by cooling and concentrating it. This will result in a reduction of their transport and tanker washing costs, and carbon footprint.
- **Widmer's Cheese Cellars of Theresa, WI:** Widmer's Cheese is a fourth-generation artisan cheese producer specializing in brick, colby, cheddar, and butterkase cheeses. This award will help Widmer's purchase a curd mill, allowing them to produce more cheese curds, and will also allow them to add refrigeration to another bulk tank for milk and whey.

DBIA's grant programs advance the organization's mission to support small and mid-size dairy processors across its 11-state service area of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.

The DBIA is supported by funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture and was created in the 2018 federal Farm Bill. Since then, DBIA has awarded over \$24 million across more than 296 grants to Midwestern dairy farms and businesses. The program also offers technical assistance to dairy farmers and processors in participating states.

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