

## **WCMA Launching Employee Safety Trainings for Dairy Processors, Offering Online Safety Resources for All**

MADISON, WI – As the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) continues its focus on food processors via a Local Emphasis Program (LEP), WCMA is proud to offer new tools and training to support dairy processors' efforts to keep their valued team members safe on the job.

"Dairy processors know that a robust safety culture is critical both to their regulatory compliance and to the well-being of their workforce," said WCMA Senior Director of Programs & Policy Rebekah Sweeney. "That means frequently assessing and adjusting safety protocols, investing in safety equipment, and dedicating time and effort to employee training."

Beginning today, WCMA is offering a library of regulatory references and safety plan templates on [WisCheeseMakers.org](http://WisCheeseMakers.org). These resources – including materials on combustible dust, personal protective equipment, noise protection, hazardous energy control, and more – are free and available to all in the dairy processing industry.

Beginning in December 2023, WCMA will also offer two new employee safety training programs, designed with input from WCMA's Health & Safety Group.

The **WCMA Train the Safety Trainer Course** will equip the dairy processing industry's safety trainers with the knowledge, skills, and strategies to effectively communicate safety expectations and protocols for maximum compliance.

This course, led by two Chippewa Valley Technical College instructors with significant knowledge of the dairy processing industry, is taught in an interactive style and covers best practices for design and delivery methods used by successful workforce safety trainers. While those attending should have a strong grasp on industry safety practices already, instructors will emphasize training around OSHA's LEP areas of concern.

Upon completion of the course, participants will be able to:

- Define training and facilitation in the workplace;
- Conduct a training needs assessment;
- Evaluate their training programs for clarity and efficacy;
- Understand various presentation tools and methods;
- Identify the characteristics of an exceptional trainer;
- Discuss adult learning principles;
- Handle environmental challenges and disruptive participants; and
- Develop vocal, verbal and visual skills to conduct an effective training class.

"This class is geared toward dairy processors' workplace trainers and environmental health leads, people who already understand the importance of safety on the job but are tasked with

the responsibility of impressing that knowledge on others,” said Sweeney. “Our goal is to boost their skills as educators and to give them tools to provide more effective on-site instruction – while also helping them build a peer network in our industry.”

This full-day course will be offered in-person at WCMA’s training center in Madison, Wisconsin on December 12, 2023 and virtually on January 30, 2024. In-person offerings, which include lunch and snacks, cost \$249 per person, while virtual offerings run \$219.

**Basic Safety Training for Dairy Processing Workers** will teach participants about their rights, employer responsibilities, and - most importantly - how to identify, abate, and avoid job-related hazards they may encounter. The industry-specific curriculum concentrates on safety strategies related to all the key focus areas of OSHA’s food processor LEP, including machine guarding, lockout/tagout, prevention of slips, trips, and falls, and chemical controls.

“This class is for everyone working in the dairy processing industry,” said Sweeney. “Great as part of an onboarding program for new employees or as a refresher for industry veterans, our partner instructors from Chippewa Valley Technical College will ensure your staff understand the importance of safety protocols in your plant, how to execute those protocols, and when to alert you to a problem.”

This full-day course will be held six times in 2024, with virtual offerings on February 20, May 14, and September 24 and in-person offerings at WCMA’s training center in Madison, Wisconsin on April 9, June 4, and October 15. Virtual offerings cost just \$149 per person, while in-person offerings – which include lunch and snacks – run \$179. Each offering is limited to 24 participants.

Successful participants in both the **WCMA Train the Safety Trainer Course** and **WCMA Basic Safety Training for Dairy Processing Workers** will come away with a packet of training materials and a certificate of completion from Chippewa Valley Technical College and WCMA, that they and their employer can retain as a record of instruction.

Registration for all safety training classes is limited, but open now at [WisCheeseMakers.org](http://WisCheeseMakers.org). To learn more, contact WCMA at [rsweeney@wischeesemakers.org](mailto:rsweeney@wischeesemakers.org).