



WISCONSIN
CHEESE MAKERS
ASSOCIATION
EST. 1891

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NEWS RELEASE

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United States Championship Cheese Contest Announces Nationally Renowned Judging Team

MADISON, WI – Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association (WCMA), proud host of the United States Championship Cheese Contest®, today unveiled the all-star team of skilled dairy industry experts that will evaluate thousands of dairy product entries at this year's competition. The event is set for February 21-23 at Resch Expo in Green Bay, Wisconsin.



This year's expert judging team includes 41 cheese graders, cheese buyers, dairy science professors, and researchers from 12 states across the U.S. They are:

- Valerie Arechiga, Glanbia Nutritionals
- Jill Allen, Tillamook County Creamery Association
- Greg Anderson, The Kroger Company
- Kirk Baldwin, KB Consulting
- Marc Bates, Bates Consulting LLC
- Larry Bell, LBell Consulting LLC
- Theodore Brown, Cabot Creamery Cooperative
- David Burk, Marathon Cheese
- Kimberlee Burrington, American Dairy Products Institute
- Dominique Delugeau, Saputo Dairy USA
- Chris Eckerman, KDI Cheese
- Dr. Nana Farkye, California Polytechnic State University
- Chad Galer, Dairy Management Inc.
- Glenn Hatcher, Pacific Cheese
- Kory Hyvonen, Oshkosh Cold Storage
- John Jaeggi, Center for Dairy Research
- Dr. Mark Johnson, Center for Dairy Research
- Andy Johnson, Dairy Connection Inc.
- Aileen Kacvinsky, Schuman Cheese
- Kyle Koll, Sargento Foods

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- Anna Ku, Tillamook County Creamery Association
- Laura Laehn, Masters Gallery Foods
- Dr. Susan Larson, Center for Dairy Research
- Terry Lensmire, Lensmire Dairy Consulting
- Christophe Megevand, Schuman Cheese
- Dr. Lloyd Metzger, Valley Queen Cheese
- Gina Mode, Center for Dairy Research
- Michael Pederson, Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection
- Adam Porath, Winona Foods
- Rob Richter, Great Lakes Cheese
- Dave Satterness, Chr. Hansen (retired)
- Steve Schenkoske, TOSCA
- Ben Smith, Hilmar Cheese Company
- Marianne Smukowski, Marianne Smukowski Consulting
- Dean Sommer, Center for Dairy Research
- Gideon St. Aubin, Dairy Farmers of America
- Cathy Strange, Whole Foods Market
- Eric Vorpahl, Masters Gallery Foods
- Julie Winans, Chr. Hansen
- Nial Yager, Washington State University Creamery
- Matt Zimbric, Foremost Farms USA

Judging will once again be overseen by the U.S. Championship Cheese Contest leadership team, comprised of nine longtime dairy professionals:

- Chief Judge Jim Mueller, Mueller Consulting
- Chief Judge Emeritus Bob Aschebrock
- Chief Judge Emeritus Bill Schlinsog
- Assistant Chief Judge Tim Czmowski, Agropur (retired)
- Assistant Chief Judge Stan Dietsche, Oshkosh Cold Storage
- Assistant Chief Judge Josef Hubatschek, ALPMA (retired)
- Assistant Chief Judge Mariana Marques de Almeida, Mrs. J and Co.
- Assistant Chief Judge Sandy Toney, Masters Gallery Foods
- Director of Logistics Randy Swensen, Wisconsin Aging & Grading Cheese

Hosted biennially by WCMA since 1981, the U.S. Championship Cheese Contest is the nation's premier cheese, butter, yogurt, and dry dairy ingredient competition. This year, members of the public are welcome to observe the preliminary rounds of judging live and in-person from 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 21 and Wednesday, February 22. Fans of great cheese are also encouraged to tune in at USChampionCheese.org for the exciting, livestreamed announcement of the U.S. Champion Cheese at 2:00 p.m. (CT) on Thursday, February 23.

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