

NEWS RELEASE
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WCMA, UW-Madison Unveil Custom Management Training for Dairy Professionals

Madison, WI -- Managers and supervisors in dairy and related industries will gain world-class management skills training and a certificate under a unique collaboration between Wisconsin's dairy industry and the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association, in cooperation with the Wisconsin School of Business and the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences at the University of Wisconsin, announce the launch of the "Management Skills Program for Dairy Professionals."

This custom management training will consist of four, two-day training sessions or "modules" held at the Fluno Center for Executive Education in Madison. Dairy manufacturers, dairy industry suppliers and dairy producers are invited to send personnel to earn a "Management Skills Certificate" from the Wisconsin School of Business.

The Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association Board of Directors recognizes the need for management and leadership training for plant managers and supervisors that have risen through the ranks of industry without formal management training, according to John Umhoefer, executive director of the Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association (WCMA). "Our organization has turned to the internationally-recognized programs at the Wisconsin School of Business to develop the management abilities of key staff in the dairy industry," Umhoefer said.

The program begins July 28-29, 2009 with the first training module entitled "Leadership/Management Mindedness & Performance Management." The remaining three modules are set for November 17-18, 2009 (Team Building; Problem Solving and Decision-Making Skills), January 26-27, 2010 (Interpersonal Communication; Emotional Intelligence and Conflict Resolution) and March 31-April 1, 2010 (Dairy Business Acumen: Basic Finance, Sales and Marketing in Dairy).

"This is a unique collaboration between the School of Business and an industry trade association," said Michael Knetter, Dean of the Wisconsin School of Business. "We're excited to work with WCMA and CALS to produce custom management training for the dairy industry in Wisconsin."

CALS, the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences at the University of Wisconsin, will work together with the Executive Education department at the Wisconsin School of Business to produce the final module – a look at dairy marketing, sales and basic finance.

"The College of Agricultural and Life Sciences is pleased to contribute to this one-of-a-kind certificate program. The Management Skills Program for Dairy Professionals is another unique tool that can elevate the quality and efficiency of dairy production in Wisconsin," said Molly Jahn, Dean of the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences.



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The WCMA Board of Directors placed a high value on flexibility and ease of use when constructing this certificate program, according to Umhoefer. The four training modules will be repeated each year and participants will have two years to complete the four modules in order to earn a certificate. In addition, participants can enter the program with any module and take the four modules in any order.

“We encourage industry to support their staff in completing these four sessions in a single year, but the program provides the same quality training no matter how managers and supervisors arrange their participation,” WCMA’s Umhoefer said.

The Fluno Center on the University of Wisconsin campus provides a total immersion learning environment specifically for adult professionals. The center combines modern, spacious classroom environments with award-winning dining and lodging. In the recent 2009 ranking of the world’s top executive education providers by London’s Financial Times, the Wisconsin School of Business and Fluno Center was ranked 9th among U.S. executive education schools; 6th in the world for “value for the money” and 1st for food and accommodations.

The “Management Skills Program for Dairy Professionals” will be offered to all WCMA member manufacturers, processors and suppliers, as well as Wisconsin dairy producers. With class size limited to 30 persons, WCMA member dairy manufacturers and processors will receive first priority for placement.

WCMA and the Wisconsin School of Business have collaborated to bundle all participant costs into a single, special rate for each module, including the cost of instruction, education materials, meals and overnight accommodations (for two nights). The cost to attend a module is \$1,425.

WCMA receives no revenue from the program, John Umhoefer explained, and will build special incentives to encourage participation. Participants earning a certificate from the “Management Skills Program for Dairy Professionals” will receive their honor at the annual, April joint meetings of the Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association and Wisconsin Center for Dairy Research. In addition, WCMA manufacturer and processor members will receive a \$1,000 reimbursement for their participants who successfully complete the certificate program.

Complete information on the Management Skills Program for Dairy Professionals will be mailed to industry and appears on the WCMA website at www.wischeesemakers.org.

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