

Introduced by Senator Baldwin and Senator Blackburn

Dairy Business Innovation Act of 2023

Legislation would enhance support for dairy producers and processors through technical assistance and grants to dairy businesses.

The *Dairy Business Innovation Act of 2023* builds on the support for regional dairy research and innovation centers across the country by raising the program's annual authorization from \$20 million to \$36 million. After the program was created in the 2018 Farm Bill, multiple dairy business and innovation centers were established to serve producers across the country. These centers, in partnership with dairy farmers and processors, are spurring innovation in dairy businesses, fostering the development of new dairy products, and modernizing existing dairy plants. As a result, the program has gone on to add value to the milk produced by American farmers and expand their market access.

Each regional initiative is tasked with providing technical assistance and grants to farmers and processors, including:

- **Supporting new and expanding dairy businesses**—Centers provide assistance with business plan development, accounting, market evaluation, and strategic planning.
- **Promoting innovation in dairy products**—Dairy businesses receive assistance with product innovation, marketing and branding, packaging, distribution, supply chain innovation, food safety training and consultation, and dairy product production training.
- **Assisting with dairy plant modernization and process improvement**—Dairy businesses receive assistance with processing facility improvement, including assistance with plant upgrades, food safety modernization, energy and water efficiency, byproduct reprocessing and use maximization, and waste treatment.

Since the establishment of the USDA program in 2019, over \$150 million has been distributed to the regional centers across the country, enabling American farmers and processors to modernize, reach new markets, and create economic growth.

Who can apply for assistance?

The centers serve prospective and established businesses, including farmers and dairy processors across the country.

Endorsing Organizations: International Dairy Foods Association, Midwest Dairy Coalition, National Milk Producers Federation, Organic Valley, Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association

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