

Introduced by Senator Baldwin
Meat Business Innovation Act of 2024

Legislation would enhance support for farmers, ranchers and small- and medium-sized processors through technical assistance and grants to the meat industry.

The *Meat Business Innovation Act (MBIA) of 2024* applies the successful model of the [Dairy Business Innovation Initiatives](#) (DBII) to the livestock farming and meat processing industry. Similar to the DBIIs, the MBIA would create regional research and innovation centers across the country. These centers, in partnership with livestock farmers and small- and medium-sized processors, would spur innovation in meat processing, invest in workforce development and the humane handling of livestock, foster the development of new meat products and uses for byproducts, and modernize existing on-farm infrastructure and processing plants. Ultimately, the program would add value to the supply chain of products made by American farmers and ranchers 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 meat processors**—Centers would provide assistance with business plan development, accounting, market evaluation, and strategic planning.
- **Promoting innovation in meat products and byproducts**—Centers would work in tandem with producers to conduct research into meat product and byproduct innovations, and meat businesses would receive assistance with investing in product innovation, as well as marketing and branding, packaging, distribution, and supply chain innovation.
- **Investing in workforce development**—Centers would offer workforce development and training opportunities, including humane handling, food safety training and consultation, and meat processing training.
- **Assisting with farm infrastructure and plant modernization**—Farmers, ranchers, and meat businesses receive assistance with operation and facility improvement, including assistance with plant upgrades, food safety modernization, energy and water efficiency, byproduct reprocessing and use maximization, and waste treatment.

The DBIIs, upon which the Meat Business Innovation Act has been model, have a demonstrated history of success since their establishment in 2019, with over \$150 million being distributed to the regional centers across the country, enabling American farmers and processors to modernize, reach new markets, and create economic growth. It's time that this model of regional investment in innovation and research is made available to livestock farmers, ranchers, and meat processors.

Who can apply for assistance?

The centers would serve prospective and established businesses, including farmers, ranchers and meat processors across the country.

Endorsing Organizations: National Cattleman's Beef Association, National Pork Producers Association, North American Meat Institute, Johnsonville Sausage, Usinger's, Wisconsin Cattleman's Beef Association, Wisconsin Association of Meat Processors, Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation, Wisconsin Farmers Union, University of Wisconsin-Madison College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, University of Wisconsin-River Falls College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences, American Foods Group, The Meat Block, Inc., Organic Valley.