



Tony Evers

Office of the Governor | State of Wisconsin

October 16, 2026

The Honorable Brooke L. Rollins
Secretary
United States Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Rollins:

During your recent visit to the World Dairy Expo in Wisconsin, you rightly recognized the positive impact the Dairy Business Innovation Initiatives (DBII) program has had on the dairy industry. In your remarks, you claimed that you would “never stop fighting” for dairy farmers. Dairy farmers in the Midwest and across the nation need you to fight for them now, and if you really want to help, you can start by withdrawing the new, arbitrary 25 percent cost-share requirement for DBII program funding and reissuing the FY2026 DBII funding opportunity without this burdensome provision.

Wisconsin is proud to be America’s Dairyland and home to one of the nation’s four DBII centers, which serves as an essential resource for dairy farmers, cheesemakers, processors, and dairy businesses across the state. While there are only four locations across the country, DBII benefits the entire dairy industry by providing grant funding and technical assistance to dairy businesses nationwide to develop, produce, market, and distribute high-quality and nutritious dairy products. Not only does DBII bolster this essential industry—which contributes over \$780 billion in economic impact to the U.S. economy and supports over 3 million American jobs—but it gives our farmers the resources and support to diversify their products, increase their income, and expand capacity, which pays dividends to the future of our farmers and farm families.

The four DBII centers are administered by public universities, a state agency of agriculture, and a nonprofit trade association. These organizations have worked hard to build a strong dairy network and develop effective programming to advance the industry forward. However, they do not have the resources to meet the new, arbitrary 25 percent cost-share requirement. If this cost-share requirement is not rescinded, DBII centers will be forced to close, ending their valuable work and negatively impacting American dairy farmers.

This comes at a time when farmers across the country, especially in Wisconsin, are already struggling under prolonged drought conditions and economic uncertainty due to soaring costs, including sky-high diesel prices, and economic volatility caused by President Donald J. Trump’s erratic tariff taxes and reckless trade wars. America’s dairy industry does not need more obstacles. I urge you to immediately withdraw the new 25 percent cost-share requirement for DBII and reissue the FY2026 DBII funding opportunity as soon as possible so the important work supported by DBII centers can continue.

Thank you for your swift consideration of this important request.

Yours in service,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tony Evers".

Tony Evers
Governor