

2024 Wisconsin Agricultural Export Advisory Council

AGENCY REPRESENTATIVES

Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC)

Aaron M. Zitzelsberger, J.D., Senior Director of Global Trade & Investment

Email: aaron.zitzelsberger@wedc.org

EX-OFFICIO, NON-VOTING MEMBERS

Sen. Joan Ballweg

Email: Sen.Ballweg@legis.wisconsin.gov

Senator Joan Ballweg was born the oldest of four to a first generation American in West Allis, WI on March 16, 1952, and she is the state senator for the 14th District located in south central Wisconsin. Joan and her husband, Tom, live in Markesan in Green Lake County. Joan and Tom own and operate a John Deere Farm Equipment dealership in Waupun and a yard and garden store in Beaver Dam, and they have been in that business since 1976. Joan graduated in 1974 from UW-Stevens Point, and was a first grade teacher before she and Tom went into business. Her public service began in Markesan, where she served as alderperson on the Markesan City Council for 4 years, and then served as mayor for another 6 years. Later, she sat on the Waupun Memorial Hospital Board of Directors and was Chair from 2002 to 2004. From 2003 to 2004, she also served on the management committee of Agnesian HealthCare Enterprises. Most recently, Senator Ballweg served as the state representative for the 41st Assembly District from 2004 through 2020.

Rep. Dave Considine

Email: Rep.Considine@legis.wisconsin.gov

A proud Wisconsin native, Dave Considine was born in Janesville and raised in North Prairie. After attending Mukwonago High School, Dave earned his Bachelor of Science in Education from the University of Wisconsin – Whitewater and holds a Master of Arts in Education from Viterbo University. Dave and his wife Gretchen have resided in the Baraboo Bluffs and the Town of Caledonia for over 40 years. They have raised five children on their farm and are now enjoying sharing it with their twelve grandchildren. In addition to owning and maintaining their farm as conservation land, they have been active community members in Baraboo and the surrounding area for many years. For 29 years, Dave served as a teacher at Jack Young Middle School in the Baraboo School District, retiring in 2014 to run for State Assembly. He is currently in his third term as State Representative for the 81st District. As an educator, association leader, steward of the land, outdoorsman, hunter, trainer in Nonviolent Crisis Intervention, nationally recognized dairy goat judge, singer, and track coach, Dave has experience with a wide variety of areas and interests.

Rep. Tony Kurtz

Email: Rep.Kurtz@legis.wisconsin.gov

Representative Tony Kurtz was born in Columbus, Ohio. Following high school, Tony spent the next two decades in the U.S. Army. Since retiring from the Army, Tony and his wife Kim have made their home in Western Wisconsin, where they own an organic grain farm in Wonewoc. They have two children, Kaylin and Nick, who are currently attending college in Wisconsin. He received a Bachelor of Science in Professional Aeronautics from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University and Master of Science in International Relations from Troy State University. He was elected to the State Assembly in 2018.

Sen. Jeff Smith

Email: Sen.Smith@legis.wisconsin.gov

Senator Jeff Smith has served in the State Senate since 2019 and the Eau Claire region as a small business owner, operating a window cleaning business for 30 years. He also served on the Brunswick Town Board as Chair for 6 years. He was active with the Governor’s Task Force for Educational Excellence, the Wisconsin Parent Teacher Association Board, the Department of Public Instruction’s Parent Leadership Corps, and the Wisconsin Alliance for Excellent Schools. Senator Smith was later elected to the State Assembly and served during the 2007 and 2009 legislative sessions. Senator Smith was Chair of the Assembly Committee on Elections and Campaign Reform. Senator Smith was elected Minority Caucus Chair for the 2021-22 legislative session and currently serves as the Ranking Member of the Senate Committee on Elections, Election Process Reform & Ethics and the Senate Committee on Sporting Heritage, Small Business, & Rural Issues. He also serves as member of the Agriculture & Tourism Committee; the Education Committee; the Government Operations, Legal Review & Consumer Protection Committee; and the Utilities, Technology & Telecommunications Committee. Senator Smith and his wife Sue live on their farm in the Town of Brunswick caring for horses, chickens, dogs, cats, a llama, and their land.

INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS (VOTING MEMBERS)

AT-LARGE

Craig Briess | Term: 2024-2027

Email: Craig.briess@briess.com

Craig Briess is Chief Executive Officer and fifth generation leader of family-owned Briess Industries, a producer of natural specialty ingredients for food and beer. He began his career as a Customs and International Trade Law attorney at a New York City-based law firm before joining the International Trade Centre in Geneva, Switzerland. He subsequently joined U.S. Customs and Border Protection, where he was an attorney with the Office of Chief Counsel, Trade, and Finance and Chief of the Trade Agreements Branch, where he managed trade agreements and special trade legislation matters. Craig earned his Bachelor of Arts from Franklin and Marshall College, International MBA from Instituto de Empresa Business School in Spain, and law degree from University of Miami School of Law. He is a member of the New York, Connecticut, and Washington, D.C. bars and admitted to practice before the Court of International Trade.

Kevin Krentz | Term: 2022-2025

Email: kkrentz@wfbf.com

Since 2020, Kevin Krentz has served as the president of the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation (WFBF), previously serving on the WFBF board of directors. He also serves as president of the Rural Mutual Insurance Company. Kevin was elected to the American Farm Bureau Federation board of directors in 2021 and appointed to serve on the American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture’s board of directors. He also currently serves on the Wisconsin Livestock ID Consortium and University of Wisconsin-Madison College of Agricultural and Life Sciences board of visitors. He has served on DATCP’s Raw Milk Taskforce, the Department of Commerce Dairy 2020 Council, American Farm Bureau Federal Milk Marketing Order Workgroup, and the Wisconsin DNR NR 151 Technical Advisory Committee. He has participated in the U.S. Dairy Export Council Trade Policy Committee meeting discussions, and in 2016, he participated in a Transatlantic Dialogue Agriculture Perspectives trip to Germany focusing on dairy production and trade. Kevin, his wife Holly, and their family own and operate a dairy farm in Berlin, Wisconsin.

CROP

Brandon Bickham | Term: 2022-2025

Email: bbickham@delongcompany.com

Brandon Bickham is the Senior Export Director at The Delong Co., Inc, which is consistently ranked in the top five containerized exporters in the Journal of Commerce and the number one agricultural exporter of containers in the U.S. From corn and soybean production to exports, he has spent his entire life involved in agriculture. He was hired by Delong 16 years ago as an Export Sales Associate and is now responsible for Delong's Export Sales, Container Logistics and Export Documentation teams. Brandon has served on the board of directors for the U.S. Soybean Export Council and currently serves on Delong's board of directors. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in Finance and Agricultural Business, and in his free time, enjoys spending time with family and friends, along with hunting and shooting sports.

Angela Weber | Term: 2024-2027

Email: Angela@lacrossedistilling.co

Angela Weber is Co-Owner and Director of Marketing at La Crosse Distilling Co., the only geothermal power distillery headquartered in Wisconsin and producer of USDA certified organic distilled spirits with an emphasis on sustainable farming and production practices. Through this business, she has participated in DATCP-led trade missions and trade shows, leading efforts to expand distribution to global markets. She has been instrumental in establishing Fieldnotes Organic Vodka as the House Vodka of Lambeau Field and Green Bay Packers. Prior to La Crosse Distilling Co., Angela founded one of the first social media consultancies located in Wisconsin in 2018 - consulting for Mayo Clinic and serving client for three years before relocating to New York, NY to join IBM as the Global Social Media Partnership Manager. In this role, she managed key relationships with platforms like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Reddit, ensuring IBM's \$40M media investment is maximized through strategic partnerships. During the pandemic, she moved back to Wisconsin to re-join her family. Angela was born and raised in La Crosse, Wisconsin and is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse with a Bachelor of Science in Marketing. She is a proud wife and mother of two toddlers.

Jackie Fett | Term: 2023-2026

Email: jackie@ginsengboard.com

With more than 20 years of experience in the natural products industry, Jackie is passionate about promoting the value of agriculture. She currently serves as the Executive and Marketing Director for the Ginseng Board of Wisconsin (GBW), a board dedicated to the research, education, and promotion of Wisconsin ginseng. During her previous 16-year career with Standard Process, a Wisconsin whole food supplement manufacturer, Jackie held a variety of roles in marketing, education, and management. She graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater with a Bachelor of Business Administration in Marketing.

Larry Krueger | Term: 2024-2027

Email: larry@kruegerlumber.com

Larry Krueger was born and raised on a family-owned sawmill and forestry business called Krueger Lumber Company where he is now the owner. Through this business, he exports forestry products to China, Vietnam, and the European Union and has participated in DATCP led trade missions in the past. He is a member of the Wisconsin Freight Advisory Committee and served on the Board of Directors for the Lake States Lumber Association (LSLA), a regional hardwood lumber organization for many years.

Kevin Lipps | Term: 2024-2027

Email: klipps@senecafoods.com

Kevin Lipps has served as Vice President of International Sales at Seneca Foods Corporation since 2011. Growing up in New Richmond, Wisconsin and graduating from the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, he began his international career in 1997 with the Friday Canning Corporation, transitioning to Seneca when acquired in 2003. Kevin has participated in numerous international trade missions and trade shows, helping Seneca's processed vegetables from Wisconsin reach more than 50 countries annually. He is grateful for the opportunity to explore further success in promoting Wisconsin's agricultural and agribusiness exports.

Charles Wachsmuth | Term: 2023-2026

Email: charleswachsmuth@cvbean.com

Charles Wachsmuth is a Vice President at Chippewa Valley Bean, the largest processor and exporter of dark red kidney beans in the world. He joined the company in 2012 as part of the sales team, focusing on targeting and developing new export markets, and now leads Chippewa Valley Bean's Sustainability and Social Responsibility projects. Prior to this position, Charles managed his own consultant business for 10 years with a focus on agricultural development and humanitarian feeding. Over his years of experience, Wachsmuth has worked and traveled in more than 50 countries. He currently holds committee assignments with the Global Pulse Confederation, American Pulse Association, and U.S. Dry Bean Council.

Bob Wilson | Term: 2022-2025

Email: BWilson@thecranberrynetwork.com

Bob Wilson currently serves as the Managing Member of Food Partners International, The Cranberry Network, and Cranberry Partners. He also serves as the Chief Operating Officer for the Cranberry Cooperative of the Americas, Managing Director of BNK Enterprises, and Director of Synesis. Through these positions, he works to supply frozen cranberries and blueberries to the European Union from multiple points of export within the U.S. and Canada. In addition to his business positions, Bob is an associate member of the Wisconsin Cranberry Growers Association and the Cranberry Institute, where he has previously served as director and chairman.

DAIRY

Jeff Schwager | Term: 2024-2027

Email: Schwager3@wisc.edu

Jeff Schwager is an experienced President and CEO with a proven track record of revenue and profitability growth. Jeff spent over 13 years at Sartori Company as President and then CEO. He was able to retire with a successful transition to the 4th generation family member leader. Prior to Sartori Company, Jeff was the president and CEO of Rite Hite Products Corporation for 15 years. He is able to help build sales, marketing, operations and logistics functions while defining and building an organization to drive future success at companies that want growth in revenue and/or profitability.

Chad Vincent | Term: 2022-2025

Email: cvincent@wisconsindairy.org

Chad Vincent currently serves as the Chief Executive Officer for the Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin. In this position, he has worked to build foreign markets for dairy products in partnership with DATCP, the U.S. Dairy Export Council, Wisconsin Cheese Maker's Association, Governor's Task Force 2.0, and dozens of cheese companies. Prior to his position with the Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin, he spent six years working in Europe, Latin America, and Asia for Miller Brewing International, working on international marketing and export operations before being promoted to President of Miller Asia. He has also held positions with Gerber Knives/Outdoor, Fiskars, and Sartori Cheese.

Ryan Wucherer | Term: 2023-2026

Email: ryan.wucherer@grande.com

Ryan Wucherer has been involved in the international export business of dairy products since 2008. He is currently the Director of International Export, where he leads Grande Cheese company's International Supply Chain and Logistics Team. For decades, Grande has worked with Wisconsin's finest dairy producers and our talented team of Cheesemakers in creating world-class, artisan Italian cheese. Our products are used in some of the best, independently owned pizzerias and Italian restaurants worldwide, www.grande.com. Before

Grande, Ryan was a Director at MCT Dairies where he started the International Logistics and Sales Team Division from scratch. This business grew to sales in over 50 countries around the world. He traveled the globe to establish new business over 10 years at MCT Dairies. Prior to MCT, he served as the Global Sourcing and International Sales Manager for Schreiber Foods, where he was responsible for the international sale of dairy ingredients including cheese, fats and proteins and negotiating and executing multi-million-dollar contracts. Ryan currently is an active board member for the U.S. Dairy Export Council, and USDEC's cheese marketing team. Growing up, he was raised on a farm in Southeast Wisconsin and currently resides in Green Bay WI.

MEAT

Bob Fitzgerald | Term: 2024-2027

Email: BFitzgerald@johnsonville.com

Since 2012, Bob Fitzgerald has served as the Vice President of International Business for Johnsonville, leading the companies export business. He is involved with the U.S. Meat Export Federation, U.S.A Poultry and Egg Export Council, U.S. Dairy Export Council, and the Madison International Trade Association. He has also led the development and growth of products produced in Wisconsin, exported to more than 30 countries, and been involved with exporting fresh and cooked Sausage, cheese, and frozen bread. Fitzgerald obtained a Bachelor of Arts in English from the University of Dayton, MBA from Rutgers University, and a Graduate Certificate in Global Supply Chain Management from Boston University.

Keith Heikes | Term: 2023-2026

Email: Keith.heikes@urus.org

Keith Heikes retired as the Chief Operating Officer of URUS in 2021 after a 40-year career in the cattle breeding industry. Prior to this position, he served as the Chief Operating Officer of GENEX Cooperative and Chief Executive Officer of Cooperative Resources International. He also spent 15 years as the Vice President of International Programs for CRI, helping expand their international reach around the world by establishing new distributors through the acquisition of retail businesses. Keith has served as a board member and chairman for the National Association of Animal Breeders, a board member for the Council on Dairy Cattle Breeding, member of the USDA Emerging Markets Advisory Committee, board member and vice-chair of the Overseas Cooperative Development Council, and board member of joint ventures in India and Australia. He currently is on the board of World Dairy Expo and serves on its finance committee.

Dr. Amy Radunz | Term: 2022-2025

Email: aeradunz@gmail.com

Dr. Amy Radunz currently works as a beef cattle technical consultant for Purina Animal Nutrition and owns a stocker operation in Ellsworth, Wisconsin. She has been actively involved in Wisconsin's beef industry for the past 10 years. She served as at-large board member for Wisconsin Cattlemen's Association (WCA) from 2015-2020. Since 2019, Radunz has represented the Wisconsin Cattlemen's Association on the Wisconsin Beef Council (WBC) and serves on the WBC Executive Committee as President-Elect. In 2021, she represented WBC at the Latin American Product Showcase to help promote Wisconsin beef and will be representing WBC at the U.S. Meat Export Federation. Amy is looking forward to serving on the WAXC committee to apply her experience and interest in beef cattle, meat science, and international trade to help Wisconsin agriculture.