



WISCONSIN ASSOCIATION OF MEAT PROCESSORS

Wisconsin State Budget 2023-25 *Meat Processing Initiatives*

Meat processing is one of the Wisconsin's largest industries and has a significant economic impact on the state. According to a study conducted by Dr. Steven Deller of the University of Wisconsin-Madison Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics, the meat and poultry processing businesses in Wisconsin generated sales of \$8.6 billion in 2017, and employed approximately 16,000 workers. In addition to providing jobs and contributing to the state's economy, the meat processing industry generates significant tax revenue for the state and paid over \$196 million in state and local taxes in 2019.

Wisconsin Association of Meat Processors represents more than 100 meat operators, processors and suppliers in the State of Wisconsin. According to Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection, in 2018, Wisconsin's livestock and meat industry harvested more than 2.1 million animals for beef, pork, and chicken with a combined live weight of nearly 2.2 billion pounds. These meats are sold domestically across the U.S. and to more than 90 countries globally.

Meat Processor Infrastructure Grants

Governor's Budget: Provide an additional \$800,000 GPR in each year to increase the available funding for the Meat Processor Grant program to \$1 million annually.

- Currently, grants are awarded with a maximum of \$50,000 and 50% matching. WAMP requests grants are awarded with a maximum of \$150,000 with 100% matching.
- Eligible applicants must operate or intend to operate a DATCP or U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) licensed meat-processing establishment in Wisconsin and be engaged in livestock harvest or processing. Projects must increase harvest capacity or production. Funding from these grants can be used for operating expenses directly related to the grant project, including expenses for engineering, architectural design, construction, food safety consultation, equipment, and equipment installation.
- There is a tremendous need for grant dollars to help those in the industry. In 2022, there were more than 100 applicants requesting over \$4 million in funding, competing for \$200,000 in grants. The five meat processors that were selected received grants of \$25,000 to \$50,000 to assist with efforts to expand frozen storage, construct and expand facilities and purchase new equipment.

- The meat processor grants have helped processors to increase their productivity, improve their efficiency, and expand their operations.
- Meat processor grants help Wisconsin's meat processors stay competitive in the marketplace by allowing them to make investments that would otherwise be out of reach. This can help them attract new customers, expand their product lines, and increase their revenue.

Meat Talent Development Grant (Phase 2)

Governor's Budget: Make the Meat Talent Development Grant program permanent with \$1,237,500 GPR in fiscal year 2024-25 to support meat industry workforce development needs by providing funds for curriculum development and tuition assistance to individuals pursuing meat processing programming at Wisconsin universities, colleges, and technical schools.

- The Meat Talent Development Grant is used for tuition reimbursement to provide financial support to students in Wisconsin meat processing training programs, support program development, and connect the meat processing industry with potential employees.
- The Wisconsin Association of Meat Processors supports expansion of the Meat Talent Development Grant to include an apprenticeship program that will provide individuals with on-the-job training and education to develop the skills and knowledge required to work in the meat industry.
- Current funding supports tuition reimbursement for the following:
 - Meat Industry High School Curriculum through UW-River Falls.
 - Humane Handling Institute at UW-River Falls, a first of its kind program that provides hands-on training for meat industry workers in humane pre-slaughter handling, transport, stunning, and equipment maintenance.
 - Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) trainings held at the University of Wisconsin - Madison Meat Science and Animal Biologics Discovery Center (UW-MSABD)
 - Meat Snacks Short Course, Meat Curing School, Master Meat Crafter Training Program and other meat-specific curriculums available at UW-MSABD.
- Funding for the Meat Talent Development Program helps the industry to attract and retain individuals interested in pursuing careers in the industry. This helps to build a skilled and motivated workforce, leading to overall success in the meat industry.