



DATCP Participates in National Winter Policy Conference

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MADISON – This week, Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) Secretary-designee Randy Romanski participated in the virtual 2021 National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) Winter Policy Conference, held February 22-25, 2021. The robust agenda included policy updates, member updates, and consideration of policy amendments and action items.

“The theme of this year’s NASDA Winter Policy Conference was ‘Together at the Table,’ which especially in these unprecedented times, is fitting that states work together to address the challenges facing the agriculture industry and the entire food supply chain,” said DATCP Secretary-designee Romanski. “I am proud to be part of this inclusive organization that brings everyone to the table and to represent Wisconsin in these important conversations.”

Secretary-designee Romanski was active in the animal agriculture committee meeting, proposing two policy action items for the organization including encouraging the expansion of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Meat Plant Modernization Grant eligibility and advocating for a One Health, Emergency Response in non-traditional situations. Both passed the committee unanimously.

“I am delighted my colleagues and I were able to pass these action items to promote additional resources for our nation’s small meat establishments and to encourage increased coordination between intergovernmental agencies and the industry, especially when there are new or emerging disease threats,” explained Secretary-designee Romanski. “As the country continues to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, we need to utilize all available resources to create and protect processing and marketing opportunities for our livestock farmers and meat processors.”

Other committee meetings included: natural resources and environment, marketing and international trade, plant agriculture and pesticide regulation, food systems and nutrition, and rural development and financial security. In the opening plenary session, NASDA President Dr. Ryan Quarles highlighted the new [NASDA Food Security Toolkit](#), which includes information about Wisconsin’s Food Security Initiative.

“While each state’s agriculture industry is unique, there are great opportunities for us to learn from each other’s experiences,” concluded Secretary-designee Romanski. “As the Wisconsin 2021-2023 biennial budget process continues, I was pleased to see that so many of the proposed investments made by Governor Tony Evers were mirrored in our NASDA discussions including developing markets, bolstering processing, promoting resiliency in the agriculture industry, and engaging agriculture to be involved in solutions to climate change.”

NASDA is a nonpartisan, nonprofit association which represents the elected and appointed commissioners, secretaries, and directors of the departments of agriculture in all fifty states and four U.S. territories. NASDA priorities include: protecting the food supply chain, advancing diversity, equity and inclusion in agriculture, building and maintaining markets that advance local and rural economies, and promoting science-based solutions to climate challenges.

The 2021 NASDA Winter Policy Conference Post-Meeting Documents are available online at <https://www.nasda.org/2021-nasda-winter-policy-conference-post-meeting-documents>.

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