



## DATCP, WEDC Officials visit UW-River Falls Dairy Pilot Plant

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: August 27, 2021

Contacts:

DATCP: [Leeann Duwe](#), Acting Communications Director, (608) 224-5130

WEDC: [David Callender](#), Communications Director, (608) 210-6706

[View and download photos](#)

MADISON, Wis. – The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) Secretary-designee Randy Romanski and Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) Secretary and CEO Missy Hughes visited the University of Wisconsin-River Falls (UWRF) yesterday to see the renovated Dairy Pilot Plant.

“I am excited at the prospect the renovated facility has to develop new talent for our dairy and food processor industries,” said Randy Romanski, DATCP Secretary-designee. “Now more than ever we need an educated workforce to help lead innovation for all points of our dairy industry – from the farm to product development.”

UWRF renovated its 30-year old dairy plant to provide teaching and training opportunities that will give graduates a competitive edge. There are over 3,700 food and beverage companies in Wisconsin supporting more than 106,000 jobs. Out of the 11 largest food companies in the world, seven are located in Wisconsin.

“Farmers and small dairies are always under pressure to come up with unique products,” said Missy Hughes, WEDC secretary and CEO. “This facility will enable these entrepreneurs to develop and test new products that could increase demand for Wisconsin’s milk.”

WEDC awarded the UWRF Dairy Pilot Plant project a \$250,000 Targeted Industry Projects grant that helped fabricate the plant’s high-temperature short-time pasteurization system.

UWRF is one of a few campuses in the nation that delivers a 360-degree experiential-learning opportunity for undergraduate students to work in a dairy plant production environment and participate in new product development. From testing to marketing, production to final retail, and being able to access the key academic components in the classroom.

“The project to transform our Dairy Pilot Plant has been an important university priority. Our students need facilities that offer modern high-quality, hands-on experiences, better equipping them to become tomorrow’s leaders in Wisconsin’s signature industry,” said Maria Gallo, UWRF Chancellor. “We are grateful to the philanthropic support of industry partners and state agencies like WEDC and DATCP for their collaboration in this renovation process.”

To learn more about UWRF’s Dairy Pilot Plant, visit <https://www.uwrf.edu/ANFS/FalconFoods/Renovation.cfm>. Agriculture contributes \$104.8 billion annually to the state’s economy, with \$45.6 billion from dairy, and food processing activity contributing \$82.7 billion to industrial sales.

###

Find more DATCP news in our [newsroom](#), on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).