

MadREP 2015 IMCP Application: Letters of Support

Partner Organization	Signatory	Signatory Title
U.S. Senate, Senator Baldwin's Office	Tammy Baldwin	United States Senator
U.S. House of Representatives, Representative Pocan's Office	Mark Pocan	Member of Congress
100 State	Andrew Conley	Executive Director/Co-Founder
Badgerland Financial	Paul Dietman	Emerging Markets Specialist
Baum Development Corporation	David Baum	President and CEO
City of Madison	Paul Soglin	Mayor
Dane County	Joe Parisi	County Executive
DATCP	Ben Brancel	Secretary
Doyenne Group	Heather Wentler	Executive Director
FEED Kitchen	Adam J. Haen	Manager
Findorff & Son, Inc.	Jeff Tubbs	Vice President-Business Development
Forward Community Investments	Salli Matyniak	President
Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce	Zach Brandon	President
Greater Madison Convention & Visitors Bureau	Deb Archer	President & CEO
Ho-Chunk Nation	Jon Greendeer	President
Innovation Kitchens, LLC	Rick Terrien	Founder/CEO
Janesville Innovation Center	Mike Mathews	Operations Manager
LION / SLOW Money Wisconsin	Tera Johnson	President
Madison Area Technical College - Jefferson	Turina Bakken	Vice Provost
Madison Area Technical College - Reedsburg	John Alt	Academic Dean
Madison Culinary and Technology Center	Matthew J. Feifarek	Executive Director
MWFPA	Nick C. George, Jr.	President
Portage Enterprise Center	Steve Sobiek	Director, Business Development and Planning
Sector67	Chris Meyer	Director
Southwest Opportunities Center, Inc.	Audrey Gaio-Johnston	Executive Director
Southwest Technical College	Duane H. Ford, Ph.D.	President
StartingBlock Madison	Terry Sivesind	President
Supply Chain Visions, Inc.	Shawn Winn	Manager
Southwestern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission	Larry T. Ward, Jr. AICP	Executive Director
United FCS	Todd Kearney, CPA	VP Community Access & Program Development
University of Wisconsin--Madison	Rebecca Blank	Chancellor
USDA, Forest Products Laboratory	John F. Hunt	Research Mechanical Engineer, PE
UW Center for Cooperatives	Anne Reynolds	Executive Director
UW Center for Dairy Research	Vic Grassman, CEcD	Manager - Technology Commercialization
UW Center for Freight, Infrastructure, Rail and Education	Teresa Adams, Ph.D.	Executive Director
UW Extension--Ag and Natural Resource Extension	David B. Williams	Associate State Program Director
UW Extension--Business and Entrepreneurship	Mark Lange	Director
UW Food Science Department	Scott Rankin	Food Science Department Chair
UW Horticulture Department	Irwin Goldman	Prof and Chair, Department of Horticulture
UW-Madison Center for Integrated Agriculture Systems	Michael M. Bell	Director
Vernon Economic Development Association	Susan Noble	Executive Director
Water Resources Monitoring Group	Dennis L. Busch	CEO
Watertown Economic Development Organization	Kim John Erdmann	Executive Director
Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA)	Wyman Winston	Executive Director
Whitewater Innovation Center	Ronald L. (Bud) Gayhart	Director
Willy Street Cooperative	Anya Friszt	General Manager
Wisconsin Business Development	Dan M. Schneider	President & CEO
Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association	John T. Umhoefer	Executive Director
Wisconsin Department of Transportation	Brad Basten	Economic Development Officer
Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC)	Reed E. Hall	Secretary/CEO
Wisconsin Food Hub Cooperative	Sarah Lloyd	Secretary, Board of Directors
Wisconsin Grape Growers Association	Steve Johnson	Owner, Parallel 44 Winery
Wisconsin Manufacturing Extension Partnership	P. Buckley Brinkman	Executive Director/CEO
Wisconsin Vintners Association	George Scovronski	Immediate Past President
Wisconsin Winery Association	Joe Callow	President
Wisconsin Women's Business Innovation Corporation	Wendy Bauman	President/CVO



March 6, 2015

The Honorable Penny Pritzker
Secretary
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Secretary Pritzker:

I am writing to convey the University of Wisconsin-Madison's strong support for the Madison Region Economic Partnership's proposal for our region to receive designation as an Agriculture, Food and Beverage Manufacturing District through the Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership (IMCP).

South central and south west Wisconsin enjoy a unique blend of food economy assets including abundant and diverse agriculture, numerous large and small food manufacturing businesses, beloved farmers markets, and regional food-oriented retail and restaurant businesses. This is a community that values and takes pride in the connection between the food on our plates, the strength of our food manufacturing economy, and the health of our community.

The University of Wisconsin-Madison is working closely with staff from the Madison Region Economic Partnership, with five different university programs – including programs in our College of Agricultural and Life Sciences and College of Engineering - poised to help achieve our shared vision for a more integrated and economically robust food manufacturing system. The numerous USDA research facilities, the Center for Dairy Research and the Center for Integrated Agricultural Systems are major University physical and scientific assets that will be partners with this effort.

The University of Wisconsin-Madison has hundreds of experienced faculty and staff in this geographic area already supporting work in the agriculture, food and beverage industries. Designating the region as an Agriculture, Food and Beverage Manufacturing District would allow the university to amplify the results of this important work.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this proposal.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Blank
Chancellor

Office of the Chancellor

161 Bascom Hall University of Wisconsin-Madison 500 Lincoln Drive Madison, WI 53706
608-262-9947 Fax: 608-262-8333



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Forest
Products
Laboratory

One Gifford Pinchot Dr.
Madison, WI 53726-2398

File Code: 4700

Date: March 10, 2015

The Honorable Penny Pritzker
Secretary of U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Pritzker:

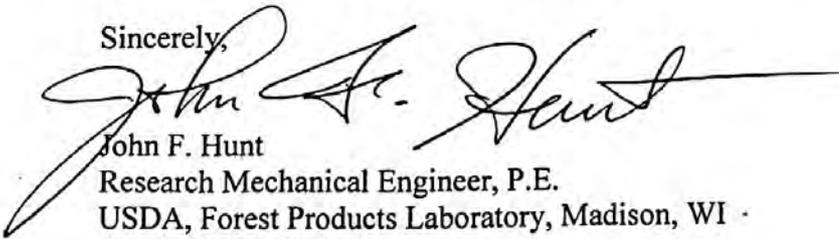
I am pleased to lend my strong support for the Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership (IMCP) application submitted by the Madison Region Economic Partnership (MadREP) for work on the CFIRE Innovation in Containerization project.

I strongly believe the MadREP's goals for CFIRE Innovation in Containerization project and MadREP's broader regional vision for a more integrated and economically robust agriculture, food and beverage manufacturing system are well-aligned with the IMCP program. South central and south west Wisconsin enjoy a unique blend of food economy assets including abundant and diverse agriculture, numerous large and small food and beverage manufacturing businesses, beloved farmers markets, and regional food-oriented retail and restaurant businesses. We are a community that values and takes pride in the connection between the food on our plates, the strength of our food manufacturing economy, and the health of our community.

The CFIRE Innovation in Containerization project could provide rural develop in a number of venues including local or regional container fabricators plus the advantage of getting local products to market in the most efficient manner. That is the vision for CFIRE Innovation in Containerization project and the IMCP designation will be a valuable tool to amplify the collective efforts of the region and achieve success.

Earning the IMCP designation will help our region better integrate, coordinate; and build on our existing and planned food economy assets. Should the MadREP receive IMCP designation, we will work cooperatively with MadREP to apply for federal assistance through grants for the CFIRE Innovation in Containerization project.

Sincerely,



John F. Hunt
Research Mechanical Engineer, P.E.
USDA, Forest Products Laboratory, Madison, WI
Email: jfhunt@fs.fed.us



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Center for Cooperatives

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Anne Reynolds
Executive Director
608-263-4775
atreynol@wisc.edu

235 Taylor Hall
427 Lorch Street
Madison, WI 53706-1503

March 9, 2015

The Honorable Penny Pritzker
Secretary of U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Pritzker:

I am pleased to lend my strong support for the Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership (IMCP) application submitted by the Madison Region Economic Partnership (MadREP).

I strongly believe that the University of Wisconsin Center for Cooperative's proposal to study and implement a Business Cooperative for Food Entrepreneurs will have a significant impact on the profitability of new and existing regional food businesses. The vision for this cooperative and the IMCP designation will be an extremely valuable tool to amplify the collective efforts of the region and achieve long-lasting success.

MadREP's broader regional vision for a more integrated and economically robust agriculture, food and beverage manufacturing system are well-aligned with the IMCP program. South central and south west Wisconsin enjoy a unique blend of food economy assets including abundant and diverse agriculture, numerous large and small food and beverage manufacturing businesses, beloved farmers markets, and regional food-oriented retail and restaurant businesses. We are a community that values and takes pride in the connection between the food on our plates, the strength of our food manufacturing economy, and the health of our community.

Earning the IMCP designation will help our region better integrate, coordinate, and build on our existing and planned food economy assets. This includes supporting a Business Cooperative for Food Entrepreneurs and integrating it with the myriad other innovative food projects going on around southern Wisconsin. Should the region receive IMCP designation, we will work with MadREP to apply for federal assistance as well as secure matching funds for the Business Cooperative project.

Working together, we can make our region a national model for leveraging food systems as an economic driver. I strongly hope you will support this application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anne Reynolds". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping "A" and "R".

Anne Reynolds
Executive Director
University of Wisconsin Center for Cooperatives



March 19, 2015

The Honorable Penny Pritzker
Secretary of U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Pritzker:

I am pleased to lend my strong support for the Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership (IMCP) application submitted by the Madison Region Economic Partnership (MadREP).

I strongly believe that the UW-Madison, Center for Dairy Research's goals for our three submitted projects and MadREP's broader regional vision for a more integrated and economically robust agriculture, food and beverage manufacturing system are well-aligned with the IMCP program. South central and south west Wisconsin enjoy a unique blend of food economy assets including abundant and diverse agriculture, numerous large and small food and beverage manufacturing businesses, beloved farmers markets, and regional food-oriented retail and restaurant businesses. We are a community that values and takes pride in the connection between the food on our plates, the strength of our food manufacturing economy, and the health of our community.

Project #1 is the **\$32 million** renovation/expansion of the Center for Dairy Research (CDR's) facilities in Babcock Hall on the UW-Madison campus. This is an excellent example of the private sector's perceived "value" that CDR brings to the dairy products industry. Funding will be supplied 100% locally, split 50/50 between the State of Wisconsin contributing \$16 million and the private sector \$16 million. Industries share was raised in less than one year. This expansion and renovation of this facility will allow CDR to have "state of the art" basic and applied research facilities which will benefit not only the regional economy but Wisconsin and the rest of the United States as well. This facility will serve as an R&D and product testing facility for all dairy product companies regardless of size. Since the production of dairy products is a highly regulated industry, access to licensed facilities, particularly for smaller companies, significantly speeds up their new product commercialization process. Thus, the vision for the Babcock Hall renovation/expansion and the IMCP designation will be a valuable tool to amplify the collective efforts of the region and achieve success.



Project #2 is a new training program that will provide a “Certificate in Dairy Processing” to dairy workers with a focus on the practical aspects of milk quality and dairy processing. Supported by the WI Cheese Makers Assoc., this certification will provide attendees additional skills that will assist in sustaining/creating family-supporting jobs in rural areas. Thus, the vision for CDR’s Dairy Certification training program and the IMCP designation will be a valuable tool to amplify the collective efforts of the region and achieve success.

Project #3 will be the development of a comprehensive “high technology” food business Accelerator (included in MadREP’s IMCP proposal under International and Marketing projects). The goal will be to assist entrepreneurs’ and other businesses in the development of new food and process technologies that will not only serve both U.S. and international technologies and entrepreneurs but potentially will increase exports and opportunities for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). While many business Accelerators focus on the stereotypical “high technology” industries such as medical technology and bioscience, this program will focus on companies developing “high technologies” within food industries. Thus, the vision for this “high technology” food focused business Accelerator and the IMCP designation will be a valuable tool to amplify the collective efforts of the region and achieve success.

Earning the IMCP designation will help our region better integrate, coordinate, and build on our existing and planned food economy assets. This includes supporting the (and integrating it with) myriad of other innovative food projects going on around southern Wisconsin outlined in MadREP’s submittal. Should the region receive IMCP designation, we will work with MadREP to apply for federal assistance as appropriate for the previously noted projects. I feel that with a private sector match of \$16 million plus the state of Wisconsin’s equal contribution, this combined \$32 million of matching funds for CDR’s projects including the renovation/expansion of Babcock Hall, the Dairy Certification Program and the “high technology” food business Accelerator will increase the competitiveness of this IMCP application.

Working together, we can make our region a national model for leveraging food systems as an economic driver. I strongly hope you will support this application.

Sincerely,

Vic Grassman CEd
Manager - Technology Commercialization
UW-Madison, Center for Dairy Research



C F I R E
NATIONAL CENTER FOR
FREIGHT & INFRASTRUCTURE
RESEARCH & EDUCATION

March 5, 2015

The Honorable Penny Pritzker
Secretary of U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Pritzker:

I am pleased to lend my strong support for the Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership (IMCP) application submitted by the Madison Region Economic Partnership (MadREP).

I strongly believe the National Center for Freight and Infrastructure Research and Education (CFIRE) goals for the Advanced Container Manufacturing project and MadREP's regional vision for an integrated and economically robust agriculture, food and beverage manufacturing system are well-aligned with the IMCP program. South central and south west Wisconsin enjoy a unique blend of food economy assets including abundant and diverse agriculture, numerous large and small food and beverage manufacturing businesses, beloved farmers markets, and regional food-oriented retail and restaurant businesses. We are a community that values and takes pride in the connection between the food on our plates, the strength of our food manufacturing economy, and the health of our community.

Our vision for the Advanced Container Manufacturing project is to strengthen the regional food economy by creating a locally produced transport container specialized for shippers of regional food and agricultural commodities. IMCP designation will be a valuable tool to amplify the collective efforts of the region and achieve success.

Earning the IMCP designation will help our region better integrate, coordinate, and build on our existing and planned food economy assets. This includes supporting the Advanced Container Manufacturing project and integrating it with the myriad other innovative food projects going on around southern Wisconsin. Should the region receive IMCP designation, CFIRE will work with MadREP to apply for federal assistance as well as bring \$55,000 matching funds to support the Advanced Container Manufacturing project.

Working together, we can make our region a national model for leveraging food systems as an economic driver. I strongly urge you to support this application.

Sincerely,

Teresa M. Adams, Ph.D., F.ASCE
Executive Director, CFIRE
Professor, Civil & Environmental Engineering



National Center for Freight and Infrastructure Research and Education
<http://cfire.wistrans.org>
1415 Engineering Drive
Madison, WI 53706
608.263.2655 voice: 608.263.2512 fax



Agriculture and Natural Resources

633 Extension Building
432 North Lake Street
Madison, WI 53706-1498
608-263-7320
608-262-9166 (fax)
711 Wisconsin Relay

March 25, 2015

The Honorable Penny Pritzker
Secretary of U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Pritzker:

I am pleased to lend my strong support for the Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership (IMCP) application submitted by the Madison Region Economic Partnership (MadREP).

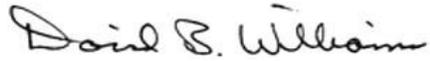
I strongly believe the Wisconsin Fermented Beverage Coalition's goals for "From Farm to Glass: University Outreach to Improve the Quality of Wisconsin's Fermented Beverages" and MadREP's broader regional vision for a more integrated and economically robust food manufacturing system are well-aligned with the IMCP program. South central and south west Wisconsin enjoy a unique blend of food economy assets including abundant and diverse agriculture, numerous large and small food manufacturing businesses, beloved farmers markets, and regional food-oriented retail and restaurant businesses. We are a community that values and takes pride in the connection between the food on our plates, the strength of our food manufacturing economy, and the health of our community.

The engagement of a University of Madison led outreach specialist will assist in the further development of a quality, regionally produced and value-added agriculturally based product. That is the vision for "From Farm to Glass: University Outreach to Improve the Quality of Wisconsin's Fermented Beverages" and the IMCP designation will be a valuable tool to amplify the collective efforts of the region and achieve success.

Earning the IMCP designation will help our region better integrate, coordinate, and build on our existing and planned food economy assets. This includes supporting the "From Farm to Glass: University Outreach to Improve the Quality of Wisconsin's Fermented Beverages" and integrating it with the myriad other innovative food projects going on around southern Wisconsin. Should the region receive IMCP designation, we will work with MadREP to apply for federal assistance as well as secure matching funds for the "From Farm to Glass: University Outreach to Improve the Quality of Wisconsin's Fermented Beverages".

Working together, we can make our region a national model for leveraging food systems as an economic driver. I strongly hope you will support this application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David B. Williams". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'D' and 'W'.

David B. Williams, Associate State Program Director
Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension
UW-Extension, Cooperative Extension



University of Wisconsin-Extension
432 N Lake Street, Room 423
Madison, WI 53706
Phone 608-263-7794
Fax 608-263-7830

Business & Entrepreneurship

March 31, 2015

The Honorable Penny Pritzker
Secretary of U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Pritzker:

I am pleased to lend my strong support for the Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership (IMCP) application submitted by the Madison Region Economic Partnership (MadREP).

I strongly believe the UW Extension Food Finance Institute's goals for the UWEX Accelerator Program and MadREP's broader regional vision for a more integrated and economically robust agriculture, food and beverage manufacturing system are well aligned with the IMCP program. South central and south west Wisconsin enjoy a unique blend of food economy assets including abundant and diverse agriculture, numerous large and small food and beverage manufacturing businesses, beloved farmers markets, and regional food-oriented retail and restaurant businesses. We are a community that values and takes pride in the connection between the food on our plates, the strength of our food manufacturing economy, and the health of our community.

The Accelerator program will provide rigorous financially oriented technical assistance that prepares companies to successfully raise money from traditional and non-traditional capital sources. That is the vision for the UWEX Accelerator and the IMCP designation will be a valuable tool to amplify the collective efforts of the region and achieve success.

Earning the IMCP designation will help our region better integrate, coordinate, and build on our existing and planned food economy assets. This includes supporting the Accelerator and integrating it with the myriad other innovative food projects going on around southern Wisconsin.



Should the region receive IMCP designation, we will work with MadREP to apply for federal assistance as well as bring the \$195,000 matching funds, in the form Tera Johnson's time, for the Accelerator.

Working together, we can make our region a national model for leveraging food systems as an economic driver. I strongly encourage your support for this application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Lange". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "M".

Mark Lange
Director, Div. for Business
and Entrepreneurship
UW-Extension



3/24/2015

The Honorable Penny Pritzker
Secretary of U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Pritzker:

I am pleased to lend my strong support for the Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership (IMCP) application submitted by the Madison Region Economic Partnership (MadREP).

I strongly believe the Wisconsin Fermented Beverage Coalition's goals for "From Farm to Glass: University Outreach to Improve the Quality of Wisconsin's Fermented Beverages" and MadREP's broader regional vision for a more integrated and economically robust food manufacturing system are well-aligned with the IMCP program. South central and south west Wisconsin enjoy a unique blend of food economy assets including abundant and diverse agriculture, numerous large and small food manufacturing businesses, beloved farmers markets, and regional food-oriented retail and restaurant businesses. We are a community that values and takes pride in the connection between the food on our plates, the strength of our food manufacturing economy, and the health of our community.

The engagement of a University of Madison led outreach specialist will assist in the further development of a quality, regionally produced and value-added agriculturally based product. That is the vision for "From Farm to Glass: University Outreach to Improve the Quality of Wisconsin's Fermented Beverages" and the IMCP designation will be a valuable tool to amplify the collective efforts of the region and achieve success.

Earning the IMCP designation will help our region better integrate, coordinate, and build on our existing and planned food economy assets. This includes supporting the "From Farm to Glass: University Outreach to Improve the Quality of Wisconsin's Fermented Beverages" and integrating it with the myriad other innovative food projects going on around southern Wisconsin. Should the region receive IMCP designation, we will work with MadREP to apply for federal assistance as well as secure matching funds for the "From Farm to Glass: University Outreach to Improve the Quality of Wisconsin's Fermented Beverages".

Working together, we can make our region a national model for leveraging food systems as an economic driver. I strongly hope you will support this application.

Sincerely,

Scott Rankin
Food Science Department Chair, University of Wisconsin Madison

Department of Food Science

Babcock Hall University of Wisconsin-Madison 1605 Linden Drive Madison, Wisconsin 53706-1519
608-262-3046 Fax: 608-262-6872 <http://www.wisc.edu/foodsci/>



3/24/2015

The Honorable Penny Pritzker
Secretary of U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Pritzker:

I am pleased to lend my strong support for the Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership (IMCP) application submitted by the Madison Region Economic Partnership (MadREP).

I strongly believe the Wisconsin Fermented Beverage Coalition's goals for "From Farm to Glass: University Outreach to Improve the Quality of Wisconsin's Fermented Beverages" and MadREP's broader regional vision for a more integrated and economically robust food manufacturing system are well-aligned with the IMCP program. South central and southwest Wisconsin enjoy a unique blend of food economy assets including abundant and diverse agriculture, numerous large and small food manufacturing businesses, beloved farmers markets, and regional food-oriented retail and restaurant businesses. We are a community that values and takes pride in the connection between the food on our plates, the strength of our food manufacturing economy, and the health of our community.

The engagement of a University of Wisconsin-Madison based outreach specialist will assist in the further development of a quality, regionally produced and value-added agriculturally based product. That is the vision for "From Farm to Glass: University Outreach to Improve the Quality of Wisconsin's Fermented Beverages" and the IMCP designation will be a valuable tool to amplify the collective efforts of the region and achieve success.

Earning the IMCP designation will help our region better integrate, coordinate, and build on our existing and planned food economy assets. This includes supporting the "From Farm to Glass: University Outreach to Improve the Quality of Wisconsin's Fermented

**Department of Horticulture
College of Agricultural and Life Sciences**

380 Moore Hall 1575 Linden Drive Madison, Wisconsin 53706
608/262-7781 Fax: 608/262-743 www.horticulture.wisc.edu

Beverages” and integrating it with the myriad other innovative food projects going on around southern Wisconsin. Should the region receive IMCP designation, we will work with MadREP to apply for federal assistance as well as secure matching funds for the “From Farm to Glass: University Outreach to Improve the Quality of Wisconsin’s Fermented Beverages”.

Working together, we can make our region a national model for leveraging food systems as an economic driver. I strongly hope you will support this application.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in red ink, appearing to read "Irwin", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Irwin Goldman
Professor and Chair, Department of Horticulture



CENTER *for* INTEGRATED AGRICULTURAL SYSTEMS

University of Wisconsin-Madison
Research Division, College of Agricultural and Life Sciences

1535 Observatory Drive
Madison, WI 53706
608.262.5200
fax 608.265.3020
www.cias.wisc.edu

March 2, 2015

Reviewers:

Thank you for the opportunity to support Southern Wisconsin's food industry nomination as a designated manufacturing community with the Department of Commerce. This region is well on its way to becoming the Napa of the Midwest. Your designation of the region as an agriculture, food and beverage sector will stabilize and accelerate that process.

The Center for Integrated Agricultural Systems brings to your attention some key projects to this end. **Regional food for regional markets** is a business activity experiencing profound growth. The Chicago – Milwaukee – Twin Cities region is home to more than 20 million people and has much unrealized potential in feeding its people regionally. In the last five years a number of businesses have stitched together values-based supply chains for regionally-grown food for regional markets. Moving food from Southern Wisconsin into the Minneapolis and Madison metro regions has been relatively easy, but Milwaukee and Chicago have proven more difficult. We think this is largely an issue of **logistics and distribution** that will require a concerted effort on the part of independent businesses throughout the region to resolve. Our region has considerable unrealized potential to serve the growing market demand for food with attributes like local, sustainable, organic, fair trade. We propose to do three feasibility studies:

- first mile cooperative logistics for food grown and processed in the region;
- metro-mile trucking infrastructure innovations that address the chokehold on business access to the Chicago market and distribution hub, and
- last-mile wholesale warehousing and distribution for products consumed in the region.

As we work with business to improve supply chains, it becomes glaringly apparent that there is simply **not enough product grown regionally that is oriented toward market demand for local foods**. The region has this potential, but current agriculture is directed more toward national markets. The Center hosts **beginning farmer schools** for dairy and livestock farmers and for horticultural crops such as vegetables, apples, grapes and other crops as possible. Support from this program would help us ramp up these schools to support more beginning farmers in their nascent business development, and enable them to more successfully reach regional markets. It would also make it possible to quickly **assess state workforce development** agencies around the country for innovative programming to build seasonal and skilled labor pools based on fair trade values.

This is just the tip of the iceberg. Department of Commerce designation would allow the region to develop values-based food supply chains, thereby increasing our capacity for production, processing, and distribution of high-quality, healthy and affordable food to our region and beyond, while boosting local, mostly rural economies in an environmentally-friendly way.

Thank you for your consideration.

Michael M. Bell

Director, Center for Integrated Agricultural Systems

Vilas Distinguished Achievement Professor of Community and Environmental Sociology

Vernon Economic Development Association

1201 North Main Street · Suite 6 · Viroqua WI 54665
608.638.8332 · snoble@veda-wi.org · www.veda-wi.org

February 25, 2015

The Honorable Penny Pritzker
Secretary of U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Pritzker:

This letter is to enthusiastically support the Madison Region Economic Partnership (“MadREP”) application seeking a Manufacturing Community designation focused on the agriculture, food and beverage manufacturing cluster located in Western Wisconsin. The thirteen county region is defined by Columbia, Crawford, Dane, Dodge, Grant, Green, Iowa, Jefferson, Lafayette, Richland, Rock, Sauk and Vernon counties.

As a non-profit organization serving the Vernon County region, Vernon Economic Development Association (VEDA) recognizes the value of creating an environment to accelerate the rebirth of agriculture, food and beverage manufacturing in our area by garnering this designation. Significant investment in the infrastructure to get products to market is critical to the growth of the food industry, the main economic driver, in this region. It is a good fit with our strategic goal to assist business startups and expansions that create jobs. Therefore, I commit to serving on the MadREP IMCP Consortium. VEDA is also providing \$100,000 of funding match to this proposal with \$20,000 in VEDA membership fees and \$80,000 in lease rates from the Food Enterprise Center.

To support the agricultural and food related strengths of our region, VEDA acquired a shuttered 100,000 square foot manufacturing building and transformed it into a multi-tenant facility for food and wellness related businesses to start up or expand. The Food Enterprise Center provides the infrastructure to aggregate, store, process, market and distribute fresh and value-added food products, which addresses the bottlenecks in the local food system and creates a regional food economy. This food system increases access to fresh healthy foods, improves the ability of small and mid-sized producers to expand their business capacity, increases revenue for area producers, creates jobs and builds wealth in our rural communities.

I encourage you to approve full funding for this proposal. We look forward to coordinating our efforts with those of our partners to use the IMCP designation wisely and effectively to grow our agriculture, food and beverage manufacturing sector. By creating an environment that nurtures innovation and provides the resources to help people explore and develop their ideas, VEDA will respond to a growing broad base of small businesses throughout the region.

Respectfully,



Susan Noble
Executive Director



Water Resources Monitoring Group, LLC

5194 State Road 81
Lancaster WI, 53813
608-723-2514

March 22, 2015

The Honorable Penny Pritzker
Secretary of U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Pritzker:

I am pleased to lend my strong support for the Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership (IMCP) application submitted by the Madison Region Economic Partnership (MadREP).

I strongly believe the Water Resources Monitoring Group's goals for low-cost remote water monitoring technology and MadREP's broader regional vision for a more integrated and economically robust agriculture, food and beverage manufacturing system are well-aligned with the IMCP program. South central and south west Wisconsin enjoy a unique blend of food economy assets including abundant and diverse agriculture, numerous large and small food and beverage manufacturing businesses, beloved farmers markets, and regional food-oriented retail and restaurant businesses. We are a community that values and takes pride in the connection between the food on our plates, the strength of our food manufacturing economy, and the health of our community.

The low-cost water monitoring technology will decrease costs of regulatory compliance for industries and municipalities, support water quality trading programs, and promote sustainable intensification of agricultural production. That is the vision for our water monitoring program and the IMCP designation will be a valuable tool to amplify the collective efforts of the region and achieve success.

Earning the IMCP designation will help our region better integrate, coordinate, and build on our existing and planned food economy assets. This includes supporting the final design and implementation of our low-cost water monitoring program and integrating it with the myriad other innovative food projects going on around southern Wisconsin. Should the region receive IMCP designation, we will work with MadREP to apply for federal assistance as well as bring the \$1M matching funds for the low-cost water monitoring program.

Working together, we can make our region a national model for leveraging food systems as an economic driver. I strongly hope you will support this application.

Sincerely,

Dennis L. Busch
CEO, Water Resources Monitoring Group, LLC



March 27, 2015

The Honorable Penny Pritzker
Secretary of U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Pritzker:

I am pleased to lend my strong support for the Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership (IMCP) application submitted by the Madison Region Economic Partnership (MadREP).

I strongly believe the Watertown Economic Development Organization's goals for Regional Video Conferencing Equipment and MadREP's broader regional vision for a more integrated and economically robust agriculture, food and beverage manufacturing system are well-aligned with the IMCP program. South central and south west Wisconsin enjoy a unique blend of food economy assets including abundant and diverse agriculture, numerous large and small food and beverage manufacturing businesses, beloved farmers markets, and regional food-oriented retail and restaurant businesses. We are a community that values and takes pride in the connection between the food on our plates, the strength of our food manufacturing economy, and the health of our community.

The project of developing a communication network using video conferencing technology will reduce travel time and increase connectivity between coaches, mentors, industry experts and businesses to increase operational efficiencies across the industry. That is the vision for the Regional Video Conferencing Equipment Project and the IMCP designation will be a valuable tool to amplify the collective efforts of the region and achieve success.

Earning the IMCP designation will help our region better integrate, coordinate, and build on our existing and planned food economy assets. This includes supporting the Regional Video Conferencing Equipment Project and integrating it with the myriad other innovative food projects going on around southern Wisconsin. Should the region receive IMCP designation, we will work with MadREP to apply for federal assistance as well as secure matching funds for the Regional Video Conferencing Equipment Project.

Working together, we can make our region a national model for leveraging food systems as an economic driver. I strongly hope you will support this application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kim John Erdmann", written over a blue horizontal line.

Kim John Erdmann
Executive Director
Watertown Economic Development Organization

March 17, 2015

The Honorable Penny Pritzker
Secretary of U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Pritzker:

I am writing to provide this letter of support for the Madison Regional Economic Partnership (MadREP) application for the Investing in Manufacturing Community Partnership (IMPC) designation.

The Wisconsin Legislature created the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA) in 1972 to meet an increasing need for affordable housing financing. The Legislature broadened WHEDA's purpose in 1983 to include financing for the expansion of business and agricultural activity in Wisconsin, a goal we share with MadREP and many members of the Consortium.

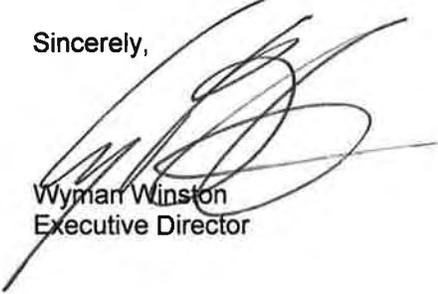
Since 1972, WHEDA has financed more than 77,000 affordable rental units, helped more than 118,000 families purchase a home and made more than 29,000 small business and agricultural loan guarantees. In addition, since 2004, WHEDA has leveraged over \$400 million New Market Tax Credits. The credits have been used, in highly distressed areas, to help finance manufacturers, food processing facilities, small technology firms, shopping centers, commercial real estate developments, retail stores, hotels, and health care facilities.

As an independent authority, not a state agency, WHEDA is not supported by tax dollars. As a lender, WHEDA has approximately \$3 billion in assets.

We look forward to leveraging and strengthening our relationship with area lenders, developers, local government, nonprofits, community groups and others for the expressed and shared purposes of advancing economic development in the sectors of agriculture, food and beverage production, processing, distribution and sales. With the designation and as a member of the IMCP Consortium, we will be better able to integrate, coordinate, our support for economic development to address the specific needs of this sector and region.

On behalf of the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority, we look forward to supporting MadREP's efforts to apply for the IMCP designation.

Sincerely,



Wyman Winston
Executive Director





March 13, 2015

The Honorable Penny Pritzker
Secretary of U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Pritzker:

I am pleased and honored to lend my strong support for the Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership (IMCP) application submitted by the Madison Region Economic Partnership (MadREP). I strongly believe the Whitewater-University Innovation Center's goals for technology-based innovation and MadREP's broader regional vision for a more integrated and economically robust food manufacturing system are well-aligned with the IMCP program. South central and south west Wisconsin enjoy a unique blend of food economy assets including abundant and diverse agriculture, numerous large and small food manufacturing businesses, beloved farmers markets, and regional food-oriented retail and restaurant businesses. We are a community that values and takes pride in the connection between the food on our plates, the strength of our food manufacturing economy, and the health of our community.

The access to video conferencing equipment will greatly enhance collaboration among partners, provide connectivity for businesses, and enhance the development of new agricultural products. That is the vision for the Whitewater-University Innovation Center and the IMCP designation will be a valuable tool to amplify the collective efforts of the region and achieve success.

Earning the IMCP designation will help our region better integrate, coordinate, and build on our existing and planned food economy assets. This includes supporting the Whitewater-University Innovation Center's technologies and integrating them with the myriad other innovative food projects going on around southern Wisconsin. Should the region receive IMCP designation, we will work with MadREP to apply for federal assistance as well as secure matching funds for the video conferencing equipment. Working together, we can make our region a national model for leveraging food systems as an economic driver. I strongly hope you will support this application.

Sincerely,

Ronald L. (Bud) Gayhart Director,

Center for Innovation & Business Development

25 February, 2015

The Honorable Penny Pritzker
Secretary of U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave, NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Pritzker,

Willy Street Co-op strongly supports the Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership (IMCP) application submitted by the Madison Region Economic Partnership (MadREP). Our 40+ year commitment to using the cooperative model as a means to propel the economic sustainability of our local food system is a perfect compliment to MadREP's ability to develop comprehensive economic strategies that will expand private investments in our food manufacturers. South central and western Wisconsin is a vibrant ecosystem of innovative food manufacturing entrepreneurs and private citizens ready to invest in and strengthen both the connection with the food on our plates and our economic positioning in the global economy. Our Co-op is well positioned to provide our cooperative members the means to invest in providing the capital access our emerging farmers and food manufacturers need to strengthen and improve their operations via our recently implemented Local Vendor Loan Fund.

The Local Vendor Loan Fund is made possible by a partnership with Forward Community Investments (FCI), Slow Money Wisconsin, the University of Wisconsin, and our cooperative members. It is a targeted, low-interest loan and mentorship program available to startup and emerging farms and food manufacturers to bolster their operations and develop a more robust supply chain, thereby increasing our cooperative's and the greater community's access to quality food goods. Loan recipients are each assigned University of Wisconsin-Extension's Food Finance Institute staff to provide ongoing technical assistance as projects position themselves to grow market share and effectively compete in the marketplace. In 2014, the Local Vendor Loan Fund provided funding and mentorship to three farmers and food manufacturers, thanks to a group of accredited cooperative members investing in our Local Vendor Loan Fund through Forward Community Investments. We are looking forward to growing this program in upcoming years to allow for greater cooperative member investing and open enrollment for all of our startup and emerging farm and production vendors.

We are also eager to collaborate with MadREP in creating the Madison Public Market, a distinctive community locale that supports emerging retailers, farmers, and manufacturers. We hope to participate in mentoring and incorporating these up-and-coming farmers and

producers into our supply chain. The IMCP will truly be an asset to accelerate these, and other collective efforts within the region, and achieve success.

IMCP designation will help our region become even better positioned to attract partners and investors to expanding upon on our existing and planned food manufacturing sector assets, including our Local Vendor Loan Fund. This year, we plan to increase our borrowing pool through FCI to \$250,000. Should the Madison region receive IMCP designation, we will work with MadREP to apply for federal assistance as well as secure \$250,000 of matching funding, bringing the total second round of lending to \$500,000. We will also support the development of the Madison Public Market.

Working together, we can make our vibrant food manufacturing and investment ecosystem a national model for using food as an innovative economic driver of the IMCP Open for Business Agenda. I strongly encourage your support for MadREP's application.

Sincerely,



Anya Firszt, General Manager
Willy Street Co-op



March 19, 2015

The Honorable Penny Pritzker
Secretary of U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Pritzker:

I am pleased to lend my strong support for the Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership (IMCP) application submitted by the Madison Region Economic Partnership (MadREP).

I believe the Wisconsin Business Development Finance Corporation and its affiliates goals for the SBA 504 Loan Program as well as our new Micro Loans and Community Advantage program and MadREP's broader regional vision for a more integrated and economically robust agriculture, food and beverage manufacturing system are well-aligned with the IMCP program. South central and south west Wisconsin enjoy a unique blend of food economy assets including abundant and diverse agriculture, numerous large and small food and beverage manufacturing businesses, beloved farmers markets, and regional food-oriented retail and restaurant businesses. We are a community that values and takes pride in the connection between the food on our plates, the strength of our food manufacturing economy, and the health of our community.

We have started to establish a great partnership with MadREP in cross promoting our programs to help grow and finance small business. Restaurants, agriculture and food related industry is often tougher for banks financing directly without some sort of assistance. With the promotion and referrals from MadREP of our various funding programs, the IMCP designation will be a valuable tool to amplify the collective efforts of the region and achieve success in helping food and agriculture projects.

Earning the IMCP designation will help our region better integrate, coordinate, and build on our existing and planned food economy assets. This includes supporting/promoting the lending programs and integrating it with the myriad of other innovative food projects going on around southern Wisconsin.

Working together, we can make our region a national model for leveraging food systems as an economic driver. I strongly hope you will support this application.

Sincerely,



Dan M. Schneider
President & CEO



March 30, 2015

The Honorable Penny Pritzker
Secretary of U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Pritzker:

The Board of Directors of the Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association would like to voice its strong support for the Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership (IMCP) application submitted by the Madison Region Economic Partnership (MadREP).

Our trade association, along with the Wisconsin Center for Dairy Research, is designing the Certificate in Dairy Processing, a worker training program with goals that correlate with MadREP's broader regional vision for a more integrated and economically robust food manufacturing system. South central and south west Wisconsin is home to a food center unique in the nation: More than 30 family-owned and cooperative cheese and butter making facilities supported by dozens of key suppliers that thrive exclusively due to the success of the cheese industry here. Hand crafted dairy foods are a source of pride in this region, as well as a key employer.

The Certificate in Dairy Processing is a new idea – core concepts training for the operators and line workers in Wisconsin's dairy processing plants. Our Association, along with the Center for Dairy Research, believes that dairy product quality and safety will benefit strongly from training in dairy products, milk quality, sanitation and food safety that reaches all levels – every worker – in our dairy plants. The IMCP designation will be a valuable tool to amplify the collective efforts of this cheesemaking region and achieve success.

This region deserves the IMCP designation to better integrate, coordinate, and build on our existing and planned dairy economy assets. This includes supporting the Certificate in Dairy Processing and integrating it with the myriad other innovative food projects going on around southern Wisconsin. Should the region receive IMCP designation, we will work with MadREP to apply for federal assistance as well as secure matching funds for our new Certificate program.

I strongly hope you will support this application.

Sincerely,

John T. Umhoefer
Executive Director



Wisconsin Department of Transportation

www.dot.wisconsin.gov

Scott Walker
Governor

Mark Gottlieb, P.E.
Secretary

Office of the Secretary
4802 Sheboygan Avenue, Room 120B
P O Box 7910
Madison, WI 53707-7910

Telephone: 608-266-1113
FAX: 608-266-9912
E-mail: sec.exec@dot.wi.gov

The Honorable Penny Pritzker

March 31, 2015

Secretary of U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Re: Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership program

Dear Secretary Pritzker:

I am pleased to lend my strong support for the Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership (IMCP) application submitted by the Madison Region Economic Partnership (MadREP). I strongly believe MadREP's broad regional vision for a more integrated and economically robust food manufacturing system are well-aligned with the IMCP program. South central and south west Wisconsin enjoy a unique blend of food economy assets including abundant and diverse agriculture, numerous large and small food manufacturing businesses, beloved farmers markets, and regional food-oriented retail and restaurant businesses. We are a community that values and takes pride in the connection between the food on our plates, the strength of our food manufacturing economy, and the health of our community.

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) coordinates and supports numerous statewide development initiatives to support a strong transportation infrastructure. A sample of those efforts connecting the state to the Madison 8 county region include-

The Multimodal Freight Network project which is designed to address freight movement issues in the state, and to be responsive to changes in Wisconsin's freight industry. The goal of this project is to develop a GIS based tool that combines commodity movement, infrastructure condition and economic data, and then use this data to inform transportation investment decisions. One of the primary beneficiaries of this analysis will be the Wisconsin businesses that move commodities on our highway, rail, ports and airport systems. The major import/export region to connect to in the state is the Milwaukee 7 region.

Examples of that planning and coordination, the **Freight Rail Preservation Program** and **Freight Rail Infrastructure Improvement Program**, are designed to-

- Connect an industry to the national railroad system;
- Make improvements to enhance transportation efficiency, safety, and intermodal freight movement;
- Accomplish line rehabilitation; and
- Develop the economy.

In 2014 WisDOT has allocated \$26 million for statewide rail acquisition and rehabilitation projects.

Earning the IMCP designation will help our region better integrate, coordinate, and build on our existing and planned food economy assets, along with a myriad of other innovative food projects going on around southern Wisconsin. Should the region receive IMCP designation, we will support MadREP's application for federal assistance as well as explore funding options for transportation related connections to these efforts.

WisDOT supports numerous Metropolitan Planning Organizations, and state and local economic efforts. Working together, we can make our region a national model for leveraging food systems as an economic driver. I strongly hope you will support this application.

Sincerely,



Brad Basten
Economic Development Officer