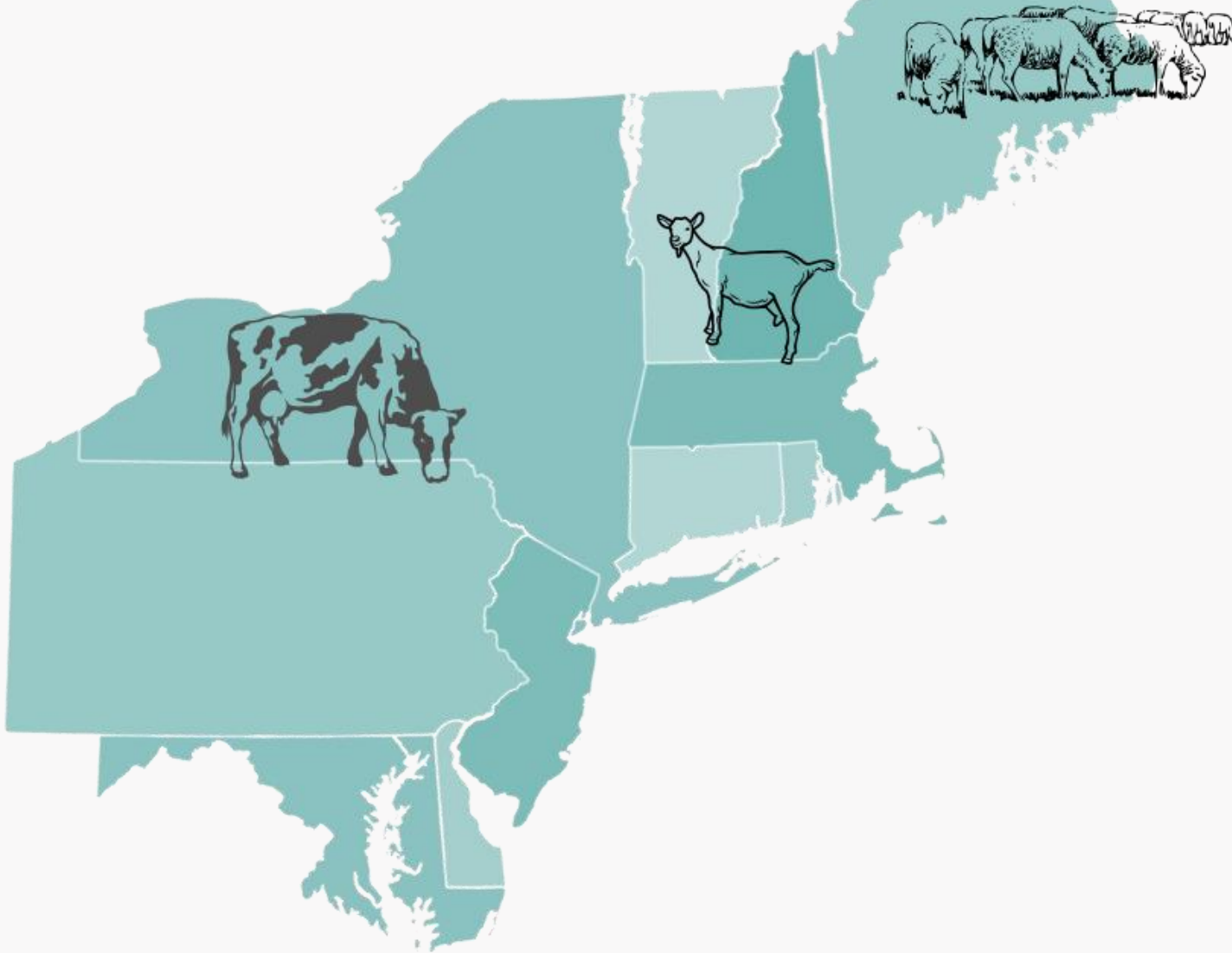


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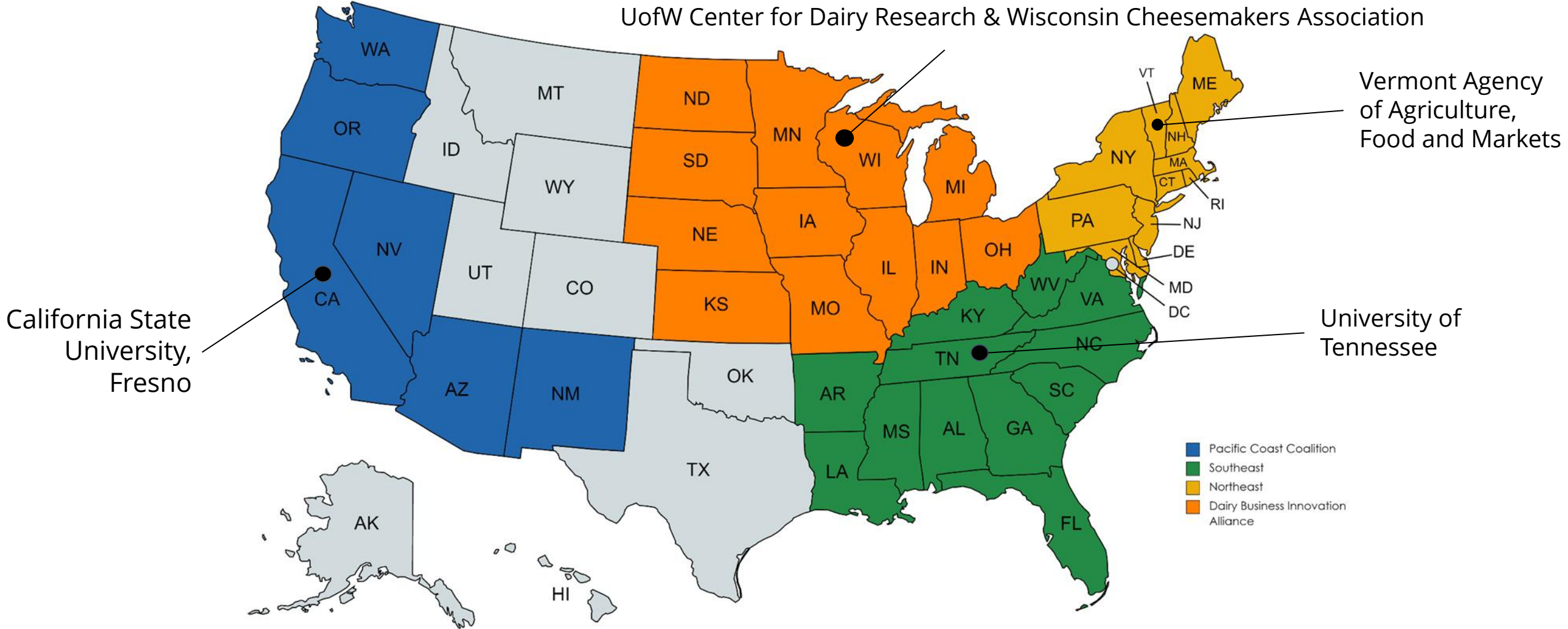
DAIRY BUSINESS  
INNOVATION CENTER



# Program and Impacts Overview

Laura Ginsburg  
Dairy Strategy and Innovation Manager

# DBII Leadership and Regional Representation



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## **One of four regional USDA Dairy Business Innovation Initiatives (DBII) in the nation.**

Established as part of the 2018 Farm Bill, the DBII was created to support dairy businesses in the development, production, marketing and distribution of dairy products.

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## **The NE-DBIC serves an 11-state region:**

Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont, and is based at the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets.

\$53M

## **Amount awarded to NE-DBIC for projects extending through 2027.**

The NE-DBIC prioritizes using funds as grants to dairy businesses. Past and current projects include health and safety training, marketing strategies, grazing transition support, technical assistance, processor expansion, and farm innovation and modernization.



# NE-DBIC Represents Dairy Farm Diversity

- New York is 5<sup>th</sup> in the nation for total milk production
  - Vermont has highest % of dairy sales of total ag receipts of any state in the US at 63%
  - Rhode Island is 48<sup>th</sup> for milk production
  - Northeast is only region in the US where every state's average herd size is less than 275
  - Region has high percentage of organic farms as a proportion of total number of farms
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**NE-DBIC has awarded a total of 409  
projects with \$37.8 million in funds**

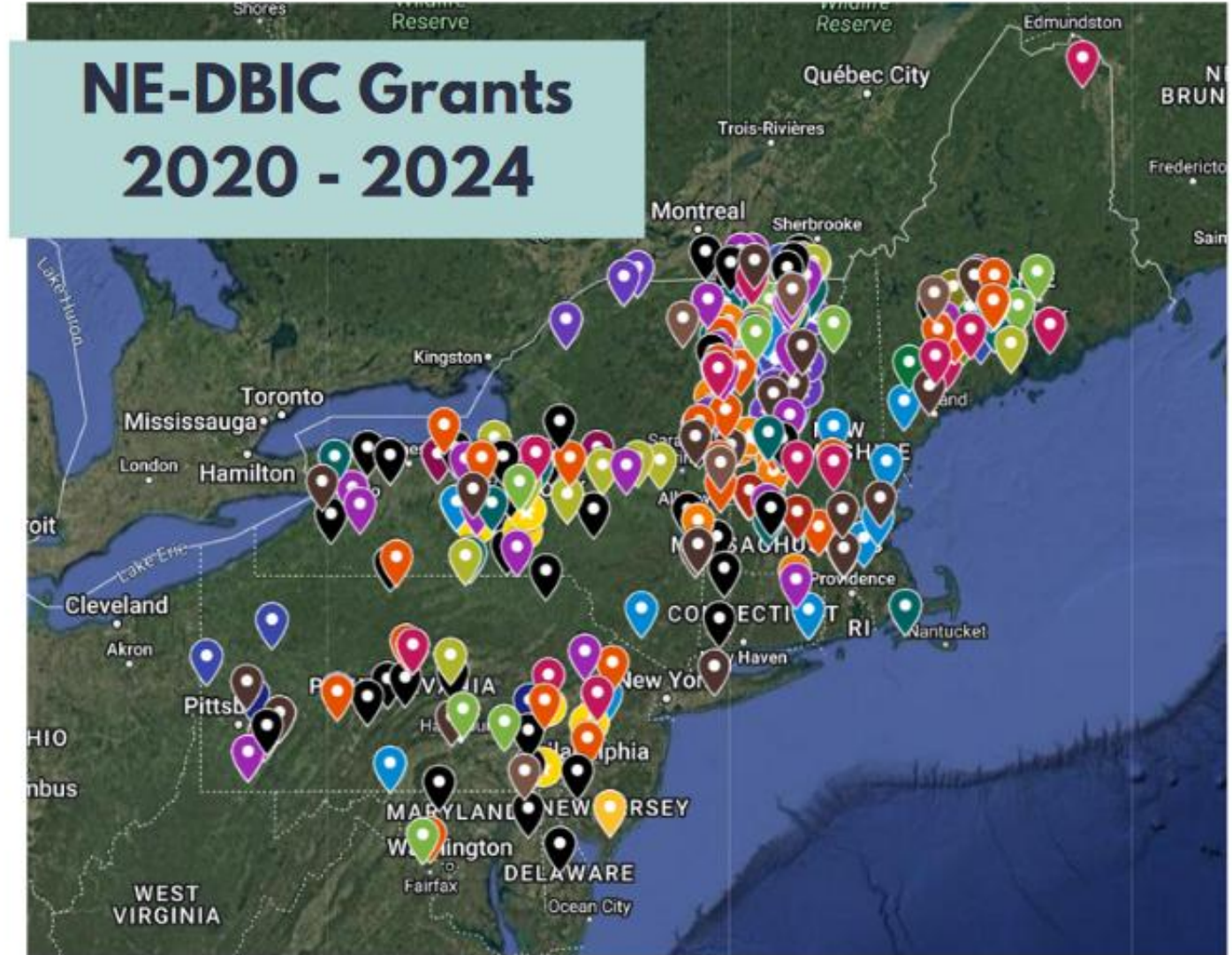




# Application Stats

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- 1,457 applications received for \$120+ million
- 409 awarded
- 28% award rate
- Average grant: \$92,233
- Grant range: \$10,000 - \$1,000,000





# Investment Types

- Competitive grants for dairy businesses
- Directed grants for projects that benefit Northeast regional dairy farmers and processors
- Contracts for research to build a foundation for additional investment and priority areas



# Existing Processor Expansion Grant

\$12.2 Million Invested

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- Cabot/AgriMark – Vermont: The Cabot facility produces “cracker-cut” cheese, a retail ready product that meets growing consumer demand for convenience products. Millions of packages are currently hand-packed, impacting production and sales volume. The investment of \$1 million will modernize the cracker cut line, provide automated packaging, and significantly increase production while moving staff into higher skilled positions.
- Pleasant Lane – Pennsylvania: A \$300,000 supported increased production, brine, aging, and conversion capacity, including updating food safety systems, good manufacturing practices, and training practices.
- Cosmic Goat Creamery – Maine: This small-scale farmstead operation used a \$26,000 grant to improve their cheese aging space, which improved product safety and quality, increased production capacity, and allowed for additional product types.





# Marketing & Branding Grants

- **Goal:** provide professional services to value-added business to support marketing and brand development through labeling, e-commerce, social media, imagery, and strategy
- **Grant impacts:**
  - Gifford's Ice Cream – Maine: Our supported brand update and marketing led to **28% increase in sales**
  - Oak Knoll – Vermont: We have seen significant sales increases since the rebrand, **\$50,000 more than the prior year and demand up 40%**
  - Wright's Creamery – Rhode Island: Our annual sales have gone from \$750,000 before the grant to a **projected \$1 million this year**
  - Pariva – Massachusetts: The results were beyond our expectations. We transitioned from sporadic orders to consistent monthly orders, which was a substantial increase for our small brand, and have **increased sales 200%**



# Dairy Farmer Modernization & Innovation Grants

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- **Goal:** support the trial and adoption of farm projects that demonstrate use of new or unusual strategies, equipment, or production practices. All projects are required to have an educational outreach component.
- **Priorities:** reduction in fuel use, energy efficiency, labor efficiency and safety
- **Funded projects:**
  - 49 projects, \$2.7 million awarded
  - Awards supported:
    - Farm robotics
    - Feed and forage management
    - Animal health and monitoring
    - Virtual fencing
    - Manure handling
    - Extended lactation study for goats





# Food Safety and Certification Grants

- **Goal:** to take actionable steps to improve the safety of dairy products. The program may address biosecurity or food safety, including written plan development, training, technical assistance, certain infrastructure improvements, special testing costs, and audits or certifications.
- **Outcomes to date:**
  - Berle Farm, New York: purchased a lab table required for antibiotic testing of milk, pasteurizer and freezer thermometers necessary for IMS documentation, new IMS lids, and a commercial dishwasher for sanitizing reusable glass yogurt jars
  - Fredrikson Farm, Maine: purchased a new closed batch pasteurizer that will accommodate increased milk production and to become a certified Preventive Controls Qualified Individual (PCQI) through the Food Safety Preventative Controls Alliance
  - Maryland and Virginia Milk Producers Cooperative: work with a third-party food safety expert to create an internal, dedicated Food Safety Culture Team to prioritize enhancements to their existing food safety programs and support ongoing improvements



# Research and Development

- New England distribution network study
- Goat dairy development needs
- Consumer perception study and marketing toolkit
- Sensory and microbial research of specialty cheese
- Goat and sheep consumer demand
- Dairy Product Innovation Challenge with Cornell University
- Workforce and apprenticeship program development







# Contact

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