



Find what you are looking for ...

Search

SPONSORED BY:
[HOME](#) | [NEWS](#) | [PACKERS](#) | [SPORTS](#) | [BUSINESS](#) | [P-G GREEN](#) | [OPINION](#) | [LIFESTYLE](#) | [OBITUARIES](#) | [ENTERTAINMENT](#) | [CUSTOMER SERVICE](#) | [SUBSCRIBE](#)[FAQ about new site](#) | [Press-Gazette's front page](#) | [Newspapers in Education](#) [Comment, Blog & Share Photos](#)
[Log in](#) | [Become a member](#) | [Search people](#)POWERED BY YOU AND THE **GREEN BAY PRESS-GAZETTE**

Editorial: Congress must find solution to immigration issue

MARCH 26, 2010

[Comments \(33\)](#) [Recommend](#) [Print this page](#) [E-mail this article](#) [Share](#) [Type Size](#) [A](#) [A](#) [A](#)

It's clear from a recent [story](#) by the Wisconsin Center for Investigative Journalism that the political gridlock over immigration reform has forced some Wisconsin dairy farmers to make tough choices.

ADVERTISEMENT

[Congress](#) must take action.

The independent government-watchdog organization earlier this month took an in-depth look at the politics surrounding [immigration](#) and its impact on the growing number of dairy farmers who rely on immigrants to run their operations.

More than 40 percent of the state's dairy industry workers are immigrants, according to a study cited in the story. The study, released last year by the University of Wisconsin-Madison Program on Agricultural Technology Studies, states that Wisconsin's dairy industry is "undergoing notable structural changes" in that its farms are declining in number, yet getting larger and producing more. Those factors have led to an increased dependence on hired workers.

The WCJ story indicated that many of the state's dairy workers are in the United States illegally and risk deportation under existing [immigration laws](#). Some dairy farmers face a difficult choice between tempting legal trouble by hiring undocumented workers or charging more for milk to make up the labor cost. Some say they would have to consider closing their farm without immigrant labor.

The story quoted Loren Wolfe, a dairy [producer](#) in Western Wisconsin, who said her family has had difficulty finding hired hands locally who are "willing to get dirty and work the long hours" it takes to run their farm.

"We need (immigrants) to milk cows or we'd barely be in business," Wolfe said, referring to Hispanics who work for her family farm near the Buffalo County community of Cochrane.

Congress has attempted to pass [immigration reform](#), most recently under the George W. Bush administration, but failed in 2007. President Barack Obama, who campaigned on the issue and talked about tackling it early in his administration, has not moved forward on it.

Dairy [producers](#) support the Agricultural Job Opportunities, Benefits and Security Act, dubbed the AgJobs bill, which would reform the seasonal worker program and offer a path to citizenship for immigrant farm workers who meet certain conditions.

Whether for or against immigration reform, many Americans believe the system needs a major fix. According to a Pew Research public opinion poll last year, 63 percent of respondents surveyed said they favored providing a way for illegal immigrants currently in the country to gain legal citizenship if they pass background checks, pay fines and have jobs.

Congress should openly debate the merits of the AgJobs bill. Until some kind of immigration reform package is passed, inaction is costing Wisconsin farmers and ultimately consumers.

33

[Comments >>](#)

Read and share your thoughts on this story.

ADVERTISEMENT

Follow Us -- News Alerts

[Email](#) [RSS](#) [Mobile](#) [Text Alerts](#) [Twitter](#) [Facebook](#)

Breaking News SMS Alerts

Get our biggest headlines sent straight to your cell.

Enter your phone number:

T's & C's here

[Sign up for other text alerts here](#)

More Sports Headlines

Men's basketball: UWGB close to selecting finalists (3)

Baseball: Wrightstown upsets Phantoms

Softball: Algoma edges Southern Door

Northern Iowa's Koch selected for Rummel Award

Girls soccer: N.E.W. Lutheran blanks Southern Door

ADVERTISEMENT

ADS BY PULSE 360

[Get Listed Here](#)

Get ID Patrol from Equifax today!

Enjoy peace of mind with total identity protection made simple

[www.Equifax.com](#)

Chili's Grill & Bar

Fresh Food, Made To Order. Let Chili's Do The Work For You Tonight

[www.Chilis.com](#)

"Six Sigma" Certification

Classes Start Monthly--100% Online--From Villanova

[www.VillanovaU.com](#)

Most Recommended Articles

Brown County sees five suicides in four days (43)

Sturgeon Bay High School teacher Darren Berg charged with sex assault of student (268)

Green Bay Packers chat with Pete Dougherty (11)

John Dederich, former manager of Brown County Veterans Memorial Arena, dies while attending Final Four (11)

Letter: Allow Subway in Door County (7)

Most Commented Articles

Memos note complaints against Green Bay City Council member Guy Zima (139)

U. S. Rep. Steve Kagen, D-Appleton, receives threats for health-care vote (115)

Group asks Wisconsin to remove Good Friday law from statutes (90)

Green Bay Packers defensive end Johnny Jolly set for trial in Houston drug case (91)

Little Suamico gas station robbed again (73)

ADVERTISEMENT

FROM \$40^{*/nt}[BOOK NOW >](#)Partners: [Jobs: CareerBuilder.com](#) [Cars: Cars.com](#) [Apartments: Apartments.com](#) [Shopping: ShopLocal.com](#) [Homes: Homefinder.com](#) [Dating: eHarmony](#)

Appleton Post-Crescent | Fond du Lac Reporter | Green Bay Press-Gazette | Manitowoc Herald Times Reporter | Marshfield News Herald | Oshkosh Northwestern | Sheboygan Press | Stevens Point Journal | Wausau Daily Herald | Wisconsin Rapids Daily Tribune | Go Door County | Packers News | WSInfo

[HOME](#) | [NEWS](#) | [PACKERS](#) | [SPORTS](#) | [BUSINESS](#) | [P-G GREEN](#) | [OPINION](#) | [Lifestyle](#) | [OBITUARIES](#) | [ENTERTAINMENT](#) | [CUSTOMER SERVICE](#) | [SUBSCRIBE](#) | [Site Map](#)[Terms of Service](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [About Us](#) | [Subscribe](#)

Copyright ©2010

Use of this site signifies your agreement to the [Terms of Service](#) and [Privacy Policy](#), updated March 2009.