

Video transcripts from Meat Science and Animal Biologics Discovery building celebration

1. Tony Evers, Wisconsin Governor
2. Randy Romanski, Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection Secretary-designee
3. Howard Marklein, Senator (District 17) and Chair of the Wisconsin Senate Committee on Agriculture, Revenue and Financial Institutions
4. Rebecca Blank, UW–Madison Chancellor
5. Kate VandenBosch, CALS Dean
6. Steven Ricke, MSABD Program Director

1. Tony Evers, Wisconsin Governor:

Hi folks, Governor Tony Evers here! I am thrilled to be joining you today for this virtual celebration of the opening of the Meat Science and Animal Biologics Discovery building on the UW campus. I am always blown away by the good work that happens on our UW campus. The work you all do improves how our industries operate, enhances our knowledge of the world around us, and benefits not just every corner of our state, but every corner of the globe. After all, that's what the Wisconsin Idea is all about. And this new facility will be no different. The research, learning, and innovation that will happen here at the Meat Science and Animal Biologics Discovery building will benefit students, consumers, and Wisconsin's agriculture industry now and into the future. So congratulations on this exciting event! I look forward to seeing and hearing all about the innovations to come.

2. Randy Romanski, Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection Secretary-designee:

Hi, I'm Randy Romanski, secretary designee of the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture Trade and Consumer Protection. Although Wisconsin is known as America's dairyland, our state's \$104.8 billion agriculture industry is extremely diverse. We grow, process, and distribute some of the highest quality food in the country, from cranberries to ginseng, and you guessed it, meat.

Wisconsin has a long and proud tradition of meat production and processing. Our meat industry is a critical part of our food supply chain. In fact, our state meat inspection program is the largest in the country. Even during the COVID-19 pandemic, our livestock farmers and meat processors have never stopped working to provide the products so many of us enjoy.

But in order to maintain a viable and resilient meat industry in Wisconsin in the future, we need to invest in research and innovation today. The new Meat Science and Animal Biologics Discovery Building is an exciting step forward in supporting and improving Wisconsin's meat supply chain. We at DATCP appreciate UW's efforts to support our state's agricultural community, including our meat industry.

3. Howard Marklein, Senator (District 17) and Chair of the Wisconsin Senate Committee on Agriculture, Revenue and Financial Institutions:

Hi. I'm Senator Howard Marklein. I chair the Senate Agriculture Committee and also serve on the Joint Finance Committee. I represent the 17th Senate district, which includes southwestern Wisconsin.

My Senate district is incredibly ag dependent. My Senate district includes a number of both pork and beef producing farms in my district. The top five beef producing counties are in my Senate district.

I'm excited about the research, training, and economic development opportunities that are going to result from this investment. Congratulations to the meat sciences team and to everyone at the University of Wisconsin that was responsible for this grand opening. On, Wisconsin!

4. Rebecca Blank, UW–Madison Chancellor:

Hello. I'm Rebecca Blank, chancellor at the University of Wisconsin in Madison. I'm delighted to welcome you to this celebration of the opening of the UW Meat Science and Animal Biologics Discovery Building. This moment has been many years in the making and I want to thank Governor Evers and former Governor Scott Walker for their support. Members of the state legislature and the Building Commission, the UW system board of Regents, Dean Kate VandenBosch, director Steven Ricke and the faculty and staff whose commitment to this project never wavered. The members of the design team whose creativity allowed us to push the boundaries of what is possible in a research and a food production facility. And the alumni, friends, and industry partners who've worked side by side with us to create what is going to be a national center for research and innovation.

When you think of Wisconsin agriculture, you shouldn't just think of dairy farms. Wisconsin is home to iconic meat brands like Johnsonville, Klement's and Usinger's. We probably more brats per person than any other state. And it's not by chance that our professional baseball team's mascots are a group of racing sausages. So it's entirely appropriate that UW--Madison is opening the best meat and animal biologics research building in the country.

This facility is so much more than a building. It's an ecosystem for collaboration that's going to bring together researchers from many different fields. In partnership with industry, this building will help us develop new technologies, solve problems that industry partners bring to us. And through our Master Meat Crafter program, create entirely new products. And our students will be taught in some of the most unique classrooms on campus, built around a chilled demonstration space. They will also for the first time ever, have the opportunity to bring their ideas to the marketplace in a professionally managed retail store, Bucky's Varsity Meats. I couldn't be prouder of this wonderful addition to our campus. Hats off to all of you who made this day possible. Congratulations and thank you.

5. Kate VandenBosch, CALS Dean:

I'm Kate VandenBosch, the dean of the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, which is home to the Animal and Dairy Sciences Department at UW–Madison.

Thank you all for joining in as we celebrate the completion of the new Meat Science and Animal Biologics Discovery Building. This project was already in the planning stages when I became dean in 2012, and I want to recognize the many people within the meat industry, university and state government who worked very hard for many years to make it a reality.

I'll admit that when I imagined the building opening, I didn't think I would be speaking to you remotely — or wearing a mask! But our students, faculty and staff have made a number of adjustments to university operations in the past several months to address the COVID-19 pandemic – and I appreciate you showing the same level of flexibility by joining us for this happy occasion today.

I'm pleased that Chancellor Becky Blank, Governor Tony Evers, Wisconsin DATCP Secretary Randy Romanski, State Senator Howard Marklein and State Assemblyman Gary Tauchen are all sharing in the celebration of this milestone. Like all of you, they're participating from separate locations, but it was important to all of them to mark the completion of this truly special facility.

Throughout the course of this project, I've learned so much about UW–Madison's rich history in meat science. As many of you know, Wisconsin meat scientists were part of a core group responsible for founding the American Meat Science Association more than 50 years ago. UW professor Dr. Robert Bray was elected as the association's first president.

Fast forwarding to more recent history, I was there at the State Capitol in 2013 when several of our industry partners brought product samples to share with Legislators and their staff members prior to the vote to approve the project in the state budget. I can attest to the fact that people in the Capitol demonstrate great skill at stacking very small plates with large quantities of meat products.

I've been able to meet three classes of Master Meat Crafters – professionals studying to earn a certificate in this specially-designed program – and I'm consistently impressed by their ability to quickly apply the skills they learned through this program to improve their businesses, which will, in turn, support their local communities.

I've been inspired by the vision established by alumni and industry leaders to expand the focus of this facility beyond studying meat as a source of food. They've challenged faculty from many disciplines to consider how to harness the potential of other life-sustaining components of meat animals. In this facility, we can examine what were once considered low-value by-products and study how these elements can help save lives. This is part of the new biologics focus of our program — and one I'm confident will continue to embolden our thinking.

Another highlight was celebrating the start of the construction of this facility, not with a groundbreaking but with a ham-salting. It was great fun to see the Chancellor and Ben Brancel, then the DATCP Secretary, wear red hair nets for the occasion. Even Bucky Badger tried to wear one!

Many of you celebrating with us have also extended your hospitality and allowed me to tour your facilities and to learn about your businesses. I'm grateful for those opportunities to learn from the best in the business.

While I'm disappointed that we can't celebrate this impressive new facility in person, it's my hope that – even at a distance – you will find new collaborators and be inspired to pursue new areas of inquiry.

In closing, I want to take this opportunity to express my gratitude.

Thank you to the members of the meat science advisory committee who worked hard to make this building a reality. Thank you to all of our donors who gave so generously to help support the construction. I also want to thank those who traveled to the State Capitol to share the value of this building with elected officials. Finally, I want to recognize the faculty, staff and students in the Department of Animal and Dairy Sciences, and throughout the university, who have contributed to the design, coordination, and planning of this remarkable building.

I look forward to the time when you can tour the building for yourself. Thank you!

6. Steven Ricke, MSABD Program Director:

I'm Steven Ricke, the new faculty director of the Meat Science and Animal Biologics Discovery program, within the Department of Animal and Dairy Sciences. Thank you for joining us to celebrate our new building on the University of Wisconsin-Madison campus. Even though we're not able to invite all of you to personally tour the building today, we're glad to celebrate its completion, and hope to give you a sense of the work we plan to conduct here.

I'm a new member of the UW-Madison faculty, having moved to Wisconsin from Arkansas in October, where I was the director of the University of Arkansas Center for Food Safety. UW-Madison, however, is not new to me. I have earned my doctoral degree here, and I'm honored to be back, following in the footsteps of my PhD mentor Dr. Dan Schaefer, who had the position of director of the MSABD program until his retirement last year.

This new building promises to be an excellent home for current and future scientists. We have the opportunity to build on an already strong Meat Science program, and we plan to set the standard for how to conduct research on food safety and animal biologics among our peers. One of the key features of the new building is the Biosafety Level 2 processing facility, called BSL2 for short. That will allow the industry to test pathogen control measures directly on carcasses as they are being processed. The unique laboratory, which functions so independently from the rest

of the building that it actually has its own address, will give our researchers and our industry partners a strong advantage when testing new methods.

Another unique feature is the creative design of the classroom spaces. Two modern lecture halls are connected by a chilled presentation room. From behind the large insulated glass windows of this space, instructors can demonstrate important concepts to students while the meat products they're referring to are kept in the appropriate temperature.

On a more personal level, I'm excited to continue and expand my research program in the new building. Several of my graduate students from the University of Arkansas have already transferred here to Wisconsin to work in my lab upstairs. My research explores how Salmonella and Campylobacter survive in food animals on the farm and during processing, as well as developing interventions to reduce the risk of these dangerous pathogens posed to consumers.

I look forward to getting to know all of our partners in the Wisconsin meat industry. Nurturing and expanding these partnerships enhances the visibility and the value of the MSABD program, and helps define research outcomes with commercial possibilities. As we move forward, I'm committed to showcasing our discoveries at local commodity meetings, national scientific conference symposia, and workshops for industry.

I hope you will spend a few extra minutes on our website reviewing the photos of the building and the profiles of some of my excellent colleagues here at the MSABD program, to better understand what a special place this is. All of this is possible because of the investment from the State of Wisconsin, the University, and our generous industry and donor partners. We thank you for the support and look forward to sharing our discoveries with you.