

Meijer Provides Lead Donation to Build New Western Michigan University Food Marketing Hub

Retailer donates \$500K to help create an in-house learning space for students, faculty, and industry partners

KALAMAZOO, Mich., Sept. 25, 2025 / [PRNewswire](#)/ -- Meijer announced a \$500,000 donation today to Western Michigan University's Haworth College of Business Food Marketing Program to support the development of a new food marketing hub. The program helps participating students grow as professionals and prepares them for a rewarding career within the industry.

"We are proud to support WMU's Food Marketing Program and invest in the next generation of industry leaders," said Don Sanderson, Chief Merchandising and Marketing Officer at Meijer. "At Meijer, we believe that fostering innovation and experiential learning is vital to a thriving food sector. This new hub will empower students with the skills, experiences, and connections they need to shape the future of food retail."

The nearly 2,000 sq. ft. space will be an innovative learning spot with flexible, collaborative work stations that can be used to host classes or student organizations, with room for over 75 students. The new space also houses technology that helps students hone their category management skills and host companies train students on crucial food industry skills.

"We are deeply grateful to Meijer for their generous commitment to the advancement of our Food Marketing Program," said Dr. Russell Zwanka, director of the food marketing program at Western Michigan University. "This partnership not only strengthens our ability to provide innovative, hands-on learning experiences, but also allows our students to become agile leaders in the evolving food industry. This new hub represents a shared vision for excellence, preparing our students to meet marketplace challenges and make meaningful contributions to not only the program, but after they graduate."

The Western Michigan University Food Marketing Program is known for its comprehensive approach to preparing students for dynamic careers in the food industry. By integrating experiential learning with academic coursework, students benefit from real-world exposure and networking opportunities that bridge the gap between campus and career. The curriculum is thoughtfully designed to foster leadership, professional development, and a spirit of community service, ensuring graduates are well-rounded and ready to excel in varied roles within the food sector.

For years, Meijer has partnered with Western Michigan University, sharing expertise and real-world insights and demonstrating its commitment to student development beyond the classroom. By inviting students to their facilities and engaging them in practical activities, Meijer provides hands-on opportunities that bridge academic learning with professional practice.

About Meijer: Meijer is a privately owned, family-operated retailer that serves customers at more than 500 supercenters, grocery stores, neighborhood markets, and express locations throughout the Midwest. As the pioneer of the one-stop shopping concept, more than 70,000 Meijer team members work hard to deliver a friendly, seamless in-store and online shopping experience featuring an assortment of fresh foods, high-quality apparel, household essentials, and health and wellness products and services. Meijer is consistently recognized as a Great Place to Work and annually donates at least 6 percent of its profit to strengthen its communities. Additional information on the company can be found by visiting newsroom.meijer.com.

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For further information: Cara Lutz, 616-791-2731, cara.lutz@meijer.com

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