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GREAT FALLS TRIBUNE WEEKEND

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FEELING BLEU

U.S., Canadian cheesemakers caught in Trump's tariff dispute

Michael Collins USA TODAY

GREENSBORO, VT – On Mateo Kehler's family farm, at the end of a dirt road about an hour from the Canadian border, the cheesemaking starts before darkness lifts over the pastures and pines of northern Vermont. • A truck with fresh milk from cows that graze in nearby fields rumbles toward Jasper Hill Farm's big blue barn, painted with a mural of a starry nighttime sky and a blue-cheese moon. An American flag stretches over the entrance. • Two hours to the north, in a small, leafy, French-speaking village, Jean Morin steps into the former Catholic church he bought for 1 Canadian dollar and turned into part of his cheese factory. The pungent smell of aging cheese fills a temperature-controlled room as Morin surveys shelves holding hundreds of wheels of the fromage he produces at the old rectory next door. • Kehler's and Morin's cheesemaking businesses sit on opposite sides of the United States-Canada border. But both are feeling the same pain of the tariff war between the United States and Canada.

"The reality is that there's nobody that is winning," Kehler said. "Everyone in these border communities is losing."

Kehler, who co-founded Jasper Hill Farm with his brother Andy, worked for a decade to penetrate Canada's highly regulated dairy market to sell his artisan cheeses north of the border. He had finally made inroads and was looking to expand when President Donald Trump slapped tariffs on billions of dollars' worth of Canadian products, including cheese.

Canada retaliated by placing tariffs on U.S.-made cheese as well as hundreds of other American goods. Trump inflamed the tensions with a barrage of insults and suggestions that Canada become the 51st state.

All of a sudden, Kehler said, Canadians were no longer interested in buying American-made cheese.

"The inflammatory rhetoric and the backlash absolutely killed our (Canadian) market overnight," he said. "And it hasn't recovered."

In Quebec, Morin and his neighbors in Sainte-Élizabeth-de-Warwick, halfway between Montreal and Quebec City, felt the sting of Trump's tariffs and taunts. Trump's outbursts and punitive measures forced Morin into a difficult decision. He stopped exporting the cheeses he produces at Fromagerie du Presbytère to the United States. The tariffs, he said, made it too expensive.



ABOVE: Vermont's Jasper Hill Farm was purchased by brothers Mateo and Andy Kehler in 1998. TOP: Due to the tariff war between the United States and Canada, Jean Morin, founder of the Fromagerie du Presbytere in Quebec, has halted sales across the border. PHOTOS BY JASPER COLT/USA TODAY

"I'm closer to Vermont than Vancouver, Toronto," Morin said. But right now, he said, the border separating the two countries feels like "a big wall in China."

For cheesemakers on both sides, "it's a terrible moment," he said.

A passion for cheesemaking

Morin, a fourth-generation dairy farmer, grew up in a small house across the street from the church he turned into part of his cheese production center.

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ANALYSIS

GOP split on Miller's ascension

Some think immigration policy has gone too far

María Luisa Paúl
USA TODAY

Greg Bovino has been waiting nine months for this.

As Border Patrol commander, he became the swaggering face of President Donald Trump's street-level immigration sweeps, leading agents through Los Angeles, Chicago and, finally, Minneapolis, where the killing of two U.S. citizens by federal officers in January sparked national outcry, set off a political storm and ended his time in the field. He retired in March, convinced that the administration had lost its nerve.

So when Trump announced Nov. 6 that Stephen Miller, formerly the White House's deputy chief of staff for policy and homeland security adviser, would become his new chief of staff, Bovino saw a correction – and vindication.

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Trafficking hidden in plain sight

Isabel Hughes
Delaware News Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

WILMINGTON, DE – One by one, the women emerged from Crystal Spa, north of Wilmington, and into public view. Each tried to shield her body as police escorted her out the front door.

This wasn't how the women typically exited the massage business – if they left at all.

For weeks, they had lived behind the lobby's drawn blinds, hidden in windowless back rooms connected by a dim hallway. One room held a single mattress atop a particle-board platform. Three pillows, one for each woman, rested against the wall. Another

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Crystal Spa in North Wilmington, Delaware, which was tucked between legitimate businesses in a suburban strip mall, became a place where women were performing sexual services on a regular basis, according to investigators. It was shut down in 2026.
ISABEL HUGHES/DELAWARE NEWS JOURNAL FILE

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