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AMERICAN CHEESE SOCIETY TO LAUNCH *CERTIFICATION EXAM FOR CHEESE PROFESSIONALS* IN 2012 – EXAM APPLICATION NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE

Denver, CO (October 11, 2011) — The American Cheese Society (ACS) has announced that the first [Certification Exam for Cheese Professionals](#) (CECP) will be offered in Raleigh, North Carolina, immediately prior to the [29th Annual ACS Conference & Competition](#). The CECP, the only exam of its kind, was created by ACS to encourage improved standards of comprehensive knowledge and service in the cheese industry.

The CECP offers professionals in the cheese industry the opportunity to earn the distinguished title of ACS Certified Cheese Professional (ACS CCP). The designation of ACS CCP after an individual's name is a mark of professional excellence, indicating that the individual has acquired the level of knowledge and expertise that is demanded throughout the cheese industry. CCPs will be required to renew their certification with ACS every 3 years by demonstrating continued professional development in the industry.

Christine Hyatt, president of the American Cheese Society, said "As the recognized leader in specialty cheese, ACS is excited to launch the first-ever Certification Exam for Cheese Professionals. This exam will set the standard for excellence in our industry, and will ensure a well-educated marketplace that can in turn support a healthy, growing North American cheese economy."

The CECP will evaluate candidates' understanding of core competencies common to the specialty cheese industry. Content for the exam is being developed from the domains identified in the [ACS Body of Knowledge](#), as well as from information gathered in surveys of key industry representatives.

Applications are now being accepted on the ACS website for the first CECP. Applications will be reviewed by the ACS Certification Committee. Applicants who meet the [eligibility requirements](#) outlined on the ACS website will be invited to register for the exam. The application deadline is March 31, 2012.

ACS plans to announce the first class of CCPs at its Annual Conference & Competition in Raleigh, NC, which will be held from August 1-4, 2012. ACS will maintain an online directory of ACS CCPs for reference by organizations and individuals seeking employees, giving ACS CCPs and their employers a competitive edge in the industry.

The CECP is made possible through the [generous support of sponsors](#) including Rogue Creamery, Mons Fromager-Affineur, DPI Specialty Foods, Kerrygold USA, Beehive Cheese Co., Concord Cheese Shop, Di Bruno Bros, Formaticum, Larkin, and Vermont Butter & Cheese Creamery.

Opportunities to sponsor the launch of the exam and align your brand with this ground-breaking program are still available. To learn more about CECP sponsorship opportunities, please contact the ACS office at 720-328-2788 or email rorozco@cheesesociety.org.

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About the American Cheese Society

The American Cheese Society (ACS) is the leading organization supporting the understanding, appreciation, and promotion of farmstead, artisan and specialty cheeses produced in the Americas. At 1,500 members strong, ACS provides advocacy, education, business development, and networking opportunities for cheesemakers, retailers, enthusiasts, and extended industry. ACS strives to continually raise the quality and availability of cheese in the Americas.

Since its founding in 1983, ACS proudly hosts the foremost annual educational conference and world-renowned cheese judging and competition, which culminates in the "Festival of Cheese," a public event regularly featuring over 1,600 competition entries from throughout the Americas. For more information, visit <http://www.cheesesociety.org/>.

About the American Cheese Education Foundation

The American Cheese Education (ACE) Foundation, the American Cheese Society's sister organization, is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization created to educate people about the art and science of artisanal and specialty cheese. The ACE Foundation is eligible for foundation and federal grants, and may receive tax-deductible donations from individuals or businesses in support of existing and new educational efforts. The ACE Foundation funds cheesemaker scholarships to the ACS Conference and supports other educational activities of ACS that are designed for members of the cheese community.