

# The American Cheese Society

NEWSLETTER 2ND QUARTER 2002

## The Great Washed Rinds of Wisconsin

by Dana Tanyeri, Director,  
National Product  
Communications, Wisconsin  
Milk Marketing Board,  
edited by Liz Campbell

Standing tall among the  
washed rind cheeses of

### ACS Mission Statement

*To uphold the highest  
standards of quality in the  
making of cheese and related  
fermented milk products.*

*To uphold the traditions  
and preserve the history of  
American cheesemaking.*

*To be an educational resource  
for American cheesemakers and  
the public through sharing  
knowledge and experience on  
cheesemaking as a hobby or as a  
commercial enterprise,  
with special attention given to  
specialty and farmhouse cheeses  
made from all types  
of milk, including cow's,  
goat's and sheep's milk.*

*To encourage consumption  
through better education on the  
sensory pleasures of cheese and  
its healthful and nutritional values.*

Wisconsin are two favorites:  
Gruyere, a grand, Swiss-style  
cheese, whose heritage  
traces back to the 12th  
century, and the new  
Pleasant Ridge Reserve,  
whose creation was  
inspired by the rare,  
French alpine cheese,  
Beaufort. Both of these  
award-winning treasures are  
produced by young, innova-  
tive companies who, along  
with a growing number of  
Wisconsin cheesemakers, are  
raising the bar in the specialty  
and artisanal category.

Pleasant Ridge Reserve, a  
“farmstead” variety produced  
by Uplands Cheese in  
Dodgeville, Wis., grabbed  
the national spotlight in  
2001, its first year in com-  
mercial production. Intro-  
duced at the American  
Cheese Society's Louisville  
conference, it took ‘Best of  
Show,’ surprising even its  
newly minted cheesemaker,  
Mike Gingrich. Wisconsin's



Gruyere giant is Roth Käse  
USA Ltd., a relatively young,  
Monroe-based company  
whose Grand Cru Gruyere  
and Grand Cru Surchoix are  
recognized as among the  
world's best. Grand Cru  
Surchoix, a premium Gruyere  
aged for at least nine months,  
took ‘Best of Show’ at the  
1999 ACS conference, and  
followed up with a ‘Best of  
Class’ award in the hard  
cheese category at the 2000  
World Championship Cheese  
competition.

Both companies' cheeses  
can be found in upscale  
restaurants and specialty

cheese shops around the  
country, and both are  
committed to maintaining  
the hugely labor-intensive  
methods of production that  
authentic washed-rind  
cheeses require.

### ■ Uplands: Upstart Success Story

Uplands' story begins on  
the farm in 1994, when Mike  
Gingrich, his wife Carol, and  
their partners Dan and Jeanne

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# The American Cheese Society

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

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The ACS Quarterly Newsletter is published by ACS and contains articles and information pertaining to its members. Views of contributors do not necessarily reflect those of the ACS. We encourage you to submit articles, letters, news items or photos to the editor for consideration.

2002 Members of the Newsletter Committee are: Kate Sander, Annie Esser, Patrick Geoghegan, Lynne Devereaux.

On Tuesday, September 11, the world changed around us. We, the committee, and the ACS board and officers, send our thoughts and prayers and good wishes to all of you — not as afterthoughts but constant ones. Be safe and be in touch.

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## From the President...

# How Old is Your Cheese?



I recently attended an event that was put together by the California Milk Advisory Board, called "Aging Gracefully: The Art & Science of Ripening Cheese." It took place at COPIA: The

Center For Wine, Food and the Arts in Napa, Calif. The program content, speakers and presentation was a true testament to the gigantic leap that cheesemakers in California and across the country have taken in response to the seemingly unending demand for better quality cheese from all areas of our industry.

The program consisted of three presentations, two panels, a tasting of the "aged" cheeses — some in varying stages of ripeness — and then a California Marketplace that was made up of 21 different cow's milk cheesemakers, some of whose cheeses were included in the aging.

The keynote speaker was Randolph Hodgson of Neal's Yard Dairy in London, who spoke of how Britain revitalized its farmstead cheese industry. That was followed by a discussion of cheese aging in Britain today.

David Benson, Ph.D., University of Connecticut, gave a presentation on the role of molds in cheese aging.

The California Milk Advisory Board asked Sue Conley of Cowgirl Creamery to take a group of cheeses and age them to demonstrate what can be accomplished when the process of affinage is applied. Sue showed slides of the process and explained how each cheese was handled and under what condi-

tions the cheeses were "finished." Each cheese and cheese type had to be handled differently so they could reach their point of perfection. Sue's passion and enthusiasm was matched by the same level of passion and enthusiasm from the audience as they asked questions. This interaction and dialogue was wonderful to experience.

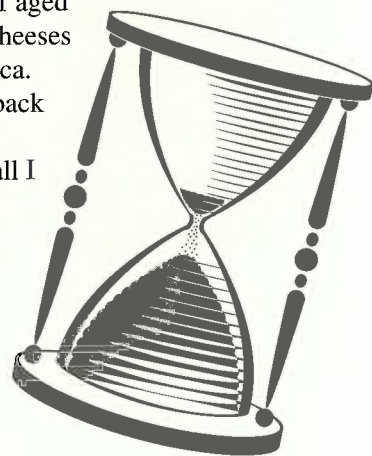
Randolph Hodgson, Sue Conley, David R. Benson, and Mario Gonzales of Fiscalini Cheese Company had a panel discussion on the art and technique involved in ripening cheese.

Rob Kaufelt of Murray's Cheese Shop, N.Y., and David Freeheim of California Milk Advisory Board discussed the current trends related to marketing aged cheese.

Over 150 people attended from all aspects of our industry. Everyone was impressed with the content of the presentations and especially with what they

tasted and could see as the possibilities for the future of aged farmstead cheeses from America.

Driving back to San Francisco, all I could think was what a great time this is to be in the cheese industry.



Best to all, Bill McKenna





when the cows first got out on the grass. With rotational grazing, they get new grass every day, all the way through the summer grazing season," he explains. "We thought that by making cheese from this milk we would be taking advantage of the truly unique characteristics of our milk." Digging deeper, he discovered that science supports the idea of summer milk being the most flavorful. Bob Lindsay, food science professor in Madison, had developed a method for identifying and measuring flavor compounds, alkyl phenols, in milk. According to Lindsay's research, these are found in much higher concentrations in milk from grass-fed cows.

Gingrich and his partners now felt certain that specialty cheesemaking was ideal, and after much sampling with friends, Beaufort was chosen. An A.O.C. French cheese with flavor and performance characteristics similar to Gruyere, Beaufort (also called Gruyere de Beaufort) uses unpasteurized, seasonal milk from Alpine meadow-grazed cows.

Wisconsin's requires all cheesemakers in the state to be licensed. So Gingrich completed the necessary coursework and apprenticed with Bob Wills at nearby Cedar Grove Cheese. He later allowed Gingrich to utilize Cedar Grove's facility on weekends to make Pleasant Ridge. The cheese is named after the farmland their animals graze, and is made only during the summer months from the 150-head herd. While not pasteurized, it is heat-treated.

Several trial batches produced at the University of Wisconsin Center for Dairy

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Patenaude, established a large-scale rotational grazing operation modeled after those in the Alpine regions of France. They cross-fenced to create 20 separate grazing pastures and began milking Holsteins, cross breeding them with Jerseys, Ayrshires, Brown Swiss,

French Normandy, and New Zealand Friesians to get the vigor of hybrids. With strong milk production underway, the partners began to consider how they could best utilize their output. "We were convinced that the milk we were producing had unique flavor characteristics," says Mike Gingrich. "But it was being sold as commodity milk." Cheesemaking seemed the way to go.

Research with veteran cheesemakers told Gingrich that June milk was the best for cheese. "The idea was that you got great flavor

**They cross-fenced to create 20 separate grazing pastures and began milking Holsteins, cross breeding them with Jerseys, Ayrshires, Brown Swiss, French Normandy, and New Zealand Friesians to get the vigor of hybrids. With strong milk production underway, the partners began to consider how they could best utilize their output.**

## *The American Cheese Society*

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*From the Editor...*

# The Cheese Plate is Now Available and a Must Read

It's spring — hard to slip into the editor mode! Kid pens are full of new arrivals, milk is flowing again, the blue heron is back on the pond from a Florida vacation, and morels are up in the woods. This is one of the busiest cheesemaking seasons of the year.

In the midst of this juicy madness, I got a call from Max McCalman at Picholine and found that his new book, *The Cheese Plate*, is finally in bookstores. For me, getting to a bookstore is like planning two weeks in France, but this trip was well worth the effort. His book is not only visually beautiful but so informational, passionate, and readable that there is really something for everyone. His descriptions of the cheesemaking process, both generally and relative to specific cheeses, has some explanations that even the cheesemaker may find informative. I did, in several places, think "oh, that's what is happening." I am a hard believer in content, that



there is plenty of it, then there is something for everyone, from the most casual to the most serious reader, and there is so

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milk is flowing again, the blue heron  
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much hard information beautifully presented that you will scarcely realize you are being informed. *The Cheese Plate* lives up to its title, and in it cheese becomes not just a course but the feature. I've not nearly made it through this wonderful book, but I would suggest to everyone that it is not to be missed, and is available on amazon.com.

Judy Schad, Editor





**"The idea was that you got great flavor when the cows first got out on the grass. With rotational grazing, they get new grass every day, all the way through the summer grazing season. We thought that by making cheese from this milk we would be taking advantage of the truly unique characteristics of our milk."**

**Michael Gingrich  
Uplands Cheese**

Research's pilot plant were aged, and the partners realized they had the potential for a great artisanal cheese. Gingrich and Wills started commercial production at Cedar Grove on weekends, and moved the cheese to temperature- and humidity-controlled facilities in Spring Green for curing. At this nondescript curing facility, perched on the edge of town, Gingrich personally hand washes and turns each plump, golden 10-pound wheel, nurturing them along for four to eight months before packing, labeling, and shipping them. He's now experimenting with extended aging for up to a year or

more. He feels this will yield a super-premium variety.

Six hundred wheels of Pleasant Ridge Reserve were produced in 2000, 1,200 in 2001. This year, Gingrich hopes to hit 1,800 wheels.

"It's growing well, but we don't want to get to the point where we'd have to give up our hands-on involvement with either the milk production or the cheesemaking," he

says. "This type of cheese demands both artistry and a lot of careful control. Our goal is quality, not quantity."

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#### **■ Roth Käse: Regal in Size, Quality**

While Uplands provides a stellar example of a very small, niche producer, Roth

Käse represents the other extreme. Though a relatively new company, its owners have roots in a cheese business that date back to 1863, when Oswald Roth began trading cheese in Switzerland. Roth was the great grandfather of the current owners, Fermo Jaeckle, and Ueli and Felix Roth. In 1990, these three established Roth Käse USA Ltd., in Green County's Monroe. They purchased an existing Muenster cheese factory and completely renovated and converted the facility into a chalet-style, state-of-the-art specialty cheese plant. Visitors can watch various stages of the process and purchase a wide range of cheeses, either produced by or carried by Roth Käse, in the adjoining Alp-n-Dell retail store.

Roth Käse has emerged as a perfect blend of strict adherence to traditional procedures and innovative, progressive business management that is enabling it to grow at a rate of 15 percent per year. The company is the first specialty cheesemaking facility in the country to have earned ISO 9001:2000 quality certification, a process that took well over two years, according to its president, Steve McKeon. ISO certification is a quality system standard recognized around the world. It provides a foundation for professional excellence by emphasizing a business vision and specific quality management principles. Certified Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker Bruce Workman leads Roth Käse's team of four professional cheesemakers, which usually includes a visiting Master from Switzerland. The company participates in an

*continued on page 8*

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Cheese Advocate  
Birmingham, Ala.

**Jennifer Ippolito**  
The Cheese Plate  
New Paltz, N.Y.

educational exchange program called Community for Agriculture, which keeps Swiss cheesemakers involved in the business.

Roth Käse's traditional copper cheese vat, the only one of its kind in the country, is used to create its Gruyere and other washed-rind varieties. "The copper is integral to the quality of the cheese," explains McKeon. "You can't make good Gruyere in stainless steel vats. With each

batch, a tiny portion of the copper surface wears off and permeates the cheese. It's part of the make, just as oak barrels are for fine wine."

When the curds set and most of the whey drained off, they

move from the vat to metal forms. The forms are lined up beneath hydraulic presses, which gently but firmly press out remaining whey and compress the curds to remove small holes that would otherwise form between them. McKeon notes that "for Gruyere, you want a smooth, dense texture from the start." After pressing, the cheese is soaked in brine for 24 hours, and then removed to red spruce slats, which the company has specially made and imports from Switzerland. After a few days of curing, the cheese is dry salted, then washed daily for two weeks and turned with a

brine solution that contains a special bacterium, or smear. This sets in motion the development of the rind. Conditions during this first phase are humid and relatively warm, from 55 to 58 degrees F. According to McKeon, "the concept behind washed rind cheeses is that you're curing them in the open, not in the bag. You're forcing the salt in and the water out. In the first stage, the cheese smells sweet

and yeasty. Later, it gives off an ammonia smell as the chemistry of the cheese begins to change more."

After three weeks, the cheese starts to develop its characteristic golden hue. At

eight weeks, the cheese is only washed weekly to maintain a slight tackiness on the rind and to ward off the development of other molds.

Roth Käse's Grand Cru Gruyere is aged a minimum

of four months, while Grand Cru Surchoix Gruyere is aged nine months or more, under the watchful eye of cheesemaker and cellar master John Babler. Housed in a cool, thick-walled, brick warehouse from the 1800s, Roth Käse's basement-level Gruyere aging cellar features floor-to-ceiling racks of 20-pound wheels at various stages of ripening. Each wheel is brushed with brine solution and replaced to continue aging until Babler deems it ready for distribution.

In addition to Gruyere and Surchoix Gruyere, Roth Käse produces several other washed-rind varieties. They include Raclette, a traditional Alpine melting cheese reminiscent of Gruyere; Italian-style Fontina; and Knight's Vail, a buttery, semi-soft cheese whose brownish rind gives it the look of a round bread loaf. Two new washed rinds have also been developed: Panina, a Spanish-style cheese, and Homestead, a traditional farmhouse-style cheese. ☺

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# Blue Ridge Mountain Dairy

By Vicki Dunaway  
Reprinted with permission from  
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issue 6

Driving the roller coaster narrow back roads to Blue Ridge Mountain Dairy, it's hard to believe that the cancerous sprawl of the Washington, D.C., suburbs is only about 30 miles away. The homes here have green space between them — more like communities in rural southwest Virginia than in the neighboring counties, where mansions worth half a million dollars are squeezed onto tiny lots like a Monopoly board in the late stages of a good game. But it's clear that the open land here is preserved not because

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Paul did complete chef's training at the Culinary Institute of America but wasn't fond of the long hours, and decided he would prefer to be in restaurant management rather than filling a chef's hat. Then somewhere along the way, he got the idea that farming might be more interesting, and he thought it would be great to work for himself.

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of distance to markets, as in southwest Virginia, but rather as a result of the conscious decisions of people who can afford to choose.

On this misty summer morning, I pulled into the driveway of Paul Stephan's 12-acre farm, emerged from my car, and was greeted by the peaceful sounds of birdsong and the quiet gazes of four cow-like animals that looked as though they had been teleported from an eon long past — a little like woolly mammoths without the tusks and trunks. I was surprised at their size. My mental images of water buffaloes were of sleek, massive beasts with long horns, dwarfing the tiny stick figures of Asian workers in rice paddies. According to *Cheese and Fermented Milk Foods*, there are 15 breeds of water buffalo in India. Paul's girls are probably about the size of Jersey cows, and have short, stout horns curving away from the face, then back toward the top of the head. They have somewhat shaggy coats, like Scotch Highland



cattle, and wide nostrils reminiscent of a gorilla. They definitely do not have the "cuddly" demeanor of a Jersey or a Brown Swiss, and the buffalo's stare suggests that you might want to keep your distance. I don't remember hearing a sound out of any of the nine water buffaloes on the farm during my visit.

After taking a few pictures, I went up to the house to find Paul Stephan, who had graciously agreed to let me interview him on one of his busy pre-market, Mozzarella-making days. No one answered the door of the two-story, Civil-War-era home, so I headed out to the plain, white block building that houses the cheese room and his office. He was there, and greeted me quietly, opening a sliding glass door

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Tualatin, Ore.

**F. Cappiello Dairy  
Products Inc.**  
Schenectady, N.Y.

**FireFlyFarms  
Organic Inc.**  
Bittering, Md.

**Fromartharie Inc.**  
Warren, N.J.

**Kraft Food Ingredients**  
Cordova, Tenn.

**Lactalis Groupe  
USA Inc.**  
New York, N.Y.

to let me in. Paul Stephan is a bright-eyed young man, obviously educated and intense. I had heard the rumor that he had been a chef, and I had fancied that he was a cheese aficionado, frustrated by the lack of availability of Mozzarella di bufala in the U.S., who took it upon himself to supply the market. It wasn't exactly like that. Paul did complete chef's training at the Culinary Institute of America but wasn't fond of the long hours, and decided he would prefer to be in restaurant management rather than filling a chef's hat. Then somewhere along the way, he got the idea that farming might be more interesting, and he thought it would be great to work for himself.

Paul brought four water buffaloes north from Florida, but didn't find them to be terribly cooperative. They didn't like the milking parlor, and Paul found it too stressful (and dangerous) to milk them, so he turned them out to pasture and bought a couple of Jersey cows. The Jerseys supply more milk (the buffaloes each only yielded about a gallon and a half per day) and are much easier to work with. Recently Paul and his wife Allison have begun working with the buffaloes,

taking them into the milking parlor and handling their udders and teats in order to prepare them for milking when they freshen. He is also going to try to train the four bred heifers to the parlor and hopes to again be able to make the traditional Italian-style Mozzarella, which he says brings about twice the (already substantial) price of cow-milk fresh Mozzarella. His milking parlor is small, about the size of a large stall within a modest barn. He milks two animals at a time in his 12' x 12' parlor. To construct the milking parlor,



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he converted a section inside a dirt-floored horse barn by pouring a concrete floor and applying pebble-textured dairy paneling to the walls. The milk room was formerly a tack room.

I asked whether the buffaloes need water for wallowing and swimming. Paul said that they like to have a body of water available, but it isn't required. This is probably less important in Virginia than it would be in

the heat of the deep South. There are two major types of water buffalo — the swamp buffaloes from Southeast Asia and the river buffaloes from India and Pakistan. River buffaloes, which are the type that Paul has, are adapted to habitats throughout the U.S. (and, of course, Italy). The web page of The American Water Buffalo Association has photos of river buffaloes in the snow in Montana. Their Web site is at <http://members.ccgw.net/waterbuffalo>. The organization's address is Box 13533, Gainesville,

Florida 32604; phone (352) 846-0996. Fencing requirements for the river variety of water buffalo are similar to those for regular cattle.

Currently Paul milks the two Jerseys and buys some milk from a cooperative to fill the growing

demand for his Mozzarella and Ricotta cheese. Ideally he would prefer to buy water buffalo milk directly from a farmer, or he might hire someone to milk his herd so that he can devote his time and energy to cheesemaking and marketing. He has recently worked out a deal to purchase some Guernsey milk from a nearby farmer until he is able to

*continued on page 10*



## **We Need Your Input to Make this Newsletter a Useful Tool for Everyone**

The newsletter welcomes your thoughts, suggestions, articles, ads and calendar events. If you are interested in contributing, please contact: Judy Schad, 812-923-9408 (phone & fax) or e-mail judygoat@aol.com. While each issue has a focus, we invite other timely and pertinent information. The features for 2002 focus on American traditional cheeses.

**The newsletter is now actively soliciting  
black and white ads.**

- \$425 full page
- \$225 1/2 page
- \$130 1/4 page (about 3-1/2" x 5")
- \$90 1/6 page (about 2-5/16" x 5")
- \$45 about 2-5/16" x 2 "
- \$30 classified (35 characters or less)

**For inquiries about ads, including specs,  
rates, and discounts for consecutive ads:**

Barry King

The American Cheese Society  
304 West Liberty Street, Suite 201  
Louisville, KY 40202  
Phone: 502-583-3783  
Fax: 502-589-3602  
E-mail: bking@hqtrs.com

Payment can be made via check,  
MasterCard or Visa to The American Cheese  
Society at the address above.

In future issues, your contributions may be edited. We welcome information pertinent to cheesemaking, cheese education or new cheeses; however, we will use editorial discretion to define what may be more appropriate for ad copy and will advise contributors if we feel it should appear in ad form and be accompanied by payment.

## **Upcoming Issues & Topics**

**• 3RD QUARTER 2002**

**Cheeses of Virginia**

What could be more timely for the ACS  
Conference in Washington, D.C.

**May 15, 2002:** Deadline for all articles,  
photos, ads and information.

**\*Since this is the conference issue we  
have moved the deadline back to May  
15 so that we can get conference info  
to members sooner.**

**• 4TH QUARTER 2002**

**Vermont Cheddar, and post  
conference report**

**August 1, 2002:** Deadline for all  
articles, photos, ads and information.

*The American Cheese Society welcomes  
your input, articles and/or photos for  
inclusion in this newsletter. Please let us  
know if you have suggestions for future  
topics or have interest in becoming  
involved in production or editing.*

**ACS Corporate  
Member/Sponsors  
2001-2002**

• continued •

Land O Lakes  
St. Paul, Minn.

McCadam  
Cheese Co. Inc.  
Heuvelton, N.Y.

Murray's Cheese Shop  
New York, N.Y.

New England Dairy  
Promotion Board  
Sutton, Mass.

Norseland Inc.  
Stamford, Conn.

Oakville Grocery  
Healdsburg, Calif.

Pacific Cheese Company  
Hayward, Calif.

Paul W. Marks Company  
Everett, Mass.

Peterson Company  
Auburn, Wash.

Provvista Specialty  
Foods Inc.  
Portland, Ore.

Roth Kase USA Ltd.  
Monroe, Wis.

SFI/Anco Fine Cheese  
Moonachie, N.J.

Sheila Marie Imports,  
Limited  
Wilmington, Mass.

Sid Wainer & Son  
New Bedford, Mass.

Straus Family Creamery  
Marshall, Calif.

**ACS Corporate  
Member/Sponsors  
2001-2002**

• *continued* •

**Swiss American Inc.**  
St. Louis, Mo.

**The Pasta Shop**  
Oakland, Calif.

**Tinn's Cheeses**  
Corunna, Mich.

**Vermont Butter  
and Cheese**  
Websterville, Vt.

**Whole Foods  
Market — Midwest**  
Chicago, Ill.

**Whole Foods Market —  
Northern Pacific**  
San Francisco, Calif.

**Whole Foods Market —  
Southern Pacific**  
Sherman Oaks, Calif.

**Whole Foods Market —  
Southwest**  
Arlington, Va.

**Whole Foods Market —  
Mid Atlantic**  
Rockville, Md.

**Wisconsin Milk  
Marketing Board**  
Madison, Wis.

**World of Cheese**  
Scotts Valley, Calif.

work up to an ideal situation.

As mentioned before, his cheesemaking room is in simple block building, pre-existing on the farm, which he renovated for the purpose. His operation is quite elegant. The cheese room contains only a 15-gallon pasteurizer, a triple sink, a water heater, a dishwasher, some stainless steel counters and a couple of refrigerators. He makes cheese in large Rubbermaid tubs and transports milk in food-grade containers

from Wal-Mart. The latter, he says, are nice because they stack well in the refrigerator and are easier to handle than milk cans. After milking, he cools the milk in these containers in an ice bath. He has tested the milk temperatures and found that this cooling procedure works well within the state requirements. His entire operation, including renovation of the building and purchase of the animals, cost about \$60,000.

Early on, Blue Ridge Mountain Dairy outgrew its 15-gallon pasteurizer and Paul recently purchased a larger one to allow him to streamline his cheesemaking. At the time of my interview he was making about 130-140 pounds of Mozzarella per week (less during holidays), which is sold in half-pound balls. His

primary markets are a farmers' market in Baltimore and the Sunday Dupont Circle Market in Washington, D.C. He recently started advertising with a small local newspaper ad to sell cheese from the farm, and has been surprised

at the good response to that ad. Paul gets \$6 per half pound of cheese at the farm, \$6.50 in Baltimore and \$8 at Dupont Circle (the high rent district). Mozzarella is packaged in brine in deli cups. Paul also uses the resulting whey to make Ricotta

cheese, which he sells in pint deli containers for \$6 per pound, about 40 pounds a week.

Paul confided that one of the biggest problems he has had, aside from milking the buffaloes, has been getting help when learning to make the cheese. He found those who make Mozzarella for sale to be quite secretive about their recipes and less than forthcoming in revealing tricks of the trade. Out of respect for his business, I did not ask for details of his make procedure, but when he asked whether I use mesophilic or thermophilic culture for Mozzarella, my curiosity was piqued. I told him I used some of each and asked him what he uses. He said he had settled on using only mesophilic culture because it helps to retain moisture in the cheese,

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though most recipes for Mozzarella call for thermophilic starter. As most cheesemakers soon learn, there are endless variations on every recipe!

During the interview, Paul was starting his cheese for the day. He pasteurized two 15-gallon batches of milk and added starter and rennet, and set the cheese to work its magic. He frequently ran a sponge mop over the floor during this time, saying he was a fanatic for keeping things clean. He said the dairy people from the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) had been extremely helpful in getting him started. Paul believes he can make a good living at his craft, given time and the right equipment.

I ran out of coffee, questions and film, and so decided to head on into the city in preparation for a meeting the next day, rather than break his concentration while he worked. I briefly visited with the four older buffalo cows and the bull, then packed up and drove back down the winding road, filled with a renewed sense of hope for the farmstead cheesemaker and the future of cheese in America.

*You can contact Blue Ridge Mountain Dairy at (540) 822-4363.*

*CreamLine is a quarterly newsletter edited by Vicki Dunaway, a cheesemaker and writer who lives and works in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia.*

*The newsletter's audience is primarily small-scale cheesemakers and other farmstead/artisan dairy processors. For more information, contact Vicki at P.O. Box 186, Willis, VA 24380, phone (540) 789-7877, or*



## What's New?

We welcome short notes and information of interest to our readers for inclusion in the "News & Notes" section. Expanded your facilities? Have a big event coming up? Finish qualifications to become a Master Cheesemaker?

**Send us your latest news!**

*Subject to space and editing.*

# It's Almost Conference Time! Mark Your Calendars!

## 19th Annual American Cheese Society Conference August 1-3

**Capitol Hill Hilton, Washington, D.C.**

Cathy Strange, Conference Chair, 707-527-7367

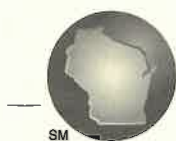
E-mail: [cathy.strange@wholefood.com](mailto:cathy.strange@wholefood.com)

Contact Cathy with conference suggestions.

This year's conference will be the best ever!

## The Cheeses of Wisconsin

*Bringing domestic artisanal cheeses to the fore.*



**WISCONSIN MILK  
MARKETING BOARD**

WISCONSIN DAIRY PRODUCERS

The Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board supports the  
ACS in celebrating specialty, hand-crafted  
American cheeses — and the artisans who produce them.

### ACS Calendar

**April 28-May 1**

American Dairy Products Institute and American Butter  
Institute 4th Annual Joint Meeting  
Fairmont Hotel, Chicago  
Contact ADPI at (312) 782-4888

**May 4-7**

Spring Fancy Food Show—NASFT  
McCormick Place, Chicago  
Register on line at [www.fancyfoodshows.com](http://www.fancyfoodshows.com)

**July 7-9**

NASFT Summer Fancy Food Show  
Javits Convention Center, New York  
Contact ACS Headquarters for information on  
exhibiting your cheeses in the ACS Booth

**August 1-3**

19th Annual American Cheese Society Conference  
Capitol Hill Hilton, Washington, D.C.  
Cathy Strange, Conference Chair: 707-527-7367 or  
e-mail: [cathy.strange@wholefood.com](mailto:cathy.strange@wholefood.com).  
Contact Cathy with conference suggestions.

# Pleasant Ridge Reserve

## DESCRIPTION

<b>Classification:</b>	Hard Aged; Gruyere Style
<b>Appearance:</b>	Light yellow pate with natural orange rind produced by washing with brine/b. linens solution.
<b>Flavor:</b>	Sweet and complex nuttiness turning to slightly caramel and toasted nuttiness with age. Firm, creamy texture and slightly pungent aroma.
<b>Age:</b>	4 months minimum to 18 months. Aged version is 4-12 months and Extra Aged is 12-18 months.
<b>Size:</b>	10 pound wheels (10-11 inch diameter and 3-4 inches high)
<b>Moisture Content:</b>	Approximately 35%
<b>Fat Content:</b>	Approximately 50% FDM



## ORIGIN/HERITAGE

Pleasant Ridge Reserve is an original farmstead cheese, inspired by the French Gruyere cheese, Beaufort. It is a cooked, pressed, washed rind cheese that is made from the unpasteurized milk of a single herd of Wisconsin cows that are fed fresh pasture from mid-May to mid October. PRR is made only from milk produced when the cows are on a full forage diet of fresh pasture, giving the cheese its characteristic complex flavor profile and long, sweet finish.

## PRODUCTION

Pleasant Ridge Reserve is made similarly to Beaufort, a French Gruyere cheese made in mountain chalets in the Haute-Savoie region. Unlike Beaufort, milk is heat treated to about 145°, then cooled to 90° and starter cultures are added. After sufficient ripening, calf rennet is added and when the curd has set, it is cut by hand and then stirred and slowly heated to 118-120 degrees. After the cook period, the whey is drained and the curd is put in molds and pressed overnight.

The next day, the cheese is removed from the molds and dry salted for two days and then is washed and turned daily with a brine solution with *brevibacterium linens* added. After a couple of weeks of daily turning, the frequency of washing and turning is gradually reduced until it reaches once a week turning at about 2 months. The weekly washing and turning is continued until the cheese is sent to a customer anywhere from 4 to 18 months of age.

Although Beaufort has a long tradition dating back 700 years or so, Pleasant Ridge Reserve has only been made for two years. The flavors in PRR are surprisingly different than Beaufort which can only be due to the different pasture vegetation that the cows graze. PRR is sweeter and the nuttiness tastes slightly toasted, unlike Beaufort. The cows that produce the milk for Beaufort graze alpine pastures at elevations of 6,000 feet or more whereas the PRR cows graze managed pastures growing in American prairie soil that are at optimum growth stages from spring through fall. Comparing PRR to Beaufort is a convincing illustration of the “*terroir*” principle.

## USES

PRR is usually served as a table cheese; as part of a cheese course or as an appetizer. Like all Gruyeres it is also an excellent cooking cheese. Chefs use it in soups, grated or diced in salads, in breads, in gratin dishes, in quiches and of course in fondue. PRR really shows off in a cheese course because of its flavor complexity and extraordinarily long, pleasantly sweet finish. It pairs nicely with fruits that are not too assertive, like fresh pears or peaches.



## Scalloped Potatoes with Pleasant Ridge Reserve

2 lbs. potatoes, peeled (preferably Yukon Gold)  
 1lb. Pleasant Ridge Reserve, grated (the finer the grating, the more flavor comes through)  
 1 cup whole milk  
 Butter  
 Pepper  
 Salt, if desired, but not needed; cheese supplies enough

Preheat oven to 375°F. Lightly butter baking dish. Slice potatoes thinly, put into cold water if not using immediately, but pat dry before using.

Cover bottom of dish with a thin layer of potatoes, add part of cheese, sprinkle with pepper. Repeat layers (ending with cheese) until all is used up.

Dot with butter, pour milk over, bake 45–60 min. until browned on top and bubbling. For best flavor, let sit at least ½ hour before serving.

## Cheese Souffle

6 T	unsalted butter	1 t.	salt
6 T	flour	1 t.	paprika
1 cup	milk, heated		Dash cayenne pepper
6	large eggs, separated	6 oz.	Pleasant Ridge Reserve, shredded (1 c.)

Preheat oven to 400°F. Butter 2 qt. soufflé dish. Cut piece of wax paper or aluminum foil long enough to wrap around the soufflé dish and fold it in half. Butter the part of the paper that extends above the dish and wrap the paper around the dish to form a collar. Secure with kitchen string or a toothpick.

Melt butter in a large heavy saucepan. Stir in the flour when the foam subsides and cook over low heat, stirring constantly, for several minutes. Slowly add the milk and cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, for 3–4 minutes. Remove from heat.

Beat egg yolks in a small bowl using a whisk, then add them to the sauce little by little, beating well after each addition. Add the salt, paprika, and cayenne. Return to low heat and cook, stirring constantly, for 1 minute. Remove from the heat and stir in the cheese.

Beat the egg whites with the pinch of salt in a clean bowl until soft peaks form. Stir a few tablespoons of the egg whites into the sauce. Gently fold in remaining egg whites with a rubber spatula.

Pour the mixture into the soufflé dish. Place in the oven and bake for 35 to 40 minutes or until puffed and golden brown on top. Serve souffle immediately.

## Gougeres (Cheese Puffs)

1 cup water  
 6 T butter, cut into pieces  
 1 t. salt  
 1/8 t. pepper  
 pinch nutmeg  
 1 cup sifted all-purpose flour  
 4 large eggs  
 Wooden spatula or spoon  
 1 cup (4 oz.) grated Pleasant Ridge Reserve cheese  
*Egg wash: 1 egg beaten with 1 t. water in small bowl)*

Preheat oven to 425° F. In heavy 1½ qt. pan bring water to boil with butter and seasonings; boil slowly until butter has melted. Meanwhile, measure out flour.

Remove from heat and immediately pour in all flour at once. Beat vigorously with wooden spatula or spoon for several seconds to blend thoroughly. Then beat over moderately high heat for 1–2 minutes until mixture leaves sides of the pan and the spoon, forms a mass, and begins to film the bottom of pan.

Remove saucepan from heat and make a well in the center of paste with wooden spoon. Immediately break an egg into center of well. Beat it into the paste for several seconds until it has absorbed. Continue with rest of eggs, beating them in one by one. The third and fourth eggs will be absorbed more slowly. Beat for a moment more to be sure all is well blended and smooth. Beat cheese into the warm pate a choux. Correct seasoning.

Drop by tablespoon or squeeze from pastry bag into circular mounds (about 1" in diam. and 1" high; space about 2" apart) on a baking sheet, paint with beaten egg wash — dip pastry brush into wash and flatten each puff very slightly with side of brush; do not let egg drip down the puff and onto baking sheet (can sprinkle each puff with pinch of grated cheese) and bake for about 20 minutes. They are done when they have doubled in size, are a golden brown, and firm and crusty to the touch.

Remove from oven and pierce the side of each puff with sharp knife. Then set in turned-off oven and leave door ajar for 10 minutes. Cool on a rack.

## Rosti

6 small potatoes (Yukon Gold), boiled until tender.  
 Peel, store in refrigerator overnight, lightly covered  
 1/3 c. chopped onion  
 Butter, salt & pepper  
 1 c. Pleasant Ridge Reserve, grated  
 Saute onions in butter 1 minute. Add potatoes, sauté until browned (high heat). Season with salt & pepper. Distribute grated cheese on top of potatoes, fry 2 minutes longer. Serve.