

The American Cheese Society

NEWSLETTER 3RD QUARTER 2004

It's not all Baaa-d

By Liz Campbell

I started making artisan cheeses because we had this beautiful equipment here, and I felt it should be used for more than cow's milk cheese," says Sid Cook, owner of Carr Valley Cheese in Wisconsin. "We're one of the smallest plants in the state. We do everything manually, the old-fashioned way."

Cheesemaking is a Cook

family tradition since the late 1880s, and has been a way of life for this fourth-generation cheesemaker. "From the time I was real little I can remember being in the plant. My first job was to pick up can lids and keep the cans moving," he has commented. "I remember standing on a five-gallon pail to stir the corners of the vats and even riding my tricycle around the vats." At 16, Sid earned his cheesemaker's license and two years ago, he became a certified Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker, a source of much pride. And it's a pride that's justified. Apart from the richly-flavoured fontina, gouda and cheddars which the plant traditionally produced, Sid has been the creator of a wide range of wonderful "designer" cheeses at Carr Valley.

The plant purchases cow's milk from 30 local dairy farmers, many of whom have been providing milk for three generations. Most days Sid's own trucks collect 40,000 to 50,000 pounds of milk. About six years ago Sid began to purchase sheep's milk from the Wisconsin sheep milk cooperative as well as goat's milk from another farmer's cooperative.



Tsigan sheep wander the plains of Transylvania, a part of Romania. Their milk is used to make a rich feta cheese. See our story on page 10.

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.

"I like sheep's milk because it adds so much complexity to the cheese," he says. "I particularly like mixed milk cheeses for that reason." Many of Sid's cheeses are mixed milk products and if the growth in their popularity and the 22 awards they have won in the past two years are any indication, these are fine examples of his craft. This year, they will use more than 250,000 pounds of sheep's milk alone and produce more than four million pounds of 50 different varieties of cheese. It's a far cry from the 4,000 pounds his dad was making in 1946 in his first plant.

In 1976, Sid and his brother bought their father's plant and 10 years later, Sid bought a plant in the current La Valle location. Zoning laws didn't permit expansion in the original site. Now on 40 acres of land, there's room to grow. There's a second plant at Mauston, Wis. Between the two, Sid employs seven licensed cheesemakers and a Master Cheesemaker. Their growth has been phenomenal, from 500 pounds of artisanal mixed milk cheeses sold six years ago to 100,000 pounds

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The American Cheese Society

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

GENERAL EDITOR

*Dana Tanyeri, Wisconsin Milk
Marketing Board*

STAFF EDITOR

*Liz Campbell
campbellliz@sympatico.ca*

COPY EDITOR

*Kate Sander, Cheese Market
News*

GRAPHIC DESIGN/LAYOUT

Liz Campbell

COPY DEADLINES

February Issue: December 1

May Issue: March 1

July Issue: May 1

November Issue: September 1

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 for consideration.

Newsletter Committee:

*Kate Sander, Dana Tanyeri, Bill
McKenna*

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2003-2004 DIRECTORS

Cathy Strange, President Whole Foods Market

2700 Wilson Blvd.
Arlington, VA 22201
703-527-7367 • Fax 703-527-7359
cathy.strange@wholefoods.com

Allison Hooper, Vice President Vermont Butter & Cheese

Pitman Road
Websterville, VT 05678
800-884-6287 • Fax 802-479-3674
AllisonRHooper@aol.com
Committee: NASFT

Mary Keehn, Secretary Cypress Grove Chèvre

4600 Dows Prairie Road
McKinleyville, CA 95519
707-839-3168 • Fax 707-839-2322
cypgrove@aol.com

Committees: Cheesemaker
Support,
Public Relations

Paula Lambert, Treasurer Mozzarella Company

2944 Elm Street • Dallas, TX 75226
214-741-4072 • Fax 214-741-4076
Toll Free 800-798-2954
paula@mozzco.com
Committee: Finance

Greetings From the President....

The summer is in full swing and so are plans for the annual conference in Milwaukee. The competition entries are streaming in, and the cheesemakers are busy selecting their finest products to delight the judges.

The annual conference rotation to Wisconsin follows the success of the 2003 conference in San Francisco, California. I cannot think of a finer way to honor the states that are at the forefront of dairy production. As well as catching up with old friends, I look forward to meeting many of the new American Cheese Society members at this year's conference, as well as sharing stories of past experience and creating new stories for the future!

In looking back over the past two years as your president, I'm proud of all of our achievements. The American Cheese Society has re-evaluated its commitment to its members: through the restructuring of the support

mechanisms provided by FSA; the move towards Policy Governance in managing the association; the formation of committees to define new and exciting directions for the membership; and the growth of North American cheese products. All these changes speak to the new age of the organization.

I have truly enjoyed these times and the opportunity to meet and work together with ACS members, the board of directors and our executive director, Barry King. The personal and professional dedication of all the ACS members, the board, and the cheesemakers will continue to be an inspiration to me for a long time to come.

And, most of all, I look forward to continuing the spirit of the American Cheese Society. Thanks to all of you for your support during my stint as president! See you in Milwaukee,

Cathy

Feedback from our Members

In our last issue, we asked our members how they used the inevitable leftover whey. Here's a letter from one member who has found a creative solution.

I have been feeding it to lambs successfully this year. Milk replacer is expensive - about \$50 of milk replacer per lamb to raise that lamb to where it can manage without milk if one pulls them from the ewe at a day and a half as I do. Many people solve this by leaving the lamb with the ewe for the first month. This results in losing the month of greatest production, and cuts down on quantity of milk as the ewe will adjust to making milk only for the number of lambs she had. So if she has only two lambs she ends up producing less than capacity.

If a lamb drinks a quart of milk a day for 30 days that's

that's 60 pounds of milk, or at least 13 pounds of cheese - \$200 worth!

My bill for milk replacer last year worried me and I thought of all that great-smelling whey. Dave Thomas was concerned about the low amount of fat in whey; others were concerned about other aspects.

What I decided to do is to feed milk replacer as per package directions for the first couple of weeks until the lambs get solidly on three times a day of feeding and I can see they are doing well. Then I begin to use whey instead

of some of the milk replacer, and by the time they are ready for twice a day feeding, I feed all whey in pans instead of the nipple feeders.

I was going to weigh often and calculate gain but haven't found the time. However they are growing very well. I usually feed the whey warmed in the evenings and may heat it a little in the morning since I have the capacity. But they eat it as well cold. I put all my whey back into the lambs, even the older ones, who still fight to get it. So I am making money on turning whey into lamb and saving money also. Not a bad deal.

Pat Elliott, Everona Dairy

Upcoming Topic

4th Quarter

The Business of Cheese

Marketing your cheese can be the most difficult part of cheesemaking. We examine ideas for improving your distribution.

We welcome feedback and your comments about any story in the newsletter. We also welcome stories written by our members.

Please contact Liz Campbell, editor at
campbellliz@sympatico.ca



From the Desk of the Executive Director.....

Dear ACS Members

It seems like yesterday that I was wishing you a happy spring, and here we are at the edge of a new summer. Where does the time go? Things never seem to slow down for ACS, which is indicative of the vibrancy and importance the association holds in the world of specialty food. In any case, we are in the midst of putting the finishing touches on the Annual Conference, and I hope that all of you are planning to attend. It will be a super three days that you won't want to miss.

I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to all of the ACS Board of Directors, and especially those who have reached their term limits and those who will relinquish their officer seats to newly elected directors and officers.

I particularly want to thank Cathy Strange for all of her support, both to me and to the organization throughout her past two years as President. I will miss her weekly calls "to see what's going on!" as she assumes her seat as chairman of the board.

When I first came to be your executive director three years ago, Kathleen Shannon Finn, ACS president at the time, jokingly said to me: "You sure you

want to take us on?" All I can say is, "Kathleen, it's been a joy!" And to Debra Dickerson, whose dedication to American specialty cheese is infectious and from whom I have learned so much, I say, "I will miss your input and most of all your smile." She and Kathleen will be stepping down from the board due to term limits. In all, these are three dedicated women whom I admire greatly and am proud to call friends. I hope that you, too, will thank them for their service to ACS.

And everything else is conference: so, if you haven't already done so, make your plans to attend the conference, July 22-24, in Milwaukee. While at the conference, I hope that you learn much, network and enjoy the events and the educational sessions.

But most of all, I hope that you continue to share your ideas and thoughts with each other and get involved in creating an even better ACS -- one that continues to flourish and grow, and to solidify its pre-eminent position in the world of specialty and artisanal foods.

You should be very proud of your accomplishments. I know that I am, and I hope to see you all in Milwaukee!

Best regards,

Barry King

ACS NEWSLETTER Advertising Information

Mechanical Requirements:

ACS will not process, typeset or edit any copy or artwork, nor can it resize any ads to meet the specifications. All ads are black and white. Fine lines or small print is not recommended. Electronic artwork is preferred. Files must be 300 dpi and saved as EPS or TIFF. Ads created in Microsoft Word are not accepted. A hard copy is required for reference. Advertiser and its agency accepts full responsibility for the contents of all advertising and holds ACS free and clear from any claims, liability or damages arising out of or on behalf of advertiser.

Advertising deadlines:

1st Quarter Issue, December 1 3rd Quarter Issue, June 1
2nd Quarter Issue, March 1 4th Quarter Issue, September 1

To submit your ad, contact Barry King at ACS.

Costs shown are per issue.
20% discount for consecutive
ads in two or four issues.

Ad Size	W x H	Member Cost
Full Page	7.5" x 10"	\$425.00
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The American Cheese Society

Board of Directors, continued

Bill McKenna, Chairman

Bill McKenna & Assoc.

2095 Jerrold

San Francisco, CA 94124

415-647-8088 • Fax 415-647-4088

billmckenna@msn.com

Committees: Conference Planning,
Sponsorship, Newsletter

Kathleen Shannon Finn,

Ex Officio

Columbus Distributing

30977 San Antonio St

Hayward, CA 94544

510-429-6860, ext. 3464

Fax 650-637-8313

kfinn@columco.com

Committees: Nominating,
Safe Practices/Quality Assurance

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

2003-2004 DIRECTORS

Daniel J. Carter

Retired

DCI Cheese Company

119 South Main Street

Mayville, WI 53050

Sue Conley

Cowgirl Creamery

P.O. Box 594 • 80 Fourth St

Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

415-663-9335 • Fax 415-663-5418

cowgirls@svn.net

Committee: Conference Planning

Debra Dickerson

Neal's Yard Dairy

Redwood Hill Farm

P.O. Box 22127

Oakland, CA 94623

510-663-6720 • Fax 510-663-6721

debradickerson@msn.com

Committees: Cheese of Choice
Coalition, Membership

John Eggena

Fromagerie Tournevent

7004 Hince

Chesterfield, Quebec G0P 1J0

819-382-2208 • Fax 819-382-2072

jeggena@interlinx.qc.ca

Committee: NASFT

Michael Gingrich

Uplands Cheese, Inc.

4540 County Road ZZ

Dodgeville, WI 53533

608-935-3414 • 608-935-7030

gingrich@mhtc.net

Committee: Cheesemaker Support

John Greeley

Sheila Marie Imports, Ltd.

14 Jewel Dr

Wilmington, MA 01887

978-658-7900 • Fax 978-658-4443

john_greeley@att.net

Committee: Judging Rules and Awards

Sara Hill

Classic Provisions, Inc.

171 Cheshire Ln, Ste. 600

Plymouth, MN 55441

763-544-2025 • 763-544-2704

shill@classicprovisions.com

Carole Palmer
Good Taste Marketing Services
4977 Battery Lane, Ste. 506
Bethesda, MD 20814
301-654-5887 • 301-654-5837
cpalmer@goodtastemarketing.com

Judy Schad
Capriole, Inc.
10329 New Cut Road
Greenville, IN 47124
812-923-9408 • 812-923-1180
Fax 812-923-9408
judygoat@aol.com
Committees: Newsletter, Farmstead

Dana Tanyeri
Wisconsin Milk
Marketing Board
8418 Excelsior Drive
Madison, WI 53717
608-836-8820 • Fax 608-836-5822
dtanyeri@wmmb.org
Committees: Newsletter,
Conference Planning

Laura Werlin
2701 Claremont Boulevard
Berkeley, CA 94705
510-486-0213 • Fax 510-486-0214
foodflaura@aol.com
Committee: Public Relations

Jodie Wische
Roth Käse USA, Ltd.
409 Viewmont Road
Germantown, NY 12526
518-537-5616 • Cell 518-755-1897
wische@valstar.net
Committees: Membership,
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Cheese Nun's Voyage of Discovery

Slow Food Dallas meets a unique cheesemaker

By Karen Silverston

I thought it was the Chinese nun – glad it turned out to be cheese,” said one viewer after the screening of Pat Thompson’s 52-minute documentary film *The Cheese Nun: Sister Noella’s Voyage of Discovery* at the historic Magnolia Lounge in Fair Park. The screening was one of the events at Slow Food Dallas on March 9, 2004. Pat Thompson, an American producer and director, is based in Paris, France.

At the reception following the film, over a hundred other guests, including Thompson’s Paris, Texas based business manager, expected cheese and waited their turn to talk with Thompson and local cheesemakers, and to taste a rare selection of raw milk and monastery cheeses.

Slow Food Dallas member Paula Lambert brought her Dallas original, Blanca Bianca: a limited-production cheese she first made for the Slow Food USA Farmstead / Raw Milk Cheese celebration in October 2003.

Blanca Bianca is hand-made from raw cow’s milk coming from local farms. Washed daily with white wine as it ages for 60 days or more, it is a moist, flavorful, delicate cheese with a creamy paste reminiscent of wine, nuts, and Deep Ellum, the Mozzarella Company’s downtown-adjacent neighborhood.

Michael and Debbie Sams brought their popular raw milk farmstead baby gruyere that they make on their farm in Kemp, a little more than an hour away from Dallas. Debbie giggled afterward that people unfamiliar with her



Sister Noella with a very young cheese wheel in the Abbey Caves.

Mennonite dress thought she was the nun.

Mike Gingrich provided Pleasant Ridge Reserve that had been cave-aged for eight months. He makes his Beaufort-inspired farmstead cheese by hand from raw milk of a single herd of Wisconsin cows only in the spring and summer. The American Cheese Society 2001 competition in Louisville, Kentucky, named Pleasant Ridge Reserve “Best in Show.” Though Mike hasn’t seen the film yet, his winning moment is captured in the film.

The Abbey of Regina Laudis donated its Bethlehem Cheese, a fun-gal-ripened St. Nectaire-type cheese made from the raw milk of the Abbey’s four Dutch Belt cows, milked by hand daily.

The cheese reiterated locations and themes within Thompson’s documentary: behind the walls of a religious cloister in the United States, in the monastery at Tamié, a remote farm in the Auvergne, the beautiful old caves of Alphonse Bellonte in Saint-Nectaire, and at the judging of the American Cheese Society in Louisville, Kentucky.

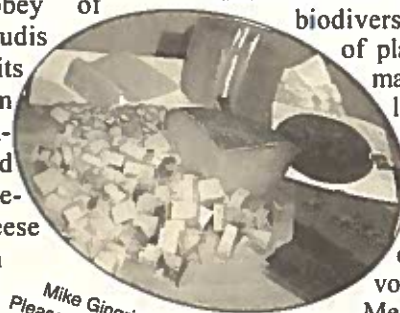
For four years Thompson followed Sister Noella, “a cloistered American nun, who, in a world of growing uniformity of food, has become a leading defender of traditional cheesemaking and campaigner for biodiversity and an inspiration for the growing number of artisanal cheese makers.

“After years of making cheese at her Benedictine Abbey in Connecticut, Sister Noella Marcellino was chosen by her community to temporarily leave the religious enclosure to go to graduate school to study microbiology and expand her knowledge of the environmental factors that produce the vast variety of cheeses.

“A Fulbright Fellowship enabled her to make an unprecedented 20-thousand mile research adventure through the ancient cheese caves of France and her findings have become a cornerstone of the trans-Atlantic debate on the need to preserve biodiversity...not just of plants and animals, but every living thing—including the tiny microbes which give cheese flavor.”

Members of the community at the Abbey carry on agricultural techniques and crafts that have been handed down through the centuries — with full knowledge of modern techniques and continued scientific research — and are known for sustainable practices, hospitality, and superb rendering of traditional Gregorian chant.

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Mike Gingrich' award winning Pleasant Ridge Reserve Cheese.

FROM THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE – KATHLEEN SHANNON FINN

I am pleased to report the following persons have been nominated as candidates for the 2004-05 American Cheese Society Board of Directors:

- ◆ **David Grotenstein** - Food and Image, Consulting
- ◆ **Joan Kimball** - Quebec Ministry of Agriculture
- ◆ **Peter Mohn** - Grafton Village Cheese
- ◆ **Kevin O'Connor** - Food Match, National Sales Manager

There's still time to submit nominations for individuals to sit on the Board of Directors of the American Cheese Society. Directors must be members in good standing (dues paid!) of ACS and able to attend meetings during the year.

This is an important exercise for you, the membership at large, as the officers of the Society are drawn from the Board of Directors. This is each member's opportunity to voice their choice for the ACS

governing board.

Please check beforehand that your nominee is willing and able to serve. Have that person forward a brief resume/bio to my attention by email or fax.

Send nominations and resumes to: Fax: (650) 637-8313 or kfinn@columco.com

Nominations should reach my desk by Wed. July 7. Thank you I look forward to hearing from you.

For the committee,
Kathleen Shannon Finn

Passionate about cheese

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Small cheesemakers in Europe, according to Thompson, particularly in warmer regions of France, Spain, and Italy, are as threatened as small American cheesemakers by new regulations.

"Hygienic fears have caused us to become passionate about pasteurizing so that we kill every single germ out of everything we eat. But, when you pasteurize things industrially, and when you produce them all exactly the same way, you lose taste," says Patrick Martins, Slow Food USA Director.

Slow Food is passionate about both pasteurized and raw milk cheese.

Observing that there are fantastic cheeses being made in America and Europe today, Slow Food defends the right of cheesemakers to make raw milk cheese.

In order to preserve artisanal foods, and to support people who produce them — the small farmer, the quality breadmaker, the fisherman — so they are not lost in an era of industrialization, Slow Food celebrates these foods and traditions. By reacquainting us with the ritual of the table with family and friends, Slow Food hopes to create a demand.

"We define ourselves as an eco-gastronomic organization," said Martins in Glenn

Mitchell's public radio (KERA, Dallas) interview the day before the screening. "You can't have great food without having a concern for the environment where food is produced. But pure environmentalists are boring and sad, and pure gastronomes are gluttonous and disgusting. So if you want to have that perfect balance, you have to define yourself as an eco-gastronome."

And the eco-gastronome is interested in everything that takes place from the soil or the cave to the table.

Slow Food is dedicated to preserving tastes. Sister Noella and Pat Thompson know that more and more people need to hear this message. And to help get that message out, PBS has already accepted this fascinating film for syndication.

So when will we all be able to watch *The Cheese Nun* on public television? That will happen, according to Thompson, when her search for underwriters is successful. That's what PBS is about these days, and she is



Bethlehem Cheese with a poster for Pat Thompson's film about a passionate cheesemaker.

"part of the process." And while the film seems to have "a life of its own" endearing itself to everyone who hears about it, the quest for underwriting continues. Know anyone who would like to be listed when the sponsor credits roll by?

Slow Food Dallas is grateful to member Mark Monfrey for donating Belgian specialty beer, to Jim Clendenen, the Mind Behind the donated wine, The Republic of Tea for donating bottled iced teas, and to Central Market of Texas for underwriting the evening.

Welcome New Members!

Pat Allen

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this year. "We like to age many of them at least a year before selling them," says Sid. "But it's hard to get age on them." It's tempting too, he says, to sell more soft cheeses because the turn-around is so much faster.

Some of his new cheeses include Virgin Pine Native Blue Sheep, a cave-aged, bandaged sheep's milk cheese with a twist. After aging three to four months, the surface is pierced so native molds can grow into the cheese. It won first prize at the ACS 2003 awards for its earthy sweetness. Marisa, named after his daughter, is a cave-aged, sheep milk cheese, made with rennet or with thistle coagulant which is often hard to obtain. It has a creamy white color and a mellow, sweet acorn flavor with a slightly stringent after-taste. River Bend Sheep is a washed rind cheese, similar to Gruyere though with a greater complexity of flavors.

Sid has also developed a wide range of mixed milk cheeses. Mobay, an earthy cheese, is made in two halves of goats milk and sheep's milk pressed together, with ash in the center and outside. Canaria is a mixed cow and sheep's milk cheese cured in olive oil. It has the texture of a parmesan with more floral flavors. Benedictine is a washed rind cheese made with fresh sheep, goat and cow milk. Cellar cured and hand rubbed for 12 weeks before packaging, its flavor explodes with intensity. It won first place in the Best of Class category at the US Cheese Contest in 2003. And these are just a slice of the cheese wheel at Carr Valley.

"Our business is growing so fast, we're at the point of making a decision about what



Sid Cook (inset) and a selection of Carr Valley's cheeses.



to do next," says Sid. "You size a plant for a certain volume and when you reach that, it's pretty expensive to go to the next level." The next step, he thinks, is to add holding tanks so they can take in goat and sheep milk cheese daily. Mixed milk cheeses have proved to be very lucrative and Sid says he loves their flavors and complexity, but, he adds, "It's hard to beat an eight-year-old cheddar."

Monforte Dairy

"It's lovely and it's scary as hell," says Ruth Klahsen of her latest venture into cheesemaking. "Everything I own, my home and kids and dogs are on the line."

Ruth has a passion for good cheese. She even made fresh goat's cheese illegally while executive chef at the prestigious Shakespearean Festival Theatre in Stratford, Canada. She had her knuckles rapped by public health for doing that but they were lenient, understanding that what she wanted was to provide the best cheese she could for patrons of the theatre.

In the end, she left her chef's hat behind and decided to hone her cheesemaking skills. She studied in England, France and Canada. At Mornington Dairy Co-op, she and her partner

made goat's milk cheeses and products but since last April, Ruth has launched out on her own into sheep's milk.

Her new dairy is called Monforte Dairy Co. Ltd. Three shepherds manage her herd of 500 sheep in Millbank, ON, Canada, a few miles from Stratford, and Ruth is making Italian style sheep's milk cheeses. Her Paradiso is a washed rind, Tellagio-style cheese that is dry salted and ripened for 60 days in high humidity. Her Romano-style cheese, Tusciano, has a drier rind and firmer texture but is also aged for 60 days. Both are made with pasteurized milk. The first batches will be ready for the public before we go to press and Ruth is planning a launch party for her babies.

The Millbank community is delighted. After all, this was the home of Millbank Cheese for many years. The small company was sold to Schneider's and eventually to Parmalat, who closed it down in 1998. The people here still have a passion for cheese and cheesemakers.

But the challenges are still massive for Ruth. "I'm being as frugal as I can. I pay my shepherds well; that's only fair," she says. "But my cost of production is still \$15.30 per kilogram and that's without any salary for me." Ultimately, her cheese will have to cost about \$30 per kilogram in retail but she's convinced that there's room in the market for good quality cheeses in this price range.

She's currently making about 100 kilograms of cheese each day but she hopes to double that volume. And once the dairy is well established, Ruth plans to start making Belle, a fresh lactic acid cheese as well as cottage cheese. She's also working on Sheep's Dip, a dip for chips with olives in it.

Yes, it's scary, but as Ruth adds with a big smile, "If you don't try, you'll never know if you can do it."

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Carr Valley's Gouda

Carr Valley Cheese

Origin/Heritage of Carr Valley

Nestled amongst the rolling hills and lush pastures of central Wisconsin, Carr Valley cheese remains one of Wisconsin's traditional cheese plants, famous for its cheddar varieties made the old-fashioned way. Owned and operated by the Cook family, Carr Valley will celebrate its 100th anniversary this year.

While tourists and locals alike flock to stores in Sauk City, Mauston and La Valle for cheese curds and aged cheddar blocks, what sets the business apart are the specialty cheeses created and produced by Sid Cook. "The general trend in cheesemaking is bigger, but here at Carr Valley we have just become more specialized – the cheeses and styles are those others aren't making," Sid says with pride.

As a certified Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker, he has concocted not quite a dozen of the 30 cheeses he makes. "I call them designer cheeses. I designed them and invented them and named them. No one's making them but me," Sid says. In fact, he relates creating a new cheese to cooking. "You think about what you want to achieve, assess the variables and start mixing." The cultures, species of milk, coagulants, other ingredients, cook temperatures, how you handle it, whether it's pressed or allowed to rest, actual curing, temperature, bacteria – all provide Sid with the opportunity to alter the flavor. "If you don't like the cheese a certain way, you can change it," he says matter of factly.

I have been making cheddar now for 39 years and I am always amazed at the seasonal difference and yearly difference in how the milk makes up into cheese and how it ages out for that season. The procedure for making Cheddar will work well for both raw and pasteurized. But you will want some modification for seasonal, geographic difference, milk fat, and if you are using Sheep, Goat, or Cow's milk.

Many of Carr Valley's specialty cheeses are sold to upscale restaurants in Chicago and specialty food stores nationwide with help of a California distributor. Sid's cheeses can also be found at the plant's Wisconsin locations.

Carr Valley Cheddar

Description : Carr Valley Cheddar is available in 1-pound blocks, packed in black wax. A 5 1/2 pound bandaged cheddar wheel, made in small batches with milled curd and waxed in red wax is available in limited quantities..

Flavor : this cheddar has a mellow, rich flavor which develops with age into an intense cheddar.

Age : a minimum of one year to eight years

Production : Make sure all equipment is clean and sanitized. Add milk to the vat. If the milk is pasteurized I would set at 88F after 1 hour ripening using 1% equivalent starter, you can adjust down as close to 1/2% as you can.....less is better. If your using raw milk set at 86F after 1 hour and 10 minutes ripening.

Add 3 to 3 1/2 ounces of single strength rennet per thousand pounds of milk is the correct strength for a 35 minute set. The rennet should be mixed with 20 to 30 times clean water in a clean pail. Make sure there is no residual chlorine in the pail as you will delute your rennet strength. After the milk has set about 30 minutes, check your set. It should be a little soft, but perfect timing is necessary to minimize fat loss and maximize yield. Wait until the set milk pulls from the side of the vat in a curved line with out breaking.

Cut with wire knives.....3/8 inch are best for Cheddar, and cut into cubes. Rest the curd rest for 10 minutes to heal and then begin stirring slowly for 5 minutes before adding heat.

Cook to 100F over a 30 minute time frame. After 100F is reached stir for 10 minutes more and stop. After the curd has settled, draw 1/8 or the whey off in about 7 minutes. Stir the curd and whey again for 4 minutes and remove paddles from the vat. Push back the curd from front to back on both sides of the vat to even the curd. Ditch the vat from both sides so that the whey can be drawn off completely.

An acidity of 18 or a pH of 6.38 is a good point to start drawing the whey below the top of the curd. When the whey is completely off, an acidity of 23 and a pH of 6.25 would be ideal.

Now it is time to cut and turn the curd. I usually cut up the center of the vat on both sides to even and make the ditch wider for better draining. I pull the curd from the cut back up on the other matted cheese. Then I cut the curd mat into 8 inch slabs and turn them. I turn again in 10 minutes and then begin to stack 4 high over a one hour and thirty minute period.

The slabbed curds should be milled into cheddar curds at a 50 acidity or 5.70 pH. After the curds are milled add 3 1/2 pound of salt per 1000 pounds of milk for a 1.6% salt content in finished cheese. Stir the salt into the cheese in two saltings and the curd should be ready to put into forms 20 minutes after salting.

Press the cheese overnight and remove the next day for packaging or further curing.



A trio of cheddar possibilities.
Top left: Carr Valley's Gift box of three cheeses including cheddar.
Top right: Red waxed 5 1/2 lb. bandaged cheddar wheel.
Bottom left: black-waxed 2-year-old cheddar

CARR VALLEY RECIPES

Cheesy Muffins

Ingredients:

1 egg
3/4 cup milk
1/2 cup oil
2 cups flour
1/4 cup sugar
1 tablespoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon minced onion
2 cups (8 ounces) shredded Wisconsin Medium Cheddar cheese
Paprika



Cooking Directions:

In a large bowl, beat egg; stir in milk and oil all at once. Add flour, sugar, baking powder, salt and onion; stir until flour is just moistened. Add cheese; blend lightly. Scrape mixture into a microwave-safe muffin pan, filling each cup about 3/4 full. Sprinkle each with 1 tablespoon cheese and paprika. Microwave on high power for 2 1/2 to 4 minutes or until done; remove from pan. Cool slightly before serving.

Wisconsin Shrimp Cheddar Dip

Ingredients:

1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened
2 cups (8 ounces) shredded Wisconsin Sharp Cheddar cheese
1 medium onion, minced
2 tablespoons fresh parsley, minced
1 to 2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce
1 cup whipping cream, whipped
1 can (4 1/2 ounces) tiny shrimp, rinsed and drained

Cooking Directions:

Combine cheeses, onion, parsley and Worcestershire sauce in medium bowl. Beat with electric mixer until thoroughly blended. Fold in whipped cream and shrimp. Cover and refrigerate 1 hour before serving. Serve with chips or crackers.

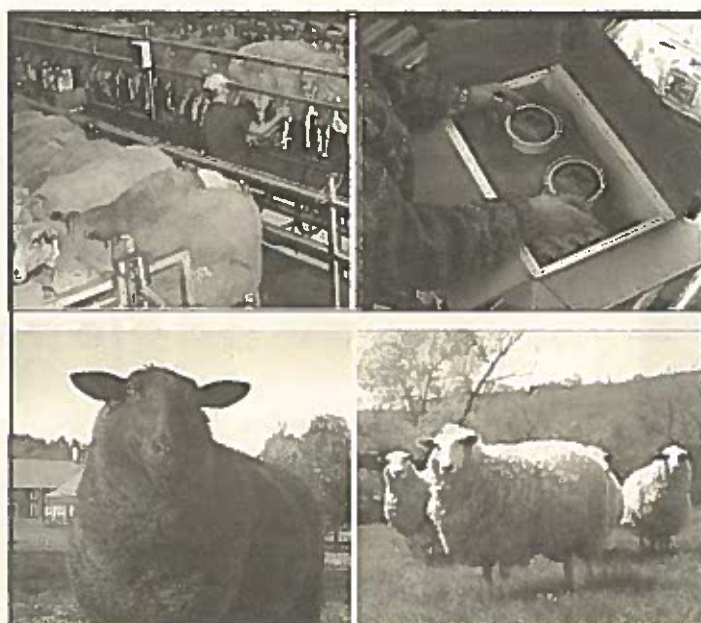
Old Chatham Cheese

You'll find pictures of a very young Tom Clark with his sheep on Old Chatham Cheese Company's website. He's always loved them. So it's not surprising that, after graduating from Cornell with a degree in agricultural economics, Tom decided to farm sheep. In 1993, he and his wife Nancy, an interior designer, bought a farm in Old Chatham, New York, planning to milk the sheep for shipping. They even had an inn on the property. But it wasn't long before they decided to try making their own cheese. And the rest, as they say, is history.

In 1996, they built a creamery. Nancy has become a licensed cheesemaker and they hired a Frenchman, Benoit Maillot, as a cheesemaker. They currently have about 900 East Friesian sheep, both pure and cross-bred grazing on the farm. Although they grow their own silage and fodder organically, they do have to buy grain for supplemental feeding which isn't organic. Each year they produce between 1500 and 3000 lambs for sale.

Using longer light periods to 'trick' the ewes into thinking it's spring so that they can become pregnant, the Clarks manage to keep about 300 ewes in milk at any given time. Breeding lambs in the fall is critical to year round production. From a holding tank on the farm, the milk is transferred to the creamery on the same property.

They make their Hudson Valley Camembert with a blend of their own milk and their neighbor's BGH-free cow's milk. It's soft-ripened for 14 days and its lush, buttery flavor won it the title of "Best Cheese in America" in 2001. It's available in 5-ounce, and 1- and 2-pound wheels. The larger



Images from Old Chatham's farm provide a synopsis of their cheesemaking done in the traditional manner.

wheels came about when the staff were about to discard excess curd because all the small molds were filled. Nancy grabbed the larger, two-pound molds and Nancy's Hudson Valley Camembert was born.



Shepherd's Wheel, with its edible white rind and creamy texture, has rich, earthy, even nutty tones and is made entirely from sheep's milk. In addition, they make a Peppered Shepherd, fresh sheep's milk cheeses, and yogurt. Nancy has been trying to develop new yogurt flavours. "It's very difficult to get the flavours exactly right," says Nancy. "Food is alive and all the parts have to balance or it doesn't turn out right. One small change in the feed or the temperature can change everything and in this business, standardization is important."

They have a new sheep's milk blue cheese which they haven't yet released because they're perfecting the recipe. But wait for it, says Nancy,

"It's going to knock the socks off others. The sweetness of the sheep's milk complements the Roquefort perfectly and the result is magical."

And then there's the lanolin skin lotion she wants to develop. Working with sheep leaves her hands so soft that she'd like to have others experience it.

The farm has proved a successful enterprise and these days they have to buy frozen milk from the Wisconsin Sheep's Milk Cooperative as well as fresh milk from local farmers to keep up with production needs. They have had to develop recipes which work with frozen milk. And they have 35 dedicated employees, their farm family, working with them. But the rewards have been much more than monetary for the Clarks.

"Life on the farm is open spaces, and animals, and fresh hay, and the babies, I love them," says Nancy, then adds more prosaically, "It's also working 24/7 sometimes. But it's never dull. One minute you're talking about DNA, the next you're discussing the feed, the next you're worried about the weather for the crops. It's about balance."

ACS Corporate Member/Sponsors 2002-2003

continued

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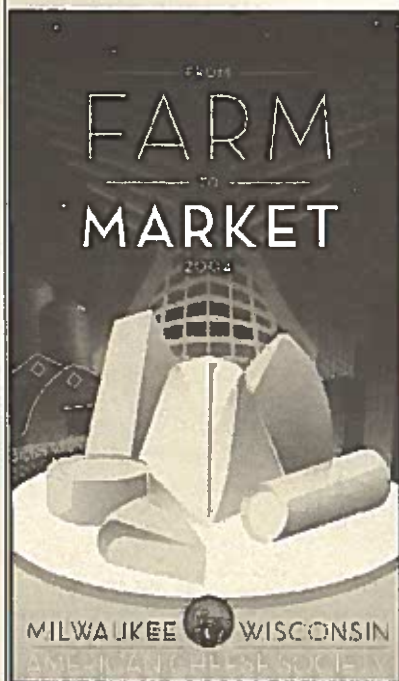
Whole Foods Market
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Whole Foods Market
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Scenes from Milwaukee:

Above: The popular downtown Riverwalk is a favourite for locals and visitors.

Below: The city's magnificent skyline is seen from a lake dotted with sailboats.

Milwaukee's the Place to Visit

For those planning their trip to the annual conference, here's a host of attractions in the area which you may want to include in your itinerary.

The 2004 ACS Conference in Milwaukee promises not-to-miss educational and networking opportunities. It will also be a chance for you and your family to mix business with pleasure, to explore the local art, cultural and family attractions. To help with your travel planning, here's a list from the *Milwaukee Business Journal* of the Top 10 Milwaukee-area tourist attractions.

1. Milwaukee County Zoo. More than 1,800 mammals, birds, fish amphibians and reptiles with more than 350 species recognized. www.milwaukee-zoo.org.

2. Milwaukee Public Museum. A natural and cultural history museum featuring three floors of spectacular exhibits. www.mpm.edu. Adjacent IMAX theatre.

3. Milwaukee Art Museum. Features the incredible Santiago Calatrava-designed Quadracci Pavilion and a collection of nearly 20,000 works from antiquity to the present. Named by *Time* magazine as the Number One design of 2001.

4. Apple Holler. An orchard, farm, restaurant gift shop bakery, farm market and dinner theater. www.apple-holler.com.

5. Mitchell Park Horticultural Observatory. Three indoor botanical gardens (tropical, arid and floral), each housed under 85 feet of domed glass. www.countyparks.com/horticulture.

6. Boerner Botanical Gardens. A collection of formal garden spaces that



host a variety of plant collections, from ornamental grasses to peonies. www.countyparks.com/horticulture.

7. Discovery World Museum. More

than 140 interactive exhibits, live theatre, outreach programs, and more. www.discoveryworld.org.

8. Betty Brinn Children's Museum. Hands-on museum for children ages 10 and under; interactive exhibits about the arts, sciences and social skills. www.bbcmkids.org.

9. Old World Wisconsin. Outdoor living history museum with special events throughout the year, such as Laura Ingalls Wilder Day, Civil War encampments. www.wisconsinhistory.com.

10. Racine Art Museum. Collections of contemporary crafts, featuring ceramics, fibers, glass, metals, wood. Also paintings and sculptures and works on paper. www.wamart.org.

Runners up include: the Captain Frederick Pabst Mansion, William Eisner Museum of Advertising & Design, America's Black Holocaust Museum, Miller Park and the Miller Brewery Tours.

And, if you're bringing the family, bring the swimsuits. Our host hotel, the **Hilton City Center**, features a big indoor water park.

Vermont creates an Institute for Artisan Cheese

Prepared by Jeffrey Roberts

Over the past twenty years, the growth and quality of Vermont's artisan cheeses has been nothing short of remarkable. The state has the greatest number of artisan cheesemakers per capita in the country. Vermont's cheesemaking stature represents another aspect of the state's ability and success to nurture and promote artisan products and niche markets. Moreover, it may offer alternatives to dairy farmers who want to diversify or transition into other agricultural enterprises.

The Institute emerges from the Northeast Center for Food Entrepreneurship (NECFE), a joint Cornell University and University of Vermont enterprise, funded by a \$3.8 million USDA grant. Over four years, NECFE with its excellent faculty and staff, established itself as a key center for education, research, and technical service and outreach for small food producers throughout the region. Recognizing the challenges facing artisan cheese

producers and building on its accomplishments, NECFE developed a plan to expand and strengthen its leadership in the artisan cheese sector.

In late 2003, the John Merck Fund made a \$150,000 grant to support the creation of the Vermont Institute for Artisan Cheese (VIAC) over the next three years and matched by two anonymous donors. The Institute is the country's first comprehensive center devoted exclusively to artisan cheese.

We believe part of the future of Vermont and other states' agriculture is rooted in value-added products, especially its artisan cheese sector. The entire sector confronts such issues as product development and market identification, capital investment, diversified farm operations, marketing and promotion, food safety and quality assurance, chef and restaurant staff training, and state, federal, and international regulations.

To address these issues, the Institute will enhance and strengthen artisan cheesemak-



At the inaugural cheese workshop hosted by the new Vermont Institute for Artisan Cheese, cheesemakers learn to evaluate the texture of each cheese for elasticity, firmness, deformability, friability and adhesivity - important qualities for good cheese.

ing through professional and public education, research, and outreach and technical service.

Co-directors, Catherine Donnelly and Paul S. Kinstedt, and principal consultant Jeffrey P. Roberts, on behalf of the Institute, welcome cheesemakers and other members of the American Cheese Society to contact us for information about educational programs, research needs, and technical questions. We envision the

Institute becoming a valuable resource for cheesemakers in Vermont, the region, and beyond.

For more information, please contact:

Jody Farnham, Outreach Coordinator, Vermont Institute for Artisan Cheese, 200 Carrigan Hall, University of Vermont, Burlington VT 05405. Or telephone (802)-656-8300.

VERMONT INSTITUTE



for

ARTISAN CHEESE

The Vermont Institute for Artisan Cheese

EDUCATION. The Institute will offer professional level education programs designed to meet an array of topics, including production approaches, quality control, food safety, and sensory evaluation. A comprehensive professional program leads to a *Master Artisan Cheesemaker* certificate. Beginning cheesemakers may take advantage of a *Certified Cheesemaker Program* that introduces key concepts of cheesemaking. A *General Cheese Program* offers workshops for chefs and other food professionals, while public education courses range from cheese tastings to fieldwork. We envision cross-cultural, national and international *exchange programs* as a key function of the teaching mission.

RESEARCH is essential to the value and success of the Institute. In May 2004, Senator James Jeffords (I-VT) announced a \$200,000 federal grant to support research on raw milk cheese and food safety issues. Beyond this work, objectives include comprehensive scientific investigation, analysis, and application of findings in a broad range of areas. In addition to UVM faculty from the Departments of Nutrition and Food Science, Animal Science and Community Development and Applied Economics, we will collaborate with colleagues from the United States and abroad.

SERVICE AND OUTREACH objectives include basic and advanced technical, regulatory, and economic advice provided by the Institute's scientists, researchers, and consultants, both in the field and at the UVM campus.

The Other White Milk -WisconsinSheep Milk Cooperative

By Dana Tanyeri

Think of dairy and Wisconsin, and images of bucolic pastures dotted with the familiar black and white Holsteins that helped earn the state its "America's Dairyland" nickname come to mind. Cow dairy farms in Wisconsin contribute more than \$20 billion each year to the state's economy and provide the raw material for the state's most famous product, its cheese. But thriving beneath the shadow of cow dairy farms in the state is a tiny but dedicated co-op of sheep dairy farmers who have emerged as a valuable source of milk for cheesemakers both within and outside the state.

Established in 1996, the Wisconsin Sheep Dairy Cooperative (WSDC) is the single largest source of high-quality sheep milk in the United States — and the only organization of its kind in this country, according to board member Tom Kieffer. Tom operates a 220-animal farm and is one of the group's founders as well as one of its largest members. "When we started, there was no established market for sheep milk in the U.S.," he says. "Anyone doing it was either making very small quantities of their own cheese on their own farm, or perhaps providing milk to a friend or neighbor. After a series of meet-

ings with people dedicated to sheep dairy farming, we started the co-op. Over the years, we've seen a lot of members come and go, but nonetheless it's growing. Sheep dairy farming is very new in this country. When it comes to things like securing bank financing, we don't have the benefit of history, as the cow dairy farmers do. It takes a unique, very persistent individual to stick with it. Most of our members, myself included, got into sheep dairying less than 10 years ago."

The WSDC began with 10 members and got its footing thanks to one small cheese plant in southwestern Wisconsin. "The cheesemaker was from France, and had some experience with the traditional Roquefort recipe," Kieffer explains. "He was looking for a consistent source of sheep milk and was our first regular customer. We no longer sell to that plant, but they got us started and we've been able to build up a sustainable customer base."

In its first year, the co-op produced 50,000 pounds of milk. This year, its 15 members anticipate a production of 600,000 to 700,000 pounds of milk. While the number of members has not increased dramatically, their production sophistication has. Kieffer chalks up much of the increase in production to a sharp focus on genetics and smart farm-

ing practices. "Many of our members have increased their herd sizes, doubling them on average," he says. "But we've also seen steady genetic improvement in the herds for dairying. That's helped to increase production significantly."

Virtually all of the co-op's milk goes to cheesemakers, either locally in fresh fluid form or long-distance in frozen form. "Unlike other milk products, sheep milk freezes very well and that's one solution for shipping the product outside of our marketing area and ensuring quality," Kieffer says.

Among the co-op's largest customers today is Carr Valley Cheese in LaValle, Wis. Another is Old Chatham Shepherding Company, Old Chatham, N.Y., which uses much of the WSDC milk it purchases in its sheep-milk yogurt, Kieffer says.

The co-op also contracts with the Wisconsin Center for Dairy Research experimental production plant to produce two private-label cheeses, Dante, an aged 100 percent sheep milk cheese that's buttery and nutty, and Mona, a 50-50 sheep and cow milk blend cheese. Both are sold locally at Whole Foods in Madison as well as at Whole Foods and specialty cheese shops in the Minneapolis market. For more information on the Wisconsin Sheep Dairy Cooperative, visit www.sheepmilk.biz.

Organic Cheesemaking in Romania with Tsigai sheep

by Gregor Schäfer

Tsigai sheep have been extensively bred in Transylvania, a part of Romania. Currently, ASI Global, a Swiss-based company, is milking about 5000 sheep comprising 10 flocks with three shepherds for each flock.

Every sheep is handmilked morning and evening and the milk (about 10,000 litres) is delivered twice a day to the dairy, which is geographically in the center of all the flocks. From this we make

2500 kilograms of feta cheese.

After weighing, the milk is filtered and then cooled before being pasteurized (73-75°C for 30 seconds). Generally, sheep's milk, with its high amount of protein(casein), is perfect for cheesemaking.

The culture(freeze-dried) is immediately added to the milk at 34°C, and after 10 minutes, organic proofed rennet is added to the milk. After 20 minutes coagulation time, the curd is cut into 20 mm cubes. Agitation starts shortly before filling the forms.

From my viewpoint there are many more positive sides than difficulties. The high yield makes the dairy owners happy. The technology is simple, which allows anyone, after a few weeks of education, to master the production of this cheese with consistent quality. The low pH means there should be no bacteriological problems. And the whey is



A group of Romanian sheep farmers

perfect for making ricottas.

I see only one difficulty in making this cheese and that is the increasing amount (during the lactation) of fat and protein. This is good for the yield, of course, But a cheesemaker needs to have a sensitive touch to add just the right amount of culture to non-standardized milk.

To maintain yield, agitation in the vat is limited until after cutting the curd. And this should be only shortly before filling. The curd should be not too soft. Filling should be done under whey level,

very important for the structure of the cheese. Turning of the cheese starts 30 minutes after the end of filling, and should be continued until the desired pH has been reached.

The cheese is distributed by their own distribution company in Germany, selling the feta in 180 g, vacuum-sealed packaging to organic stores in Germany, or in 3 kg pieces to stores.

Every cheesemaker knows exactly "his" milk's qualities and characteristics. I believe there is no secret in this recipe. The most important ingredient is the quality of the milk.

Gregor Schäfer is a cheesemaker member from Germany who was production manager in Romania for ASI Global, a multinational network of agronomists specialists in farm product vertical integration, organic farming and worldwide marketing.

Milk Facts

Average: 0.3-0.5 liters (almost the same as quarts) per sheep per day.
Lactation period: April to September.
Percentage fat: starting 5.5% in April, increasing up to 8.5% in September
Percentage protein: 5-8% (April to September)
Yield/cheese production: 22-35% Feta.

Events Calendar

Thanks to Cheese Market News for kindly providing the listings

June 28-29, 2004: Food Quality Systems: Building a Program to Evaluate Your Supplier, Guelph, Ontario. Contact Marlene Inglis, Training Manager, Guelph Food Technology Centre, 88 McGilvray Street, Guelph, Ontario, N1G 2W1, 519-821-1246, FAX 519-836-1281, e-mail: minglis@gftc.ca, website: www.gftc.ca.

July 12-13, 2004: Downes-O'Neill LLC 2004 Dairy Processor/End User/Ingredient Buyer Price Risk Management Seminar, Chicago. Contact Eric Meyer, Downes-O'Neill LLC, 800-231-3089, 312-332-0527, eric@dairy.nu; www.downesonell.com.

July 12-16, 2004: Institute of Food Technologists (IFT) Annual Meeting & Expo, Las Vegas. Contact IFT, 312-782-8424, FAX 312-782-8348, website: www.ift.org.

July 14, 2004: Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association Golf Outing, Nekoosa, Wis. Contact WCMA, 8030 Excelsior Drive, Suite 305, Madison, WI 53717, 800-999-2454, FAX 608-828-4551, office@wischeesemakersassn.org.

July 16-17, 2004: NorthEast Fresh Foods Alliance Trade and Consumer

Expo, Boston. Contact NEFFA, 781-963-9726, website: www.neffa.com.

Aug. 6-7, 2004: International Association for Food Protection workshops: "Your Data, Your Job: quality Systems for Microbial Food Analysis" and "Converting to the NCIMS Voluntary HACCP System from Traditional Dairy Inspection", Phoenix. Contact IAFP, 800-369-6337, 515-276-3344, FAX 515-276-8655, e-mail: jcat-tanach@foodprotection.org, website: www.foodprotection.org.

Aug. 11, 2004: Utah State University's Western Dairy Center 16th Biennial Cheese Conference, Sun Valley, Idaho. Contact Pat Moloney, IMPA, 208-385-9510.

Aug. 12-13, 2004: Idaho Milk Processors Association (IMPA) Annual Meeting, Sun Valley, Idaho. Contact Pat Moloney, IMPA, 208-385-9510.

Sept. 28-Oct. 1, 2004: Pennsylvania State University's Cultured Products Short Course, State College, Pa. Contact Pen State 814-865-8301, e-mail: shortcourse@psu.edu, website: conferences.cas.psu.edu/.

Sept. 28-Oct. 1, 2004: California

Polytechnic State University's 6th Dairy Science and Technology Basics for the Farmstead Cheesemaker, San Luis Obispo, Calif. Contact Laurie Jacobson, 805-756-6097, website: www.calpoly.edu/~dptc.

Oct. 11-13, 2004: Sanitation Short Course, State College, Pa. Contact Pen State 814-865-8301, e-mail: short-course@psu.edu, website: conferences.cas.psu.edu/.

Oct. 17-20, 2004: University of Wisconsin-River Falls Food Microbiology Symposium and Workshop: Current Concepts In Food-borne Pathogens and Rapid and Automated Methods in Food Microbiology, River Falls, Wis. Contact the Department of Animal and Food Science, University of Wisconsin-River Falls, 410 South 3rd Street, River Falls, WI 54022, 715-425-3704, FAX 715-425-3785, e-mail: foodmicro@uwr.edu.

Oct. 19-20, 2004: California Polytechnic State University's 9th Annual Dairy Cleaning and Sanitation Short Course, San Luis Obispo, Calif. Contact Laurie Jacobson, 805-756-6097, website: www.calpoly.edu/~dptc.

Oct. 24-28, 2004: National Dairy Board/National Milk Producers Federation/United Dairy Industry Association Joint Annual Meeting, Reno, Nev. Contact National Milk Producers Federation, 703-243-6111, FAX 703-841-9328, website: www.nmpf.org.

Nov. 2-3, 2004: New York Pizza Show, New York. Contact Dianna Seddon, sale representative, 877-281-8134, dseddon@infinityexpo.com, website: www.newyorkpizzashow.com.

Nov. 8-10, 2004: Pennsylvania State University's Pasteurizer Operators Workshop, State College, Pa. Contact Pen State 814-865-8301, e-mail: shortcourse@psu.edu, website: conferences.cas.psu.edu/.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

July 21-25, 2004

21st Annual

American Cheese Society (ACS) Conference

Milwaukee, Wisconsin

For more information, contact ACS, 502-583-3783, FAX 502-589-3602, website: www.cheesesociety.org.

A Great Opportunity

Cowgirl Creamery is sponsoring a "Guest Cheese Maker" booth at the Ferry Plaza Farmer's Market in San Francisco this summer. The market is held every Saturday from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

They began on May 1, inviting one American cheesemaker each week to set up next to their booth. They supply the booth, canopy, cash box and bank, coolers and everything required for a day's sales. The cheesemaker brings cheese to sell directly to the public and is welcome to give samples and distribute information.

The Farmer's Market will

receive six percent of their revenues as a fee. The rest belongs to the cheesemaker.

Peggy Smith and Sue Conley of Cowgirl Creamery are looking forward to introducing American cheeses to the enthusiastic buyers at the city's Farmer's Market.

"Our customers often include restaurant chefs and food writers," says Sue Conley. "This is an opportunity to expose them to cheeses they have not yet tasted."

Send your preferred date request to Sue via e-mail sue-conley@cowgirlcreamery.com or fax to 415-663-5418.

The Annual ACS Cheese Sale



Sunday morning, July 25th, in Milwaukee.*

This once-a-year sale features cheeses that have been entered in the Cheese Judging and spotlighted at the Festival of Cheese. The prices are low. The quantities are plentiful. Bargains galore!

Plan to go home from the Festival with some wonderful cheeses while you help the ACS raise money for future programs.

* Time and location to be announced.



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- Advance notice of special events in your area, including the Bon Appetit Wine and Spirits Focus
- The opportunity for cheesemakers to exhibit their products at the Winter and Spring NASFT Fancy Food Shows, in San Francisco and New York

YES, I wish to join the ACS at the membership level of:

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| Profession: | <input type="checkbox"/> Academic | <input type="checkbox"/> Association | <input type="checkbox"/> Broker |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Butter Maker | <input type="checkbox"/> Cheesemaker | <input type="checkbox"/> Chef/Caterer | <input type="checkbox"/> Consultant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dairy | <input type="checkbox"/> Distributor | <input type="checkbox"/> Enthusiast | <input type="checkbox"/> Importer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public Relations | <input type="checkbox"/> Writer/Author | <input type="checkbox"/> Marketing | <input type="checkbox"/> Retailer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trade Publication | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ | | |

Ways You Can Help ACS and ACS Members:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Write an Article for the Newsletter | <input type="checkbox"/> Start an ACS cheese-buying club in your store |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Share Technical Expertise | <input type="checkbox"/> Write an Article for a Newspaper or Magazine |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Discount Offers for Members | <input type="checkbox"/> A Link on Your Website to Other Members |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A Website Link to ACS | <input type="checkbox"/> Help in Meeting the Press |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bringing in New Members | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public Cheese Tastings | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

Method of Payment ☐ Check ☐ Money Order ☐ Mastercard ☐ Visa Total Enclosed \$

Name on Card Card Number Exp. Date

Send completed application with your membership or subscription fee to:
The American Cheese Society • 304 W. Liberty St., Ste. 201 • Louisville, KY 40201

Short Bio:

• FOR CHEESEMAKERS ONLY

Retail Channel(s) You Use (if any)

☐ Retail Stores ☐ Mail Order ☐ Distributor ☐ On Site ☐ Website ☐ Farmer's Market
Cheeses Made:

Corporate Members, you may indicate up to four additional names to be listed as representatives of your company:

1. _____ 2. _____
3. _____ 4. _____

ACS Membership Levels

ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP \$75 • The Associate membership is designed for those who want to gain and/or increase their knowledge about the world of cheeses and cheesemaking. This level of membership is not available to those within the trade. Benefits of membership may include: • one-year subscription to the ACS newsletter • discounted registration fees for the annual conference.

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP \$125 • The individual membership includes those individuals and businesses that are involved in the production, distribution, marketing of cheese and/or related products. Individual membership may also be held by writers, cookbook authors, and academicians in related fields. Includes the Associate benefits above plus: • membership directory • annual conference report • ACS website listing, link to your own website, and access to members-only area • invitations to selected Society events • voting rights and eligibility for the Board of Directors. For cheese-maker members, also included in the Individual Membership are • reduced judging entry fees for the annual cheese competition • option to participate at Bon Appetit Wine & Spirit Focus • option to participate in NASFT trade shows in New York and San Francisco.

CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP \$750 • Benefits include those of the Individual member category above, for up to five designated company representatives (a \$625.00 value) and the ability to add additional members at the reduced rate of \$100.00 each, plus: • a one-time one-quarter page ad in the ACS newsletter (all artwork and copy to be supplied by member) • eligibility to advertise in the ACS newsletter.

MULTI-UNIT BUSINESS MEMBERSHIP: \$1,875 • Designed for multi-unit retail outlets, membership is held by each of the units under the same business heading. All employees of the company would be affiliate members of the ACS via the store membership. This category includes all of the same benefits of the Corporate Membership, plus • each unit listed in the membership directory • eligibility for all employees to receive annual conference discounted rate • access for all employees to the members-only area of the ACS website.