

The American Cheese Society

NEWSLETTER 1ST QUARTER 2006

Developing An Effective Cheese Marketing Plan

By Carole Palmer

Marketing is often implemented as a desperation move. Good marketing is based on a careful understanding of what the customer values. A marketing plan helps you plan for your future instead of reacting to changes in

your business. The role of marketing is to create customers who believe in and buy your cheese on a regular basis. It can remove potential customer resistance to buying. This process takes place over the long term.

Goal Setting

As Oliver Wendell Holmes said, "The greatest thing in this world is not so much where we are, but in what direction we are going."

To be successful, the goal must be realistic. For example, your business may be growing, you are selling nearly all of your cheese, but you feel vulnerable because your customer base is small, mostly one or two significant customers. A realistic and sensible goal is to focus on finding new customers while keeping current ones satisfied.

Market Research

Are you offering what

your customers want to buy? Market research does not have to be expensive or complex but it will help you gather information to find who your potential customers are and if there is a demand for your product. Survey a cross-section of your customers, brainstorm with friends, and conduct focus group interviews.

Define your market, i.e., identify your customers. Since you will have limited



resources, first target those customers who are more likely to buy your cheese. Will you concentrate on retail or foodservice? Local, regional, or national distribution? Specific specialty markets? Specific restaurant or hotel groups?

Outline your marketing strategy in writing. Use it as a working tool that can be revised. Far too many companies have no plan and do what they see a competitor do or jump from one idea to another.

The 4 P's of

Marketing: Product, Pricing, Positioning, Promotion Product

Describe your cheese from your customer's perspective. Identify the attributes and "romance" that will appeal to the target. Remember your target will

continued on page 8

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.



The American Cheese Society

NEWSLETTER

GENERAL EDITOR

Joan Kimball, Quebec Delegation,
Chicago

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, Joan Kimball, Alison Hooper,

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2005-2006 DIRECTORS

Allison Hooper, President Vermont Butter & Cheese

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

Jennifer Bice, Vice-President

Redwood Hill Farm

2016 Coffee Lane

Sebastopol, CA 95472

707-823-8250

707-823-6976 (fax)

rvdhill@sonic.net

Carole Palmer, Secretary

Good Taste Marketing Services

4977 Battery Lane, Ste. 506
Bethesda, MD 20814

(301) 654-5887 ;

(240) 465-0234 (fax)

cpalmer@goodtastemarketing.com

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: Own Backyard

Greetings From the President.....

Dear ACS members,

In October the ACS Board of Directors met in Portland, Ore., for one of our two meetings per year. Some of us discovered Portland for the first time. The city is accessible and personal. There is a vibrant food scene of hip restaurants and a wonderful farmers market on Saturdays. We held a pre-conference cheese event at one of our member distributors, Provvista. At it, local cheesemakers and winemakers from the Pacific Northwest served up their best to consumers, retailers and the media. It was a true "Backyard event" designed to excite Portland about having the ACS take advantage of all things Portland next July. I, for one, am smitten with the place and can't wait to return next summer. The ACS is fortunate to have new enthusiasm from that part of the country. Many conference attendees will be with us for the first time.

The board is exploring a formal strategic planning process. As our organization grows and our industry changes, it is important for your board to remain responsive to you, the members. ACS is all about the members, not about the board of directors. Our job is to manage your resources for your priorities. To this end, ACS is designing a members' needs assessment survey that will be easily completed on line. Short and simple to assure greater participation, having your important feedback by the summer conference will guide us in developing a three-year work plan. Keep an eye out for a members' survey in the spring of 2006.

Strategic planning notwithstanding, member initiatives are well under way. Cheese education is just one initiative that is on the short list. After the Louisville workshop on cheese education, a groundswell of interest sparked an ACS Fromager Working Group and an impromptu luncheon where more than 40 conferees attended.

Today, the Cheese Education Committee has a board liaison in Steve Ehlers from Larry's Market in Milwaukee. Laurie Greenberg has written about this committee's goals for the year in this newsletter. Imagine ACS administering a "fromager" certification program like a sommelier or a CCP Certified Culinary Professional! Imagine a marketplace in which more clerks behind the retail counter knew much more about cheese or a restaurant where you couldn't stomp the front of the house with a question about the cheese course! And,

what if they had to have the expertise before applying for the job? Certification is a daunting task that will require lots of planning and baby steps.

Who are the expert teachers? Who says? Laurie's group is thoughtful and thorough. This will be fun to watch as it unfolds.

Finally, what would ACS be without cheesemakers? Our membership chair Carole Palmer says that all American cheesemakers should be ACS members. And, ACS needs to assure value to those cheesemakers so that they join with us. In an effort to respond to them, the cheesemaker support committee and I plan to contact each of the nine known regional cheese guilds across the United States and Canada. ACS should indeed provide a forum for these guilds to network with each other and with us. As our cheesemaker scholarship fund increases, ACS should help regional guilds to invite expertise to their groups and co-sponsor regional events.

In 1997, five Vermont Cheesemakers started the Vermont Cheese Council. With 12 charter members we helped to grow awareness of cheesemaking in Vermont. Today with 35 member cheesemakers in my state, we are working together to brand the terroir of Vermont through local and regional food events, sponsored courses in cheesemaking, a website and newsletter. A cluster of Vermont cheesemakers helped to spawn the new Vermont Institute for Artisan Cheese which is appropriately located at the University of Vermont.

Of course we have expertise in cheese technology in a state where such good cheeses are made. Such is the nine-year evolution of a local guild. With vision, a governance structure and a spirit of inclusion, much can be done on a regional level. This too has been the mantra of 22 years of the ACS. Our disparate and fledgling groups are too small to work independently, but together we can build awareness and good cheesemaking in North America. I look forward to all your suggestions about the best way we can do that.



Allison

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



Dear ACS Members,

A very happy new year to all! I hope that your holidays were wonderful and healthy and that 2006 is a prosperous year for you. As we make plans for this new year, I want to let you know about some exciting items on the ACS agenda for 2006.

In an effort to keep pace with our members' needs and assure that member benefits are hitting the mark, the ACS membership committee will conduct a member needs assessment during the first half of 2006. Your participation will ensure that the board has input from members for developing the strategic direction of ACS for the next few years.

During the course of the year, headquarters receives many questions from the media and others about statistics of the industry, including growth and variety of American cheese. In most cases, we are unable to answer those questions because we have been unable to get the information. With this in mind, the survey will also gather statistics about the production and consumption of artisanal American cheeses. We want to be the source for information about the industry with the overall goal being to show how important your American artisanal cheeses

are. It will also help us to make a case for research into grant and agricultural funding programs that could benefit you. The survey findings will be published on the ACS website to make the information readily available to any media source conducting research.

We are also planning to make improvements to our website in early 2006 by making it more user friendly and dynamic. This will include adding industry forums where members can collaborate by sharing their extensive knowledge and experience.

Planning for the 2006 Annual Conference and Competition is well underway. The Hilton Portland and Executive Tower in beautiful Portland, Ore., is the venue for the July 20-22 conference. The members of the conference planning committee are committed to providing the best educational sessions, tastings and speakers for the members of ACS. We at headquarters will keep you posted on planning and registration through blast emails and the website.

In the last few months, I have had the opportunity to speak with many members as well as correspond through e-mail. Thank you all for your support during the transition. I look forward to seeing you all in Portland.

Warm regards,
Marci



2005-2006
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jodie Wische, Board Chair

Roth Kase USA, Ltd.
409 Viewmont Road
Germantown, NY 12526
518-537-5616 (office)
518-755-1897 (cell)
wische@valstar.net

Committee: Conference Planning

Cathy Strange, Ex-Officio

Whole Foods Market
2700 Wilson Blvd.
Arlington, Virginia 22201
703-527-7367
703-527-7359 (fax)

cathy.strange@wholefoods.com

Kurt Dammeler

Beecher's Handmade Cheese
104 Pike Street, #200
Seattle, WA 98101
206-322-1644
206-749-0269
kurt@sugarmtn.net

Steve Ehlers

Larry's Market
8737 North Deerwood Drive
Milwaukee, WI 53209
414-365-9650
414-357-4629 (fax)
sehlers@mac.com
Committee: Festival

Michael Gingrich

Uplands Cheese, Inc.
4540 County Road ZZ
Dodgeville, WI 53533
608-935-3414 • 608-935-7030
gingrich@mhtc.net
Committee: Cheesemaker
Support, Sponsorship

David Gremmels

Rogue Creamery
P.O. Box 3606
Central Point, OR 97502
541-665-1155
541-665-1133
david@roguecreamery.com

David Grotenstein

Food and Image
210 West 101st Street
New York, NY 10025
212-222-4578
212-222-4592 (fax)
foodandimage@aol.com
Committee: Judging, Rules &
Awards

Want to reach America's top cheesemakers with your company's message?

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 are 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: December 1 2nd Quarter: March 1
3rd Quarter: June 1 4th Quarter: September 1

To submit your ad, contact Marci Wilson at ACS
502-583-3783 or mwilson@hqtrs.com

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
Half page	7.5" x 4.94"	225.00
1/4 page	3.69" x 4.94"	130.00
1/6 page	3.69" x 3.25"	90.00
1/8 page	3.69" x 2.4"	45.00
Classified Ad (35-word max.)		35.00

The American Cheese Society

Board of Directors, cont'd

Sara Hill

Classic Provisions, Inc.

171 Cheskire Ln, Ste. 600

Plymouth, MN 55441

763-544-2025 • 763-544-2704

shill@classicprovisions.com

Committee: Festival

Joan Kimball

Quebec Delegation Chicago

444 North Michigan Avenue, Ste.

1900, Chicago, IL 60611

312-645-0392

312-645-0542 (fax)

joan.kimball@mri.gouv.qc.ca

Committee: Newsletter

Thomas Kooiman

Provvista Specialty Foods, Inc.

2389 NW Wilson Street

Portland, OR 97210

503-228-7676

503-228-7979 (fax)

tomk@provvista.com

Committee: Conference Planning

Michelle Martino

The Cheese Works Ltd.

22 Bates Road - PMB 307

Mashpee, MA 02649

508-495-4067

508-495-4068

mademoisellecheese@yahoo.com

Laura Werlin

2279 Pine Street

San Francisco, CA 94115

415-359-9695 • 415-359-9699

foodflaura@aol.com

Committee: Public Relations

Oregon Events

Though the ACS Conference won't be held in Portland for months, it's already generating a stir in the Rose City and the Northwest is ready!

On Saturday, Oct. 22, 150 lucky locals savored some of the best American cheese at **An Extraordinary Artisanal Cheese Tasting**, held in conjunction with the ACS board meeting and hosted by Provvista Specialty Foods.

Paula Lambert, board member and chair of the Own Backyard Committee, coordinated the event to rave reviews. According to Paula, the evening "was really special because it was held inside the Provvista warehouse. We had hoped that 30 cheese-lovers would come...so we were really thrilled with the fabulous turnout!"

Featured cheeses and cheesemakers from afar included: Redwood Hill Farm, Cypress Grove, Beecher's Handmade Cheese, Uplands Cheese, Vermont Butter and Cheese, Mozzarella Company and Roth Käse USA. Oregon Cheesemakers were out in force as well with tempting treats from Rogue Creamery, Willamette Valley Cheese, Juniper Grove and Oregon Gourmet Cheese.

Eversham Wood poured lovely Willamette Valley wines and local beers from Bridgeport Brewing, Rogue Ales and Widmer Brewing Company paired perfectly with the cheese.



Kurt Dammeier offers Mike Gingrich some of his own Beecher's Handmade Cheese in Portland.



Portland residents Chuck and Candace Whitlock taste some of Paula Lambert's Blanca Bianca.

Judging by the reaction of the enthusiastic crowd, the city is ready to embrace all things cheese when the conference comes to town, July 20-22, 2006.

Metropolitan Market, a Seattle area gourmet retailer, held the city's first ever American Artisanal Cheese Festival Oct. 7 – 18, 2005. Even Mother Nature approved as the sun put in an appearance at the opening event along with more than 350 local cheese enthusiasts.

The outdoor tasting featured cheesemakers from Wisconsin, California and Idaho as guests of honor. Appreciative cheese lovers had an opportunity to talk directly with Sid Cook from Carr Valley Cheese, Monte McIntyre of Point Reyes Blue, Karen and Chuck Evans from Rollingstone Chevre and Joe Milinovich from Uplands Cheese Company. Other cheeses showcased included selections from Bravo Farms, Redwood Hill, Rogue Creamery, Roth Käse and Three Sisters.

Tristan Ambrose, resident Fromager was thrilled with the turnout. "Metropolitan Market has long been committed to far-reaching artisan cheese, from direct import in the early 90s to today's focus on American farmstead cheeses," she said. "We go to great lengths to find the very best and newest for our customers and this special celebration underscores that dedication." The opening event was followed by a weekend of in-store appearances and tastings at the chains' five area locations.

Wisconsin Dairy Artisan Network



The new website, www.wisconsinfarmstead.com, offers resources for Wisconsin farmstead dairy producers, consumers and buyers.

Learning more about farmstead dairy products and the Wisconsin artisans who produce signature cheeses, yogurt, ice cream and bottled milk just got easier, thanks to a new website unveiled recently by the Dairy Business Innovation Center (DBIC).

The new website offers resources for emerging artisans, consumers interested in learning more about the state's burgeoning farmstead dairy industry and local or national buyers looking to source handcrafted artisanal products.

"More and more farmers, consumers and buyers are seeking information about one of the fastest-growing and most exciting segments in Wisconsin agriculture: artisanal and farmstead dairy products," says Dan Carter of DBIC.

Originally created three years ago by the Wisconsin Dairy Artisan Network, the website has been revamped and updated by DBIC, its partner organization.

Producers considering starting a farmstead operation will find tools for starting a business, writing a business plan, market research and food safety regulations.

Consumers seeking to learn more about purchasing and enjoying farmstead dairy products can view an interactive map with information on the state's 25

farmstead dairy operations. Visitors can also learn more about the different types of artisan cheeses, as well as tips for buying, serving and storing specialty products.

"This website is one more tool in our mission to enhance revenue for producers who bring top quality offerings to the everyday marketplace and connect them with a growing consumer base that is demanding more artisanal cheese and unique dairy products," Carter says.

The Wisconsin Dairy Artisan Network partners with DBIC and assists current and future Wisconsin dairy artisans through education, promotion of the craft and regulatory advocacy. The network is composed of dairy farmstead producers with support from industry organizations.

The Dairy Business Innovation Center is part of the Wisconsin Value Added Dairy Initiative to reinvigorate dairy in Wisconsin. It's a key component of Gov. Jim Doyle's *Grow Wisconsin* plan and is funded by a \$2.4 million grant with support from Sen. Herb Kohl, Rep. Dave Obey and in-kind contributions of agencies and organizations within Wisconsin's dairy sector.

For more information, contact Jeanne Carpenter at 608-224-5115 or e-mail jeanne.carpenter@datcp.state.wi.us.



"I want to learn about dairy artisan products...."

Welcome New Members

Paul Basta
Santa Monica, CA

Brian Becker
Long Beach, NY

Nicolas Beckman
Los Angeles, CA

Jenny Cates
Salem, MA

Brett Corrieri
Nashville, TN

Julia D'Arcy
Elmwood Park, NJ

Jennifer Dwyer
Frederick, MD

Brendan Enright
Aurora, OR

Sheila Flanagan
Warrensburg, NY

Nancy Foster
Minneapolis, MN

Cheryll Franks
Georgetown, KY

Gina Freize
San Diego, CA

Jennifer Haggerty
Needham, MA

Dawn Jump
Ocean Park, WA

James Kellehor
Cleveland, TX

Barrie Lynn Krich
Los Angeles, CA

Patricia Lund
Monona, IA

Tim Macy
Elmwood Park, NJ

John Macy
Elmwood Park, NJ

Alan Palmer
Brooklyn, NY

Gregory Peterson
Hayward, CA

Odessa Piper
Silver Spring, MD

Matthew Schweizer
Sheffield, MA

Sue Shields
Mt. Vernon, WA

Jack Showalter
Salem, MA

Trevor Thomas
West Sacramento, CA

New Members

Dale King's agricultural roots run deep into the soil of Ohio. His family has been farming since 1853. So when his daughter Elizabeth and her husband Randy Finke began working the dairy farm with them, the two families decided they needed to expand their income. Moving off the land wasn't an option.

Elizabeth took a cheesemaking course in Wisconsin, worked with a couple of New England cheesemakers and took Margaret Morris's course in Glengarry, Ontario, Canada. Then she went home to Ohio and spent the next six months perfecting her own formula for gouda.

"We had an advantage since the milk we produce is very high quality," says Dale, whose registered Holsteins and registered Brown Swiss cows have won awards at the World Dairy Expo in Madison, Wis. "Elizabeth and Randy take special care of the cows. They're pets really."

Once they felt they had the cheese formula right, they invested in a 51-ft by 72-ft building. They also imported special vats from The Netherlands and bought cheesemaking equipment.

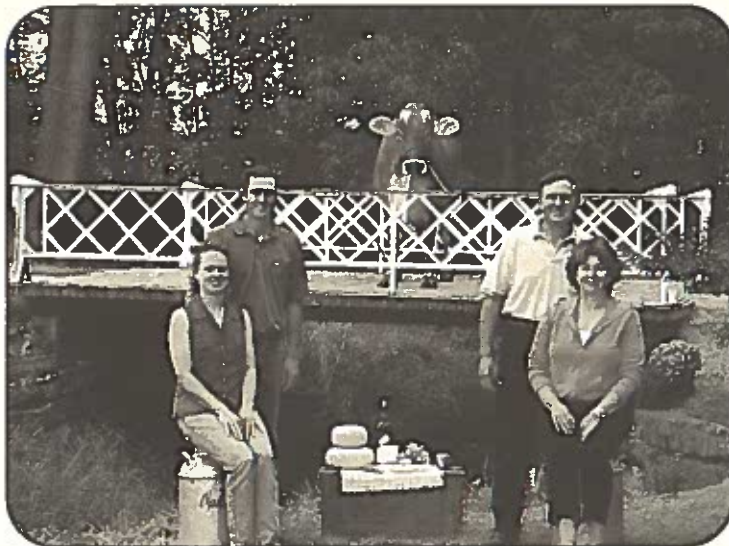
In September, 2003 they began making their first cheese, starting

with 3-month gouda, then adding flavored (c a r a w a y , habanero and j a l a p e n o) goudas and a 1-year aged gouda.

At first, business was slow but little by little their cheese became known in the area. Dale and his wife Jean sold the cheese every Saturday at the North Market in nearby Columbus. It wasn't long before word started to get out.

Whole Foods ordered the cheese for their Columbus store. Then the *Columbus Dispatch* did a story on the family's operation and the orders began to pour in. Finally, Murray's in New York picked up their cheese last July after they won a ribbon at the American Cheese Society's annual competition. In fact, these days, they're having a hard time keeping up.

Thus far, they have used the fluid milk from a single morning milking (about 3,200 pounds) for cheesemaking. The rest is sold to a nearby cheese factory. The result is production of about 300 pounds of cheese per week right now.



However, with a substantial new order in the works, they plan to add the milk from a second milking to their cheesemaking.

Are they going to add other cheeses? Not at the moment because they feel the market will take more of what they're currently producing, says Dale. And if sales continue the way they have been, the little farmstead cheese operation will soon be in the black.

Oakvale Cheese joined the American Cheese Society (ACS) last year and says Dale, "I can't say enough good things about it." He and Jean attended the ACS meeting in Louisville where they met and chatted with other cheesemakers, a process he found invaluable. "I can't put enough emphasis on how willing people were to share information and offer advice," he says. "If we hadn't joined it would have been a huge loss to us."

Upcoming Topic

2nd quarter 2006

Goat's Milk - Liquid Gold

What's the story behind the changing price and availability?

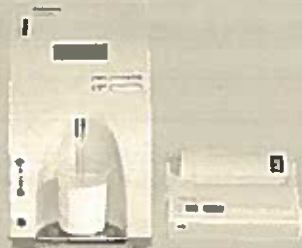
This is your newsletter. We welcome your stories, comments and ideas.

Contact: Liz Campbell, editor: 416-207-9150, campbellliz@sympatico.ca

INTRODUCING OUR BRAND NEW LINE OF RAPID RESPONSE MILK TESTERS

INTERNATIONAL MACHINERY EXCHANGE YOUR EXCLUSIVE DEALERS FOR THESE QUALITY, AFFORDABLE, PORTABLE MILK TESTERS.

**MILKOSCOPE
JULIE C2**



**MILKOSCOPE
JULIE C3**



**MILKOSCOPE
EXPERT**



FEATURES:

- WORKS WITH ANY MILK (COW, GOAT, SHEEP, ETC.)
- EASY TO READ LCD DISPLAY
- POWERED BY 110 OR 12 VOLT POWER SOURCE
- EXCELLENT ACCURACY & REPEATABILITY
- SIGNAL WARNING WHEN FLUSHING IS REQUIRED
- VERY FAST SAMPLE TIME
- COMPUTER INTERFACE FOR EASY MONITORING ANALYSIS
- ADD PRINTER FOR ONLY \$199.00
- ONE YEAR WARRANTY

3 MODELS OF MILKOSCOPES TO CHOOSE FROM, WORKS FOR COW, GOAT, SHEEP & BUFFALO MILK. THESE UNITS HAVE LARGE EASY TO READ LCD DISPLAYS THEY ARE MANUFACTURED TO THE HIGHEST QUALITY STANDARDS FOR DURABILITY. FEATURES INCLUDE PORTABILITY, EASY CONNECTIVITY TO PC AND PRINTER, EXCELLENT ACCURACY AND REPEATABILITY.
PRICES STARTING AT: \$2,500.00

MEASURED COMPONENTS	MEASURING RANGES	ACCURACY
FAT	FROM 0.01 TO 25.00%	PLUS/MINUS 0.04%
SOLIDS-NON-FAT (SNF)	FROM 3.00 TO 15.00%	PLUS/MINUS 0.1%
DENSITY	FROM 15.0 TO 40.0 DENSITY	PLUS/MINUS 0.5 DENSITY
PROTEIN	FROM 2.00 TO 7.00%	PLUS/MINUS 0.1%
LACTOSE	FROM 0.01 TO 6.00%	PLUS/MINUS 0.1%
ADDED WATER	FROM 1.00 TO 70.00%	PLUS/MINUS 0.5%
TEMPERATURE OF THE SAMPLE	FROM 5 TO 40 DEGREES C.	PLUS/MINUS 1 DEGREE C.

INTERNATIONAL MACHINERY EXCHANGE, INC.

214 N. Main St. * P.O. Box 438 * Deerfield, WI 53531

Call (608) 764-5481 or Fax: (608) 764-8240

Website: www.imexchange.com * E-mail: sales@imexchange.com

continued from page 1

be saying "What's in it for me?" and "How I Can I Improve My Business with this Cheese?"

Pricing

Study the price structure used by distributors, retailers and restaurants. Be aware of distributor expenses involved in buying, warehousing and shipping. One approach is to determine the retail store price to the end user, then work backwards to establish your price. Consider East Coast/West Coast price levels to ameliorate shipping costs.

Positioning

Positioning is your identity in the marketplace: how you want the market and other cheesemakers to view your product? Positioning includes pricing, consistent quality, customer service support, the distribution channel and packaging. Effective positioning puts your cheese first in

the minds of potential customers.

Promotion

Promotional activities are used to accomplish your marketing objectives. The tools you select will depend on your marketing budget. Some particularly cost-effective marketing tactics include direct mailings to your target group, publicity, sampling, cheese maker dinners, recipes, personal contact and notes, and testimonials from influential industry members. A brochure in some format is essential.

Develop a marketing expense budget. By putting down a figure, you are committing yourself to supporting your marketing program. The amount can be anywhere from 5 percent to 50 percent of your projected



gross sales. If you are new in the marketplace, you will have to spend more aggressively to establish your market share objective. Often, small businesses estimate their

sales revenue, cost-of-goods, overhead and salaries, and then gross profit. Anything left is considered available funds for marketing support. That's not such a good idea.

Carole Palmer is the president of Good Taste Marketing Services, a Bethesda-based sales and marketing firm specializing in bringing artisanal foods to market. She can be reached at 301-654-5887 or via cpalmer@goodtastemarketing.com

New Chef Ambassadors Showcase Diversity Of Wisconsin Cheeses

Eight notable chefs from around the nation are bringing their distinctive regional styles to the Cheese with Pride, Chefs with Passion program, an initiative of the Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board (WMMB), that connects Wisconsin Cheese and the State's cheesemakers with some of the country's best chefs.

The new ambassadors will spend the year cooking with and featuring America's Dairyland's signature product in their restaurants and "spreading the word" about Wisconsin's specialty and artisan cheesemakers to their peers and patrons through a variety of activities.

The new ambassadors are:

Govind Armstrong, Table 8, Los Angeles

When not in the kitchen, he is busy making television appearances on shows such as *The Today Show*.

James Campbell Caruso, El Farol, Sante Fe, NM

Known for his self-described "Latino-Mediterranean blend" style of cook-



Eight chefs have signed on as new Wisconsin Cheese Chef Ambassadors. Front row, left to right: James Campbell Caruso, Guillermo Pernot, Mindy Segal, Govind Armstrong. Back row, left to right: Greg and Mary Sonnier, Gabrielle, New Orleans; Michael Smith and Debbie Gold, 40 Sardines, Overland Park, KS.

ing. he authored *El Farol: Tapas and Spanish Cuisine* and is writing a second on modern Mediterranean food. **Debbie Gold and Michael Smith**, 40 Sardines, Overland Park, Kan. Smith and Gold are active in the culinary community, and are among America's most recognized and respected chefs.

Guillermo Pernot, ¡Pasion! Restaurant, Philadelphia

A native of Argentina, Pernot's interpretation of Latin cuisine has earned

many awards. Best known for ceviche dishes, he co-authored the cookbook, ¡Ceviche! in 2001.

Mindy Segal, HOT CHOCOLATE, Chicago

Segal's smart, homey style has earned her critical acclaim from the *New York Times*, *Chicago Sun-Times* and more.

Mary and Greg Sonnier, Gabrielle, New Orleans

Mary lends her talents as dessert master, and Greg is famous for his delicate versions of Creole cuisine.

(The restaurant is currently closed following Hurricane Katrina.)

The chef ambassadors began the year with a recent "Wisconsin immersion" in Madison, Wis., that included cheesemaker and dairy farm tours and Wisconsin Cheese tastings. The program will culminate in June with a dinner at the James Beard House in New York, where each chef will serve a course featuring Wisconsin cheese.

Guilds Support Artisan Cheesemakers

While states such as Wisconsin, Vermont and California have recognized the importance of their artisan cheesemakers, few states provide much support. For these states, a new phenomenon, the cheesemakers guild, brings together people who once worked in isolation. Indeed, the emergence of such grassroots organizations has provided invaluable support to farmstead and artisan cheesemakers. Through peer gatherings and communication, educational activities, informal mentoring and a collective voice in regulatory affairs and promotion, these networks are helping small scale cheesemaking to blossom.

Three such organizations came to the last American Cheese Society Conference to talk about how they have fared. All three agreed that being a cheesemaker involves being a paid-up member of the school of hard knocks, but a guild can provide support and help at the local level.

The New York Guild

The New York State Farmstead and Artisan Cheese Makers Guild grew out of a visit from Kathy Bis, a Scottish cheesemaker, who held workshops in the state. Bis planted a seed of interest after describing their own guild in the UK. The 12 existing artisan cheesemakers in New York decided to create their own guild to foster a strong and vibrant farmstead artisan cheesemaking sector in the state and to support its growth.

Their goals include: encouraging excellence in New York State farmstead and artisanal cheeses; promoting and sustaining cheese making as a craft and livelihood within New York State; connecting small-scale cheese makers with a broad range of buyers, from brokers to chefs to consumers; and representing the interests of small-scale

cheese makers to government agencies, the media and other audiences.

The state agriculture department provided a grant and the group began by creating a website and printing brochures. They established a dialogue with regulators. And following the UK model, they opened their membership up to supporting members like chefs, retailers and others with a vested interest in promoting artisan cheesemaking. Their membership now numbers 200 and they've taken their professional activities to another level, helping artisanal cheesemakers and creating classes for cheesemakers.

The Maine Guild

The Maine Cheese Guild developed its mission statement early in 2003 after several years of meetings. Their aims are to develop a collective voice to promote Maine cheese and cheesemakers; educate cheesemakers and consumers; coordinate resources; and share the joy and art of regional cheeses. The Maine Department of Agriculture has been very supportive of their efforts and has recognized them as the commodity sector. They see the Guild as taking some of the burden of helping early start-ups off their plate.

The Guild welcomes any individual who is a friend of the Maine cheese trade including all farmstead and artisanal cheesemakers, small dairy producers, sellers, suppliers, chefs, consumers and researchers with an interest in cheesemaking, dairying and cultured milk products. *Cheese Parings*, a hard copy newsletter published quarterly, is a benefit of membership. This informative newsletter contains information not published on the website including a small classified section. Each

November the Guild puts together an offering of members' cheeses, sold through members' retail stores as well as on the website.

The Southern Guild

The Southern Cheesemakers Guild was the first one in the United States and began officially in 2000, though its roots go back a few years before this. Initially, it was an e-mail support group with the idea that ordering supplies together could lower costs. From North Carolina, Virginia and South Carolina, the group spread to Georgia, Alabama and Arkansas, then finally as far north as Indiana (Capriole Cheese is a member).

In January, 2002 Celebrity Dairy hosted a general meeting, and in February 2003 Guild members came together for an advanced cheesemaking workshop with Neville McNaughton at Sweetgrass Dairy in southern Georgia. Then,

in January 2004, they invited an Italian cheesemaker for a workshop at Sweet Home Farm in southern Alabama. Indeed, the members have agreed that education is a primary focus of the group and future meetings will include an educational component whenever possible.

The group is open to commercial cheesemakers in any "southern" state as well as non-commercial cheesemakers who are seriously working toward a cheesemaking business. Most communication takes place via an e-mail discussion group and everyone is welcome on it (you don't have to be a member).

All three guilds agreed that while everyone is enthusiastic, cheesemakers have little time so volunteers have to work these activities into their busy schedules. However, all three acknowledged the growth of artisanal cheesemaking which has resulted from the support of guilds.

MAINE



CHEESE
GUILD



Cheese Education: A new ACS committee

A new ACS committee has been created to represent the interests and concerns of cheese educators. The Cheese Education Committee held its first meeting, by conference call, in early December 2005. A major focus of the committee for this first year will be developing the content for a basic exam in cheese product knowledge for professional cheese educators.

This initiative came about at the American Cheese Society meeting in Louisville, in July 2005, where there was a panel discussion entitled: *Fromager in North America: Professional status for cheese expertise?*

The session was designed to raise the question of whether or not there is a need to develop professional status and/or certification for people with cheese product expertise. There were four panelists. Laurie Greenberg spoke about the potential reasons for developing certification, how other professions establish certification and professional status (appraisers, chefs, etc.) and raised a set of issues that were common among similar programs in other professions. Scott Harper, a Louisville Sommelier working toward Master

Sommelier status, spoke about Sommelier training and certification as one model. Max McCalman, of the Artisanal Cheese Center in New York, spoke about his title, years of experience and learning, and expressed strong enthusiasm for the need to establish professional certification for people with cheese expertise. Max also provided some detail on the training he provides for cheese experts at Artisanal. Kathy Guidi, of the Cheese Education Guild in Toronto, described the training program she has developed in Canada (artisancheesemarketing.com) and proposed some possible models for Fromager status for professionals in the U.S. and Canada.

Then those attending the session were asked to join the discussion. A lot of enthusiasm was expressed for "fromager" status. Before leaving the session, 27 people (not including the panelists) signed a sheet with their contact information, expressing their interest in continuing the discussion.

A second meeting was held while still in Louisville at the encouragement of several people who wanted to further the discussion. Others who did not attend the Fromager session were also interested in the issue. At

the Saturday follow-up meeting 44 people attended.

In order to continue discussion after Louisville, Jacques Williams set up a listserve for on-line networking of the group.

The ACS board was approached about recognition of cheese educators on ACS membership application forms, one of the issues raised in Louisville. The board recommended that the group make a request to form an ACS Cheese Education Committee. The request was submitted and approved by the ACS Board at their October 2005 meeting.

The new ACS Cheese Education Committee welcomes input from all ACS members. Those interested in contributing to this "Fromager" initiative be sure to look for a session in the upcoming 2006 ACS conference program for Portland. If you want to sign onto the "fromager" listserve, please send an e-mail to majordomo@lists.panix.com. The e-mail must contain the words "subscribe fromager".

*Laurie S. Z. Greenberg
Dairy Business Innovation Center
and Cultural Landscapes, LLC*

Ontario's Interest in Artisan Cheese is Growing; Where are the Cheesemakers?

A recent study by Cressy Gourmet Investments with support from the Canadian Adaptation Council found that awareness of artisan cheeses is high. The artisan cheese segment is growing at three times the pace of the total cheese market.

Despite this, awareness of Ontario-produced artisan cheese is generally low. And apparently for good reason.

"Ontario consumers are clearly interested in artisan cheese yet there are too few licensed artisan scale cheesemakers in Ontario given the size of the market," says ACS member Petra Cooper of Cressy Gourmet Investments.

She adds, "The Ontario artisan

cheese segment of our dairy industry is clearly under developed, especially when you compare our statistics with Quebec and the U.S. where artisan cheeses have recently really hit their stride in terms of the varieties available, sales growth and growing worldwide recognition of their quality. Ontario has the potential to become known as a region that produces outstanding and original artisan cheeses – just as it has become known for its wine in the last five years."

Clearly, until there are more Ontario cheesemakers, consumers will continue to satisfy their taste for artisan cheese by eating imported cheese.

However, the recently established Ontario Cheese Society (OCS) is working to change all that. OCS wants to both increase the number of cheesemakers in Ontario and increase appreciation for Ontario-made artisan cheese. The society also hopes to encourage Ontario cheese enthusiasts to try cheeses made from the milk of different animals. Currently, goat cheeses make up approximately 17 percent of artisan cheese purchases and sheep cheeses approximately 2 percent of artisan cheese purchases.

For information about OCS, contact Petra Cooper: petrac@fifth-town.ca.

Reprinted with permission from OCS Newsletter

Events Calendar

Thanks to *Cheese Market News* for kindly providing the listings

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

July 20-22, 2005

23rd Annual American Cheese Society Conference and Competition

The Portland Hilton and Executive Tower,
Portland, Oregon

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

Feb. 8-9: Quality Milk Conference, Madison, Wis. Scott Rankin, 608-263-2008.

Feb. 13-14, 2006: Fun, Flavorful Finance, Ann Arbor, Mich. Contact Zingerman's Delicatessen, 734-930-1919, website: www.zingtrain.com.

Feb. 16-17, 2006: Agricultural Outlook Forum, Arlington, Va. Contact Stacey Harley, 202-720-2831, sharley@oce.usda.gov.

Feb. 21-23: Farmstead Artisan Cheesemaking Course, Portland, Ore. Washington State University Creamery, 509-335-4014, e-mail: creamery@wsu.edu, www.wsu.edu/creamery.

Feb. 27-28: Symposium on Advances in Dairy Product Technology, San Luis Obispo, Calif. Laurie Jacobson, 805-756-6097, www.calpoly.edu/~dptc.

Feb. 27-March 1: Dairy Farmers of Oregon Annual Convention, Seaside, Ore. Marilyn Adams, 503-229-5033.

Feb. 28-March 1: Wisconsin Process

Cheese Short Course, Madison, Wis. Bill Wendorff, 608-263-2015 or John Jaeggi, 608-262-2264.

March 6-7: New York State Cheese Manufacturers Annual Meeting, Syracuse, N.Y. Janene Lucia, 607-255-2892.

March 6-9: Washington State University Cheesemaking Short Course, Pullman, Wash. Washington State University Creamery, 509-335-4014, e-mail: creamery@wsu.edu, www.wsu.edu/creamery.

March 7-8: Cheesemaking Opportunities and Challenges Conference, Sonoma, Calif. Topics to include: What's In A Name; Starting a Artisan or Farmstead Cheese in the Modern Times; Understanding Titles and Certificates; Handling Cheeses In Retail. Contact Sheana Davis, 707-935-7960, e-mail: sheana@vom.com, www.sheanadavis.com.

March 14-16: Pizza Expo 2006, Las Vegas. 502-736-9500, website: www.pizzaexpo.com.

March 15-16: SmartMarketing 2006, Las Vegas. International Dairy Foods Association, 202-220-3557, website: www.idfa.org.

March 21-24: Cheese Short Course I, San Luis Obispo, Calif. Laurie Jacobson, 805-756-6097, website: www.calpoly.edu/~dptc.

March 25-27: International Cheese Technology Exposition, Madison,

Wis. Contact Wisconsin Cheesemakers Association, 800-999-2454, www.wischeesemaker-sassn.org.

March 27-31: Wisconsin Cheese Technology Short Course, Madison, Wis. Bill Wendorff, 608-263-2015.

March 28-29: Dairy 101: IDFA's Milk Procurement Workshop, Rosemont, Ill. Contact International Dairy Foods Association, 202-220-3557, website: www.idfa.org.

April 18-19: Milk Processing Technology Short Course, San Luis Obispo, Calif. Laurie Jacobson, 805-756-6097, www.calpoly.edu/~dptc.

April 25-26: Plant Operations Conference, St. Louis. International Dairy Foods Association, 202-220-3557, website: www.idfa.org.

April 30-May 2: American Dairy Products Institute (ADPI) Annual Meeting/Expo, Chicago. Beth Sutton, 740-828-3060.

May 6 - 14: Horizon Tours' Dairy and Cheese Study Tour of the Netherlands: \$2,790 per person (double occupancy) includes airfare, local transportation, accommodations, meals, and excursions to goat and sheep operations, museum castle and a horsemilk cheese farm. A visit to Amsterdam is included. Contact New Horizons Tours, 608-231-5881.

ACS Bids Farewell to Sara

Sara Sweetser Bolton, 52, passed away at her home in Dripping Springs, Texas on Nov. 9, 2005. Sara was an organic farmer and cheesemaker. She founded Pure Luck Dairy with her husband Denny in Texas Hill Country in the early 90s.

Many ACS members will remember Sara and her daughter, Amelia, from our conferences. Sara had a delightful smile and a twinkle in her eye. She made wonderful goat cheeses that received numerous awards, including four blue ribbons from the ACS.

In 2002, Sara traveled to Armenia on behalf of USDA to teach cheesemaking there. Among her many accomplishments, Sara was recognized by *Saveur Magazine* as an "Authentic Star of Texas" in 2003 and was one of the 50 American Cheesemakers chosen for *Saveur's* Cheese Issue in 2005.

Visit www.purelucktexas.com to learn more about Sara, her many accomplishments, and Pure Luck cheeses. Sara will be missed by all who knew her.





1ST QUARTER 2006

304 W. Liberty St., Ste. 201

Louisville, KY 40202

502-583-3783

Fax 502-589-3602

Contact: Marci Wilson

mwilson@hqtrs.com

www.cheesesociety.org

PRE-SORTED
FIRST CLASS
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Madison, WI
Permit No. 1

BECOME A MEMBER!

Benefits of annual membership may include:

- Subscription to the quarterly ACS newsletter
- Discounted registration fees for the annual conference
- Annual membership directory
- Listing on the ACS website, with links to your own website
- 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:

☐ Associate (\$95) ☐ Individual (\$160) ☐ Small Business (\$450) ☐ Corporate (\$790) ☐ Multi-Unit Business (\$1,975)

Company/Organization Name

Mr./Ms. Your First Name Last Name

Title

E-mail Address Website

Street Address

City State Zip Code

Home Telephone Work Telephone

Fax Number

- | | | | |
|--|--|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 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 a short bio and your membership or subscription fee to:
The American Cheese Society • 304 W. Liberty St., Ste. 201 • Louisville, KY 40202

FOR CHEESEMAKERS ONLY

Retail Channel(s) You Use (if any):

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

Cheeses Made:

Short Bio:

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 \$95 • 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 \$160 • The individual membership includes those individuals and businesses that are involved in the production, distribution, marketing of cheese and/or related products. Individual memberships 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 cheesemaker 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.

SMALL BUSINESS MEMBERSHIP \$450 • Benefits include those of the Individual member category for up to three designated company representatives.

CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP \$790 • 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 \$1,975 • 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.