

The American Cheese Society

NEWSLETTER 2ND QUARTER 2008

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Raw Milk and Cheese: Status and Focus

By Cathy Strange

Cheesemakers, educators, advocates, retailers...all of us who are members of the American Cheese Society or cheese lovers are typically passionate about something. During this highly-contested election year in the United States, we all become very sensitive about politics, including who and what our representatives "represent." Our awareness of how our government and regulatory agencies support and protect us produces topics that generate a lot of energy. One of the most prominent and interesting food safety topics revolves around pasteurization and the right to produce cheese with raw milk.

The majority of food lovers do not like to be told what to eat, when to eat or what is good; basically we are free spirits with liberal thoughts around what we consume. We are defenders of basic human rights on all levels, especially around our own food-related rights. In 1949, the U.S. government agency responsible for food safety introduced a regulation to define a 60-day aging period for all raw milk cheese products, whether imported to or produced in the United States. The concept behind this was to support further protection of the consumer. Thus began the journey in the United States for the majority of cheesemakers to focus on producing "safe" products for the consumer.

Flash forward to 2008. We are surrounded by food-



David Gremmels of Rogue Creamery offers a taste of their raw milk blue cheese (seen on right). Rogue is the first raw milk cheese producer to export to the EU (see page 9).

safety issues, initiated both domestically and abroad. As a result, fear sometimes dictates our responses and taints our basic knowledge of human biology. Humans are strong animals; we have not been around long in the scheme of history but we are evolved and resilient. We survived for centuries drinking milk from animals before pasteurization and eating cheese produced without pasteurized milk, and we will continue to survive. Most of us are clear that we will fight for this right. We will challenge regulatory agencies armed with scientific documentation,

produced by such scholars as Dr. Catherine Donnelly. We will support cheesemakers producing raw milk cheese products with our votes and with our dollars. We will align with organizations that will communicate and represent us, and we will stay true to our goal of maintaining this right for all. This is how the Cheese of Choice Coalition (CCC) was established.

Currently, there are ongoing government initiatives to research and substantiate scientific studies attempting to push us to further

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Cheese of Choice Coalition History

The Cheese of Choice Coalition was founded in 2000. The founding principles of the CCC are to:

- * Support safe hygiene in cheesemaking through procedures such as HACCP, which are established and monitored by regulatory agencies
- * Encourage all efforts to promote artisanal, farmstead, traditional and other locally made cheeses crafted by skilled cheesemakers
- * Oppose all new efforts to require mandatory pasteurization of milks used in cheesemaking
- * Support the law as it exists today

The CCC is a partnership organization founded with Old Ways Preservation and Trust, the Cheese Importers Association of America and the American Cheese Society. This organization is represented by a standing committee in the ACS.

The American Cheese Society

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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.

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Greetings From the President..... Yes in my backyard!

Last month I attended two great "Backyard" events in California. The first was Sheana Davis's Epicurean Connection 6th annual Sonoma Valley Opportunities and Challenges Cheese Conference.

The theme of the conference was "The Food Chain" from the farm to the table. Needless to say, Sheana could not have picked a better time of year to invite a chilled Vermonter to Sonoma.

With limited resources, Ig Vella and Sheana Davis pull off a successful small regional conference. The atmosphere is informal yet informative. This year the topics focused on marketing for the small cheesemaker. We heard Dee Harley of Harley Farms speak the truth about the challenges of agritourism. Attendees were given a tutorial in building a business model for agritourism.

We heard from noteworthy retailers and distributors in the Bay Area including The Pasta Shop, Cheese Works, and Rainbow Grocery about cheese pricing and expectations of cheesemakers going to market. The table was too small for the famous local California cheese book authors who spoke from the heart about the commitment of birthing a book and the pride with which they share their knowledge.

Juliet Harbut toured us through a fascinating history and tasting of British cheeses. She kept us laughing and eating a lot of cheese. The three-day event reminded me of a wonderful dinner party with friends where we discussed matters in depth over great food (cheeses from all over that were generously donated and displayed by Cheese Plus) and great wine (from their own backyard). We all should take a page out of Ig and Sheana's play book and think about such a conference in our own backyards.

I drove through breathtaking countryside to Petaluma for a completely different event: California's Artisan Cheese Festival. There I was in what was clearly the pinnacle of valuable real estate and yet the place was hardscrabble and real. The struggle to maintain the agriculture of the region was palpable. California's Artisan Cheese Festival is a

brilliant collaboration between the California Cheese Guild and five prominent land conservation groups.

The bottom line message was the symbiotic relationship between the working landscape and the food we eat. Those with a focus on the land came away with a new appreciation for the high value of the local cheeses. On the other hand, Bay area foodies may have considered purchasing a membership in one of the local land trusts to assure themselves a sustainable supply of good cheese. We in the business assume that this relationship is implicit yet we really can't be overly explicit.

Here, I was a passenger with no obligations but to take in the seminars and rub elbows with the local celebrity cheesemakers. This is indeed a consumer education event with a number of retailers attending. Friday night kicked off the event with cheesemaker dinners at local restaurants. On Saturday, I studied and tasted cheeses that I don't get in Burlington, Vt., took in a thoughtful presentation about raw vs. pasteurized milk cheese and finished with a tutorial on goat cheese.

The seminars were all packed with earnest students of good food and cheese. After cheese school, attendees dined on an elaborate repast put on by local chefs.

Sunday was set aside for a big festival celebration under the tent complete with demos and good cheese buys. California Cheese Guild members should be proud of their president, Lynne Devereaux, for executing such a well-organized and enjoyable event. Last year, the event netted more than \$10,000 for the participating non-profits.

That brings me to one more event which is rapidly approaching. Our own annual ACS conference and competition will be very exciting as we celebrate our 25th anniversary. Plan to come to Chicago for this very special event.

See you there.

~ Allison





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

Dear ACS Members,

As I write this letter I'm filled with anticipation – not least because we are preparing to celebrate our Silver Anniversary Conference July 23-26 in Chicago. In the midst of the hard work, the conference theme, "25 Years – Looking Back, Looking Forward," has taken on new meaning for me. The successes of the early days and the promise of days ahead merge to form the type of thrill that marks milestones. I am fueled by conversations with long time ACS members that reveal a fresh excitement surrounding this special conference.

The city with big shoulders is rolling out the red carpet for us. Selected by the city as the number one foodie event of the summer, the ACS annual conference and Festival of Cheese promises to be our largest ever with more than 1,000 attendees. The artisanal cheese community will shine as we expect our largest American Cheese Society Competition ever – last year the largest in the United States.

A special thanks goes to conference planning co-chairs, Steve Ehlers, Joan Kimball and Greg O'Neill and their entire committee. They have worked hard to create a program worthy of our 25th anniversary, with sessions to benefit and entertain all facets of our membership. Whether cheesemaker, retailer, distributor, author, chef or enthusiast, this year's attendees will leave armed with valuable

information to help them thrive.

Optional tours during the conference only suggest a taste of what the conference has in store for an attendee. Roth Käse, in the heart of Wisconsin dairy country, has been on the cutting edge of cheesemaking for five generations. Included in this day trip will be a tour through Roth Käse's facility, including viewing of cheesemaking, curing cellars and their new Culinary Education Center. This day will not only showcase the cheeses made at Roth Käse, but attendees can expect a sampling of other Green County local fare.

For those who want to stay abreast of the hottest retail sites in Chicago, the retail tour was designed for you! Pastoral Artisan Cheese, Bread & Wine is one of the most renowned cheese retailers in the Midwest. Sam's Wine and Spirits is one of a handful of full-service liquor stores and chains that includes a full-service cheese department. The newly-expanded Marion Street Market and Café in Oak Park includes a retail operation with a broader selection of wines, beers and cheese from the United States and around the world. Finally, tour goers will make their way to Fox & Obel Market Café.

So, watch your mail for the conference registration materials to arrive in late April, and mark your calendars now to attend.

I look forward to seeing you all in Chicago this July! It is going to be a knockout four days!

~ Marci

NOMINATIONS DUE FOR 2008 ACS LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

The time is now to compose your nomination for the third annual ACS Lifetime Achievement Award.

The ACS Lifetime Achievement Award was created in 2006 by the American Cheese Society Board of Directors to honor individuals for significant contributions they have made to the industry throughout their career.

Nominees must demonstrate outstanding achievements of significant impact to the larger community of the American cheese industry and have a

minimum of 15 years experience in a cheese-related profession.

To nominate an individual, complete the nomination form on our website www.cheesesociety.org, submit a one-page summary of demonstrated contributions to the industry, a bio and two letters of support.

Nomination packets must be received at the American Cheese Society office by June 1, 2008. Late nominations will not be accepted.

The American Cheese Society

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Scholarships Available for Cheesemakers

This year the American Cheese Society will award scholarships to deserving cheesemaker members. Cheesemakers are our core, and we want to ensure attendance of as many cheesemakers as possible at our annual conference.

Two 2008 Full Cheesemaker Scholarships will include full ACS conference registration, four nights hotel and \$500 towards travel expenses to attend the conference held this year in Chicago, on July 23-26. In addition, multiple partial scholarships will be awarded which include full ACS Conference registration.

Scholarships will be awarded based on need and merit. Use the essay requirement to let the committee know more about yourself, why you want to attend, and why you should be chosen!

Applications are available from ACS headquarters or on the ACS website and are due by April 30. Winners will be notified soon after June 8 so that plans can be made. Complete your application and plan to attend to gain cheesemaking knowledge, learn sales tips and strategies, and network with those in our cheesemaking industry.

The John Crompton Memorial Scholarship

The John Crompton Memorial Scholarship Committee is pleased to announce the first annual John Crompton Memorial Scholarship(s) earmarked for retail industry attendees of the 2008 American Cheese Society Conference.

Educated and passionate retailers are integral to the long-term growth of the American specialty cheese industry, and these scholarships are available to assist those who might otherwise not be able to travel to the ACS Annual Conference.

Eligible applicants are current members of the specialty food retail trade exhibiting enthusiasm and dedication to the cheese industry and a desire to further their education in the field. The award includes complimentary conference registration along with a one-year membership to the

American Cheese Society as well as four-night hotel reservations and need-based funding toward travel and meals.

The deadline for application is June 2008. These scholarships were created in honor of our friend and colleague, John Crompton, who passed away in August 2006. A 25-year employee of Seacrest Foods and a specialty food industry veteran, he was known for his passion, dedication and commitment to the industry. He loved the business and the people and made them his life. John's boisterous personality and instinct for the business left a deep impression on all who knew him.

Interested applicants can learn more about the ACS Conference and this scholarship opportunity on the ACS Website at: www.cheesesociety.org.

Certification Alliance: Major Initiatives Underway

By Susan Page Sturman

The Fromager Certification Alliance of ACS conducted a market-research survey last year with the participation and support of ACS. It measured and demonstrated the support of the membership for such a certification program. There will be a report on this survey during the business meeting session of the annual conference, and a detailed article on the results of the survey is being prepared for this publication.

Another significant undertaking that the Alliance has begun is the establishment of a database of cheese educators throughout the country. Taylor Cocalis of Murray's Cheese Shop in NYC is spearheading this effort, and there is a brief questionnaire posted on the Forum pages of the ACS website that cheese educators may complete and post on the Forum.

This database will be a listing, to be accessible via the ACS website, of as many cheese education programs as the team can identify; it will not be an endorsement or

even an evaluation of these programs, but rather a listing for the convenience of the ACS membership.

On-the-job training continues, naturally, to be the primary source of education across the industry. The Alliance realizes that while ACS cannot currently offer formal training in preparation for a certification exam, it can support potential candidates for certification in their efforts to educate themselves through formalized training.

The Alliance is planning a pre-conference session on Wednesday, July 23, from 2:30-4:30 p.m. This session is planned as a working meeting to begin outlining the scope and content areas for a certification exam program.

Participants will include leaders from all areas of the American artisanal cheese industry. It is the Alliance's intention to use the session to initiate a conversation that will extend throughout the conference, and continue via electronic and telephone contact throughout the coming months.

Member News

ACS members who produce, market, support or serve American cheese share what they're doing. If you have news you'd like to share with us, please send it to the editor, Liz Campbell, at campbellliz@rogers.com.

Bravo Farms is adding a gourmet Ice Cream and Coffee House and has added a new Pepper Jack cheese to their line-up. They are also going green with a recycling program for boxes, paper and bottles used at the factory. Bill Boersma is hand-dipping their Gouda in beeswax, which is a first for any artisan cheese company. Bravo's cheese was featured on www.wine.woot.com the week of March 31.

RogueChocolateStout.com is a new website from ACS/WCR member **Sebbie Buhler** of Rogue Ales, with pairing notes and recipes that include Rogue Chocolate Stout (think Rogue Creamery Chocolate Stout Cheddar, Rogue Chocolate Stout and Hazelnut Brown Ale Cheesecakes, or Lola's on Harrison Chocolate Stout Cake) along with events and other links and listings. Sebbie also teaches beer and cheese classes at Artisanal in New York City and DiBruno Bros. in Philadelphia.

Sue Conley and **Peggy Smith** have been selected by the Slow Food Nation '08 committee to be the "Curators of Cheese" for Slow Food Nation, Come to the Table, being held on Labor Day Weekend, Aug. 29 - Sept. 1. They will be coordinating the cheese education and tasting pavilion at Fort Mason Center. Slow Food Nation is the first major American-based Slow Food event, and will provide a great opportunity for cheesemakers, retailers, cheese enthusiasts and dairy farmers to instruct and to learn about the subjects: milk, cheesemaking, animal husbandry, feeds, pastures, enzymes, cultures, and affinage. For complete details, check out the website: www.slowfoodnation.org

Crowley Cheese Inc. was at the State House in Montpelier, Vt. in March to receive the 2008 Centennial Business Award, sponsored by the Vermont Chamber of Commerce, the Vermont Secretary of State and *Vermont Business* magazine. Crowley Cheese has been in operation since 1882 and remains one of the oldest continuously operating cheese factories in the United States.

At the festive annual banquet that marks the conclusion of the Vermont Farm Show, the Vermont Dairy Industry Association awarded its prestigious John C. Finley Memorial Award to **Allison Hooper**, co-founder of **Vermont Butter & Cheese Company**. Recipients of the award are recognized for their outstanding contribution to Vermont agriculture as achieved through outstanding

character and mental vigor exemplified by John C. Finley, educator, deputy commissioner of agriculture and ardent promoter of Vermont agriculture. For 23 years, Hooper has developed and nurtured the dairy goat industry in Vermont on which she and partner Bob Reese depend for milk. She also is recognized for starting the Vermont Cheese Council and for her leadership in branding Vermont as a national leader in the artisan cheese industry.



Paula Lambert of **Mozzarella Company** was featured in a year-end Business Section article in the *Dallas Morning News*, detailing how chance plays an unforeseen part in the lives of business leaders, and in *Kappa Key* magazine, detailing her cheese factory and cookbooks. She was chosen as one of 12 people, places and things that define Dallas Dining in *D Magazine's* first Foodie Hall of Fame for their publication *Eating and Drinking*. Paula also participated in a "Pioneers of Artisanal Cheese" panel at the NASFT Fancy Food Show in San Diego and presented at the Culinary Entrepreneur Series at the Institute for Culinary Education in New York.

Marin French Cheese Co. of Petaluma, Calif., won Best of Class for their Marin French Blue in the Blue-Veined, Exterior Molding class.

Award-winning and nationally-recognized **Rogue Creamery**, of Central Point, Ore., through an extensive collaborative effort, has earned the groundbreaking accreditations and certifications necessary from both the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the U.S. Department of Agriculture to export its raw milk cheeses to the European Union. Rogue Creamery began shipping its Rogue River Blue cheese to London's Neal's Yard Dairy, and its entire line of six blue cheeses to Whole Foods Market, also in London. Independent retailers will also sell their products in Paris and Amsterdam.

Roth Käse, Monroe, Wis., took first place for Roth Käse Private Reserve in the in the Smear Ripened Hard Cheeses class.

In the flavored hard cheese category, **Sartori Foods**, Antigo, Wis., won Best of Class for Sartori Reserve Rosemary and Olive Oil Rubbed Asiago and a silver medal for Sartori Reserve Black Pepper Bella. Sartori Reserve SarVecchio Parmesan earned silver in both the Parmesan category and the open class grated cheese categories.

Dedicated foodies and novice cheesemakers can
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Sustaining Community

Sheana Davis and the Sonoma Cheese Conference

By Judy Creighton

When our cheese community comes together, it provides moments of camaraderie and growth that our industry needs to keep expanding and enriching itself. For the past six years, Sheana Davis has presented a three-day, **Opportunities and Challenges Conference** in Sonoma, Calif., bringing together cheesemakers and cheesemongers, as well as those who aspire to join our ranks. Each year the conference focuses on a particular aspect of our cheese industry.

When ACS was originally formed, one of its goals was to have regional conferences to bring together people and information. Sheana has been successfully meeting this goal for six years with this conference. It has served as an ACS outreach for many members who can't attend the national meeting and also attracts people nationwide.

Each year, she has worked with Ig Vella of Vella Cheese Company to assemble knowledgeable cheese people from around the world to participate in her conference. Her goal is to educate those in the cheese business, whether producer, distributor or retailer, with open discussion on how the cheese market works best. Assembling experts to speak on panels and seminars enables the rest of the cheese community to meet and mingle with some of the great cheese producers, academics and cheesemongers in America. It gives the industry an opportunity to share knowledge, learn, mentor and explore new possibilities in the ever-changing specialty cheese business. Novices and the experienced alike relish the interactions. The informality gives everyone access to learn and discuss in small groups.

This year's conference on March 4-6 focused on "The Food Chain, from Farm to Table." Juliet Harbutt, chair of the British Cheese Awards, was the keynote speaker and provided an overview of British cheeses and the British Cheese Awards. Dr. Leslie Butler, marketing specialist from UC Davis, lectured on the profit chain from producer to consumer. Various panels addressed issues such as Retail Pricing, Buying Cheese from Distribution to Retail, Enterprise Innovations in the Cheese Business, Connecting with Your Community, California Agritourism and Demo Marketing. Speakers included Dee Harley of Harley Goat Farms, Steve Ehlers of Ehlers Market in Wisconsin, Julianna Uruburu of Pasta Shop, Jesse Swartzburg from Cheeseworks West, Cindy Callahan of Bellwether Farms, Gordon Edgar of Rainbow Co-op



The launch of Sonoma Artisan Cheese Week as proclaimed by the Sonoma County Supervisors, March 2, 2008. Front row: Franklin Peluso, Laura Werlin, Ig Vella, Janet Fletcher, Back row: Peter Wellington, Sonoma Winemaker, Clark Wolf, Sheana Davis, David Noyes, Sonoma Winemaker

Grocery, and many local specialty market owners, managers and distributors.

A panel of five cheese book authors – Janet Fletcher, Juliet Harbutt, Laura Martinez, Lenny Rice and Laura Werlin – discussed their writing experiences. Day Three spotlighted ACS president, Allison Hooper, who presented an inspiring history of her company, Vermont Butter & Cheese Company.

The final event of the conference was an impressive closing panel with Ig Vella, Franklin Peluso and Sid Cook giving an overview of the cheese business over the last 50 years. Each day also included generous tastings with cheeses from local artisan and specialty producers.

Laura Werlin, author of *Cheese Essentials*, commented, "I can't help but think of Sheana's incredible entrepreneurial spirit. She is tireless...she knows just about everyone connected with cheese. Conference attendees get the benefit of Sheana's resourcefulness because she really does choose key people who can elucidate the pressing and relevant cheese issues."

Along with producing extraordinary cheeses to be handed down through generations, this industry has also produced people like Sheana who care, give and commit to a lifestyle that brings true enrichment that touches so many lives. Ricki Carroll of the New England Cheesemaking Supply Company, says, "Sheana has been a wonderful friend in the cheese world. She lives and thinks outside the box. I find it a joy just to hear her name mentioned, and we are all blessed to have her among the ranks of this wonderful world of cheese."

For more details on the Sonoma Conferences, go to www.sheanadavis.com

Judy Creighton is Core Instructor at the San Francisco Cheese School and an ACS Member.

More Member News

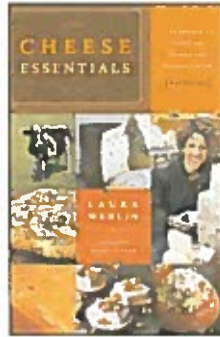
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make a three-day exploration of artisan cheesemaking with Shelburne Farms' "Pasture to Palate: the Art of Cheesemaking," May 19 to May 21. The course includes visits with small cheesemakers, delicious dinners at the Inn with tastings under the guidance of experts, and making cheese with **Shelburne Farms** head cheesemaker. Director of "Pasture to Palate" is Jeff Roberts, author *The Atlas of American Artisan Cheese* and co-founder of the Vermont Institute for Artisan Cheese. Details can be found at www.shelburnefarms.org.

Uplands Cheese Co. won second place in the same class at the recent

World Cheese Championships in Madison, Wisconsin.

Laura Werlin's latest book, *Laura Werlin's Cheese Essentials* has been nominated for a James



Beard Foundation award. Considered the "Oscars" in the food world, the James Beard awards are handed out in June every year in New York City. No newcomer to this honor, in 2004 Laura won a James Beard award for *The All American Cheese and Wine Book*.

The Wisconsin Milk Marketing

Board offers a new interactive resource, the Wisconsin Cheese Descriptors for the Menu CD, designed to help chefs and their staff learn about, menu and sell Wisconsin specialty cheeses. The free CD serves as an introduction to the many distinctively flavored Wisconsin cheeses and the craftsmen who make them. The CD is available to order online at www.WisDairy.com/CheeseCD.

The **27th Biennial World Championship Cheese Contest** in Madison, Wis. drew entrants from around the globe and is the largest cheese and butter competition in the world. Check the website for the names of ACS winners: www.wis-cheesemakersassn.org/wccc/2008/past-results.php

Keeping the Faith

By Liz Campbell

Spring Brook Farm in Reading, Vt will start making raw milk Tarentaise Vermont Alpine Cheese this May using a system which is well established in the Alpine regions of Europe, but will be unique in the United States. The system is difficult to describe – so much so that cheesemaker John Putnam simply "bought an Air France ticket and went over there to see how it works."

The new facility will house two 1,000-liter copper vats made in France, aging facilities, and America's first vacuum system for transferring the curd to the presses. The use of copper vats is itself unusual as Putnam had to argue the case for these in his home state where they were deemed illegal initially. "Tarentaise begins with copper; I think it makes a difference," says Putnam. "I've had a European chef tell me our cheese has real complexity – I think that's because of the copper." Indeed, ask any chef and he'll tell you egg whites whisked in a copper bowl make a better meringue but they don't know why.

The new vacuum system allows Putnam to lift the curds and whey from the huge vats without an

impeller which would break up the curd. These move into the "bell" in which the whey and curds separate. The weight of the whey presses the curd tight, and then the addition of air lets the whey out of the bell, leaving the curds behind.

These are then lifted out into molds. Alpine cheeses like Comté are made in exactly this manner, though the curd is left uncut to make giant wheels of cheese. Putnam plans to cut the curd to make smaller cheeses.

Like the Tarentaise made at Thistle Hill Farm (just 20 miles away), Spring Brook Farm Tarentaise also will be a true farmstead cheese. "We're using the AOC model," explains John Putnam. "We're keeping to making one style of cheese, the way they do in Europe, even though the cheese will be made on a different farm."

Every component of the Tarentaise cheese will be produced on the farm; the milk itself will travel only 85 feet



John and Janine Putnam in front of the copper vats in which they make their award-winning Tarentaise.

from the 45 Jersey cows to the cheese vats; and from the vats, it's only another 30 feet to the aging cave. "This truly is artisanal Tarentaise," he adds. There will be a human touch every step of the way, and we are keeping faithful to the terroir of our region in Vermont. We wanted others to see that it is possible to make a cheese that is commercially viable, supports a small farm, and boasts the complexity of flavour that makes it artistically unique."

With the addition of Spring Brook Farm, production of Tarentaise Vermont Alpine Cheese will triple this year.

Welcome New Members

Check our list for new members who might be near you. Contact details are on the ACS website.

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St. Louis, MO

New Member

David Lenzmeier was "born into this," he says, having grown up on a dairy farm 5 miles from his current cheese plant in Kimball, Minn., with a dad who was passionately involved with cooperatives. While completing his degree in agribusiness at the University of Wisconsin, he and other students made cheese and ice cream for sale in the university's foodservice operations.

In 1996, David took over as general manager of a co-op in Minnesota and noted how so many dairies were disappearing. So, two years later, he started his own dairy – Stickney Hill Dairy – with a herd of goats from whose milk he made fresh chevre. By 2003, the demand for Stickney Hill's chevre was growing so much that he was buying goat milk from other farmers and expanding production.

Last year, David had to make a hard decision – to sell the herd and concentrate on the cheesemaking. "It was a challenge to focus and there were so many other farmers doing such a great job producing milk," he says. "I wanted to be more creative as a cheesemaker."

That's meant the development of new flavors of chevre. Their traditional garlic/herb, peppercorn and tomato basil flavors have been augmented by honey, fiesta (Mexican) and a really unique one – pumpkin spice. This last took off during the past holiday season. "We went out

on a limb with that one because we wanted to do something different," said Cheryl Willenbring, manager at the plant. "It was really popular."

Production fluctuates with the seasons, but last year the small dairy averages 40,000 to 50,000 pounds of cheese each month, all of it fresh. Most of this is sold to foodservice and retail outlets like SuperTarget under private label. They also produce industrial crumble chevre for other brands.

David patently loves his work because he's now quit his "day job" to concentrate full time on the cheese operation – three dairy facilities that focus on the production of cheese, butter, milk powders and specialty packaging. Apart from their fresh chevre, the company also produces



Gerry Spoden, operations manager at Stickney Hill, at work.

frozen chevre medallions as well as goat cheese powders and goat butter.

Recently, David joined ACS. "I see it as a great opportunity to learn from other cheesemakers and to see what's happening in the marketplace," he says. And he's definitely planning to enter some of their cheeses in the competition in Chicago this summer.

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homogenize and pasteurize with the goal of protecting us against the villainous raw milk. No doubt, raw milk is complex. Any ingredient in raw form may potentially be dangerous if not properly handled during any stage of milking through production. That is why we are all advocates for responsible cheesemaking. There are responsibilities associated with producing consumable products and cheese is no exception.

The mission of CCC is to maintain the current 60-day standard for aging of raw milk cheese assuring the availability of traditionally-produced cheeses from Europe such as Parmigiano Reggiano, Gruyère and Comté (to name a few) and to support the rights of cheesemakers everywhere to make cheese using raw milk. To assure this right, we continue to work in support of cheesemakers to refine production methodology and documentation that reflect solid manufacturing processes. As food safety becomes a more visible topic in a global society, this commitment will substantiate our drive to produce safe food and...tasty food.

The government regulatory agencies have worked with CCC in partnership. All in all, our goals are the same – safe food. It is human nature to doubt the relationship with government agencies; sometimes this is with good basis and sometimes not. Recently, the FDA, Oregon Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Dairy Export Council worked to support the first exportation of a raw milk cheese produced in the United States to the United Kingdom. My, how things have changed!

The opportunity to purchase Rogue Creamery Cheeses in the United Kingdom through partnership with Neal's Yard Dairy and Whole Foods Market is something that I am sure few of us would have thought possible only a few years ago. This was a milestone for raw milk advocacy on many levels!

The FDA will continue to pursue



David Gremmels, Ig Vella and Cary Bryant make Rogue Creamery cheese.

studies that reflect the ongoing concerns of food safety organizations, consumers and lobbyists. ACS will continue to work with CCC to create awareness, financially support scientific documentation and advocate for

raw milk cheese producers and consumers everywhere.

Cathy Strange is global cheese buyer for Whole Foods Markets, past president of the Board of ACS and a tireless worker with ACS.

A Success Story

Rogue Creamery has been consistently recognized in both the United States and throughout the world, becoming the first American cheesemaker featured at the prestigious "Cheese" festival in Bra, Italy, in 2007. The Creamery won the London World Cheese Award for best blue cheese in 2003, the first time an American cheesemaker had won the honor. Awards also include the coveted Best New Product in the World for its Smokey Blue at the National Association for the Specialty Food Trade (NASFT) Food Show in New York.

Despite these kudos, Rogue's cheese could not be marketed overseas – until now. Because the export of raw milk cheese had not been previously allowed, new regulations and guidelines had to be created to make it possible. While U.S. cheesemakers, including Rogue Creamery, had competed internationally in cheese competitions, commercial shipments of raw milk cheese legally produced in the United States could not be exported to the European Union. The EU raw milk certificate was outdated, and the existing U.S. dairy certification program protocols did not cover raw milk. The US Dairy Export Council's Market Access and Regulatory Affairs Department, which works to remove trade barriers that negatively impact U.S. exports, made resolving the certification issue a priority so that U.S. companies could take advantage of the demand for their products in the European Union.

"This is a monumental change in dairy for the U.S. for a raw milk American handmade cheese to be exported, and for our government to create standards allowing American raw milk cheesemakers to take advantage of markets in the EU," says David Gremmels, president and co-owner with Cary Bryant of Rogue Creamery.

The U.S. government approved the raw milk health certificate for use in September 2007.

"Raw milk gives your cheese depth of flavor and complexity thanks to the enzymes in the native plants and grasses in our pasture. The less you do to the milk, the better," adds Gremmels.

Welcome New Members

Lynne Guidicianne
Fromartharie, Inc
Reading, MA

Peter Hartogs
Landmark Media
Falls Church, VA

Christine Hughes
Chicago, IL

Jeanette Hurt
Milwaukee, WI

Robin Kaplan
Exclusively Gourmet, Ltd
Chicago, IL

Kerry Kaylegian
Pennsylvania State Univ.
University Park, PA

Jamie Kemp
The Wine Source
Baltimore, MD

Richard Kessler
Fromartharie, Inc
New Fairfield, CT

Peter Kindel
Redwood Hill Farm & Creamery
Sebastopol, CA

Dena King-Nossokoff
Oakvale Farm Cheese
London, OH

Kimberly Lang
Maryville, TN

David Lenzmeier
Stickney Hill Dairy
Kimball, MN

Christy Martinez
Molto Formaggio
Frisco, TX

Kathy Obringer
Ancient Heritage Dairy
Scio, OR

Chan Patterson
Viking Cooking Schools
Ridgeland, MS

Charan Peeples
Coach Farm, Inc
Pine Plains, NY

Michael Perlmeier
Molto Formaggio
Frisco, TX

Pamela Robinson
Robinson Farm
Hardwick, MA

Oregon Cheese Festival

By Tami Parr

Oregon Gov., Ted Kulongoski declared March **Oregon Artisan, Specialty and Farmstead Cheese Month**, and it was indeed a month filled with cheese in Oregon, the highlight of which was the fourth annual Oregon Cheese Festival held in Central Point, Ore., on March 14-15.

The festivities started Friday with a dinner benefiting the Oregon Cheese Guild at the historic 1920s era Ashland Springs Hotel. The menu, created by Chef Damon Jones, featured five courses incorporating the cheeses of Oregon producers paired with wines from Southern Oregon. Diners sampled Pholia Farm Elk Mountain in the beet salad, Tumalo Farms Truffleur in scalloped potatoes, and Bison shank with Rogue River Blue. Guest host Laura Werlin emceed the dinner, which also included cheese plate centerpieces at each table with cheeses from – you guessed it – Oregon cheesemakers.

The Festival proper began on Saturday at the site of Rogue Creamery in Central Point. Most of Oregon's artisan cheesemakers were in attendance, including Fraga Farm, Rivers Edge Chevre, Willamette Valley Cheese Co. and Ancient Heritage Dairy, as were artisan producers of local wines, bread, cured meats and chocolates. Hundreds of revelers packed the tent throughout the day as they sampled, savored and purchased all of the above. In addition, classes gave attendees the opportunity to learn about local cheese and wine pairings (hosted by Laura Werlin), or to learn about the process of making cheese (hosted by Marc Druart from Vermont Institute for Artisan Cheese).

People came from all parts of the state to attend, and the crowds were a testament to the level of inter-



A tasting plate is paired with wines



Cary Bryant (Rogue Creamery) and Marc Druart (VIAC) prepare for cheesemaking 101

est in artisan cheese both in Oregon across the Northwest. Maybe every month should be Oregon cheese month?

"Vini, vidi, ego creavi."
—Julius Caesar

Seattle CHEESE Festival 2008

- Taste cheese from Washington and around the world.
- Experience wine & cheese pairings in the wine garden.
- Sample the Cheese Fest Best from Seattle's finest restaurants.
- Attend seminars from top food and wine professionals.
- Kids can take part in a kids parade through the market.

"The Big 3"

May 16-18 • Pike Place Market

Cheese Education

Toronto-based *Cheese Education Guild* (CEG) is Canada's first cheese appreciation school. Since 2005, this three-course, 72-hour study program has raised the level of cheese product knowledge and inspired fine cheese awareness among food professionals and cheese lovers alike.

"Patterned after international wine education programs, our graduates go on to be recognized cheese experts ... authors, event organizers, caterers, cheese mongers and restaurateurs offering fine cheese service. Together we are leading the cheese renaissance and raising the bar for cheese quality and service appreciation," says Kathy Guidi, Dean and founder of *Cheese Education Guild*.

Throughout the study program, CEG students explore and compare hundreds of cheeses using specific cheese vocabulary and sensing techniques. Student evaluations say cheese tasting and discussion, in addition to project work, are the most valuable components of the program. Huguette Chenard, a graduate said: "I am quite amazed at what I have learned about cheese over the past year. In April 2006, I did not even know how cheese was made. Today (May 2007), not only can I analyze and appreciate cheese, but have successfully introduced cheese appreciation to friends."

Teaching with Guidi is Anne-Marie Shubin, graduate of *Cheese Education Guild* and an experienced chef. Her love of cheese runs deep as she inspires oth-



Cheese Education Guild Graduating Class 2006 with guest speaker Max McCalman. Several are now ACS and OCS members.

ers to navigate their cheese journey.

Successful completion of each 24-hour course results in a Certificate of Achievement. With graduation from all three courses comes an invitation to continue cheese networking and learning through the **Cheese Education Guild Caseophile Club**. Cumulative knowledge from the three core courses prepares graduates to take cheese competency exams being developed in association with the American Cheese Society in order to obtain accreditation as a Cheese Professional.

"The fundamental goal of CEG was to open the door to better understanding of the intricacies of artisan craftsmanship, in both new and old world cheese, supporting farmstead and artisan cheese production and the time-honored tradition of enjoying cheese," says Guidi, who goes on to say that the cheese school is the most fulfilling and challenging piece in her 35+ year career. "People who truly love cheese have a common bond with those who craft it. The people who come to CEG are sommeliers of cheese!"

Learn more about *Cheese Education Guild*: www.artisancheesemarketing.com

Cheese Slices

Multi-award winning author, television host and international "master of cheese," Will Studd, is launching his *Cheese Slices* series in the USA.

Filmed on three continents, Studd's extraordinary odyssey is the world's first series to cover international artisan and farmhouse cheeses, providing a fascinating glimpse into the way the world's best-loved cheeses are made.

Cheese Slices Vol. 1, 2 & 3 are now available at www.cheeseslices.com. The



new website offers online purchasing and plenty of additional information on Studd and *Cheese Slices*. In June, Studd will visit the USA to film two new episodes for *Cheese Slices* Vol. 4, to be released in 2009. North California new

farmstead cheeses appear in Vol. 3 and Vermont cheese is featured in Vol. 2. During his visit, Studd also will host two special *Cheese Slices* events in New York.

Welcome New Members

Rodney Roeske
Molto Formaggio
Frisco, TX

Danielle Rouvrais
Sid Wainer & Son
New Bedford, MA

Riki Senn
Viking Cooking Schools
Milford, DE

Victor Simas

Sid Wainer & Son
New Bedford, MA

Genevlyn Steele
Balducci's Food Lover's Market
Richmond, VA

Julie Steil
River Valley Cheese
Fall City, WA

Masha Stern
Vermont Cheesemongers
Burlington, VT

Michael Stickney
Exclusively Gourmet, Ltd
Chicago, IL

Ken Strunk
Redwood Hill Farm & Creamery
Sebastopol, CA

Beney Thomas
U.S. Dairy Export Council
Arlington, VA

Lindsay Thomeer
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Ed Vaughn
Liberty Heights Fresh
Salt Lake City, UT

Chris Wadden
Pasadena, CA

J. Loren Weaver
Hope Springs Farm
East Earl, PA

Ronald Weil
Swiss-American, Inc.
St. Louis, MO

Cheryl Willenbring
Stickney Hill Dairy
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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 (\$150) ☐ Individual (\$190) ☐ Small Business (\$550) ☐ Corporate (\$955) ☐ Multi-Unit Business (\$2,370)

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: ☐ Academic ☐ Association ☐ Broker
☐ Butter Maker ☐ Cheesemaker ☐ Chef/Caterer ☐ Consultant
☐ Dairy ☐ Distributor ☐ Enthusiast ☐ Importer
☐ Public Relations ☐ Writer/Author ☐ Marketing ☐ Retailer
☐ Trade Publication ☐ Other (Specify) _____

Ways You Can Help ACS and ACS Members:

- ☐ Write an Article for the Newsletter
- ☐ Share Technical Expertise
- ☐ Discount Offers for Members
- ☐ A Website Link to ACS
- ☐ Bringing in New Members
- ☐ Public Cheese Tastings
- ☐ Start an ACS cheese-buying club in your store
- ☐ Write an Article for a Newspaper or Magazine
- ☐ A Link on Your Website to Other Members
- ☐ Help in Meeting the Press
- ☐ Other _____
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☐ 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 \$150 • 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 \$190 • 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 \$550 • Benefits include those of the Individual member category for up to three designated company representatives.

CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP \$955 • 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 \$2,370 • 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.