



January 2022

PRESS RELEASE

2021 Comté Scholarship Winner Announced!

The Comté Cheese Association is delighted to announce that Zach Berg has won the ninth annual Comté Scholarship for American Cheese Society *Certified Cheese Professionals*[™] (ACS CCPs[™])! Berg won an all-expenses-paid trip to the Comté region to explore the cheese and its culture first-hand, and a \$750 cash stipend.

Zach Berg, co-owner/cheesemonger at Monger's Provisions in Detroit, MI, upon learning the news replied, "Oh my God, what wonderful news! The opportunity to visit the Jura and see how Comté cheese is made, has been on my cheese bucket list! I am jumping up and down, this is incredible."

Evan Talen from Aperitivo in Grand Rapids, MI, was named runner-up. He along with the next top four entries will receive a special gift for their efforts.

The essays were judged on the basis of knowledge and creativity by a panel of three renowned cheese experts: **Cathy Strange**, Vice President, Specialty and Product Innovation and Development, Whole Foods Market, Inc.; **Laura Werlin**, Author and Cheese Educator; and **Nora Weiser**, Principal of non-profit consulting firm 12 Flavor and Director Emeritus of the American Cheese Society.

This year two essay questions were asked. There were: "How did the pandemic affect your sale and your customers, positively and/or negatively?" and "What is your perception of the market for artisanal / craft cheeses (>\$15/lbs.)?" For their reply to each question, participants were requested to use Comté as an example." Berg's winning essay may be read here: <http://www.comte-usa.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Zach-Berg-Winning-Essay.pdf>

The Certified Cheese Professional[™] (CCP) Exam was established by the American Cheese Society in 2012 to encourage high standards of comprehensive cheese knowledge and service for professionals in all areas of the cheese world. The exam is based on the knowledge and skills required to successfully perform cheese-related tasks in jobs across the board.

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Made exclusively in the Jura Mountain region of France, Comté is an artisanal cheese with AOC (Controlled Appellation of Origin) and PDO (European Protected Denomination of Origin) designations. Each wheel of Comté reflects a unique terroir, a season of production, and centuries of cheesemaking and affinage traditions.

For further information, please contact:

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The Comté Cheese Association – Comité Interprofessionnel du Comté – was set up by decree on 11th June 1963. It represents all those who are involved in the production of Comté—dairy farmers, cheese-makers, affineurs—and carries out activities in all fields of interest to the trade, including research and technical issues, economics, information and communications, marketing, law and promotion of the Comté appellation, defense of local traditions and protection of the environment.

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