

# Vermont Cheese Council

Fall 2007 • Vol. 7, Issue 2

## ACS Takes to Vermont

Susan Spraulding



*Vermont Governor Jim Douglas shares a moment with Grafton Village Cheese's Wendy Brewer, and Plant Manager, Rick Woods at the opening reception at the American Cheese Society's 24th Annual Meeting. Below, throngs of enthusiasts crowd into the Sheraton to taste and view cheeses from near and far.*

Robert Grego



### **American Cheese Society in Vermont At a Glance**

- There were 829 attendees (from 42 states and provinces, as well as from the UK, France and Italy)
- 260 first time attendees
- 200 volunteers
- 200 cheesemakers submitted 1208 cheeses into competition
- There were 89 categories in the competition
- 168 cheeses won awards
- 28 Vermont cheesemakers participated in the competition
- 20 Vermont cheesemakers (71% of those entered) won awards
- In competition, the top three states to take 1st prize awards were Wisconsin with 20; Vermont with 10; California with 9
- Second place top three states were: California with 26; Wisconsin with 25; Vermont with 19
- Third place top three states: Wisconsin with 29; California with 18; Vermont with 12
- In all, Vermonters took 41 awards including 10 first prizes
- 12% of all winning cheesemakers were Vermonters



## President's Message

# We Paint a Pretty Picture!

Once again we shift into a new season. We are finishing a spectacular summer full of events to be proud of. We have all been involved in cheese tasting, Farmer's Markets, promotional activities and of course the ACS Conference in Burlington! Vermont cheesemakers won an unprecedented 41 awards and once again showed the country what an outstanding group of artisans we have here. I have been extremely proud to serve the council during this stage of our career. We all come from such diverse backgrounds and yet we share this passion for our state, our lifestyles and the wonderful products we produce here. It is a very exciting time as we move ahead. Many people watch us with admiration.

I think we have come to be truly appreciated in this state. We were originally seen as a somewhat offbeat group and perhaps still are but we have also earned a place here. People from far and wide enjoy not only our fine cheeses but what we do for our communities and the Vermont landscape. Our livestock are seen dotting the pastures. People watch us haying our fields and wave enthusiastically as they pass our tractors on the roads. They visit our barns at all times of the day and express envy for our way of life. We paint a pretty picture for those around us. In a funny way, despite the realities that we know, we appreciate

their enthusiasm and allow them the pleasure of their perspective. Their enthusiasm encourages us to continue on, for what would Vermont be without its farmers? We, like our animals, are an integral part of this landscape.

It is a curious time for Vermont cheesemakers. We all face issues of growth, demands and time constraints. We wrestle with satisfying the amazing demand for our cheeses while also preserving the quality of life we have come to represent. Will this demand continue? Should we try to satisfy it? How do we move forward? Are we getting too old for all this? Who will take over? Would we wish it on anyone? I see some exciting new opportunities in the years ahead. I see a small, core group of truly farmstead producers but I also see a new era with some larger artisanal producers as well. These are the Cabots, Graftons and Vermont Butter & Cheeses and others to follow who will really be able to meet the demand while maintaining a great name for Vermont products. There is room for all of us and our customers eagerly await us!

In closing, go forward in this new season with a glad heart. Reflect on what is really important in our lives. Strive to nurture those things. Know that we cheesemakers are appreciated, and our customers are appreciated as well! Paint a great picture and use lots of colors!

— Jon Wright, Taylor Farm

## Vermont Hosts ACS and Makes Impressive Showing

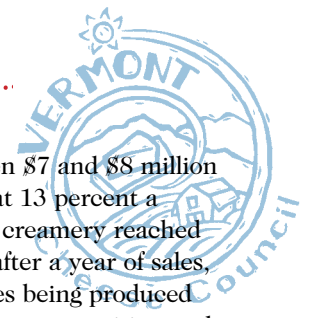
The 24th annual conference of the American Cheese Society, entitled Achieving Sustainability, was held in Burlington, Vermont in August. This conference brought together cheesemakers, retailers, distributors, teachers, and enthusiasts from across North America and Europe to celebrate the enthusiasm for American specialty cheese. Education seminars at the conference covered subjects from cheese making to the art of aging

cheese. A Chef's Cheese Cook-off; a national cheese competition, multiple social events and pre-conference tours to farms and cheese factories in Vermont rounded out the event.

An international panel of judges was assembled to judge those cheese entered into competition on both aesthetic and technical qualities. Unlike other cheese competitions, where cheeses are graded down for technical defects, the American Cheese Society's goal is to give

positive recognition to those cheeses that are of the highest quality in their aesthetic evaluation such as their flavor, aroma and texture in addition to their technical evaluation.

Vermont cheesemakers had a strong showing at the competition, coming in second only to Wisconsin with first place winners. At the end of the day, 41 awards were presented to Vermont producers including ten 1st place, nineteen 2nd place and twelve 3rd place ribbons. Cabot Creamery led Vermont producers with four each 1st and 2nd place ribbons and three 3rd place finishes. Vermont Butter & Cheese won seven ribbons overall. See page 5 for a complete list of Vermont award winners.



# Expansion News:

## *More cheese, please*

- **Blue Ledge Farm** in Leicester, has graduated to a 150-gallon pasteurizer after starting with a 15-gallon pasteurizer and moving up to a 35-gallon model in five years of making cheese. Blue Ledge made 18,000 pounds of cheese last year and expects to make 20,000 pounds this year, according to Co-Owners Hannah Sessions and Greg Bernhardt.
- In the Northeast Kingdom town of Greensboro, **Jasper Hill Farm** cheesemakers expects to produce 75,000 pounds of cheese this year, an increase of 250% over the past two years. Owners Andy and Mateo Kehler, who are brothers, are now in the process of growing their business through construction of a new cheese aging facility. Jasper Hill has been the recipient of a \$400,000 loan from the town of Greensboro to facilitate the project for which construction is already underway. This \$2.9 million dollar, 22,000 square foot cave and aging facility will be known as “The Cellars.” Here, cheese from Jasper Hill as well as other participating cheesemakers will be aged, packaged and shipped — as much as a million pounds in a year. Jasper Hill has already embarked on successful collaborations in aging the cheese of other cheesemakers. Their partnership with Cabot Clothbound Cheddar netted the pair a Best of Show award at the 2006 American Cheese Society meeting. They are also ripening cheese for **Grafton Village Cheese, Dancing Cow Farm, Twig Farm, Crowley Cheese, Plymouth Cheese Co, Crawford Family Farm, Neighborly Farms** and **Bonnieview Farm.**

- **Doc’s Leap** in the northern village of Bakersfield started with 10 goats in 2000 and has grown to 60 animals, 45 of which are milked. Sales are growing by 30 percent a year, said George van Vlaanderen, who runs the organic operation with his wife, Kristan Doolan. The couple last year completed a renovation that doubled the size of their facility with a new milking parlor and milk storage area. Van Vlaanderen just left his job as a high school teacher to run the business full time alongside Doolan.
- After three years of planning, financing and construction, **Vermont Butter & Cheese Company** last summer added a 3,500-square-foot new Aged Cheese addition to their current cheese plant in Websterville. This one kind state-of-the-art creamery has combined American, French and Canadian technology to make a line of soft ripened goat cheeses called Bonne Bouche, Bijou, Coupole and a new product called French Crottin. A visitor’s gallery welcomes cheese fans for a self-guided tour and tasting.

In the 20 years since VB&C began, sales have gone from \$16,000 a

year to between \$7 and \$8 million now, growing at 13 percent a year. The new creamery reached “break-even” after a year of sales, and the cheeses being produced have already won recognition and awards at prestigious competition like the US Championship Cheese Contest, and the American Cheese Society competition. At the 2007 Summer New York Fancy Food Show, Bonne Bouche was named the Winner of the “Outstanding Cheese or Dairy Product” category.

- **Spring Brook Farm** in Reading, Vermont broke ground in early September on a new cheese house dedicated to the production of Tarentaise Cheese under the direction of John and Janine Putnam of Thistle Hill Farm in Pomfret.. The process will be that of Thistle Hill Farm Tarentaise, but there will be two 1,000 liter copper vats turning simultaneously. Aging will be on site in an attached cave. It will be a true farmstead operation, according to John Putnam, as the feed, cows and milk and cheese will all be produced on the farm. Production at the new facility is expected to begin in May of 2008. Thistle Hill Farm will also continue to produce its Tarentaise at their Pomfret site. Overall, production of this multi-prize winning cheese is expected to triple.

— Excerpted in part from “Cheesemakers hustle to keep up” by Leslie Wright, *Burlington Free Press*, July 2007



*At right: The new Vermont Butter & Cheese Company Creamery. At left, their award-winning Bonne Bouche.*



# Vermont Institute of Artisan Cheese

## Upcoming Courses

**T**he Vermont Institute of Artisan Cheese is located on the campus of The University of Vermont in Burlington. The Institute, the country's first comprehensive center devoted to artisan cheese, will provide education, research, technical services, and public outreach. Here is a partial listing of what is offered in the coming months:

### **Artisan Cheesemaking Practices: Spanish Cheeses**

*December 3-5, 2007, 8:30am-4:30pm*

This course is an intensive three-day short course focused on artisan practices used in Spain to produce a variety of traditional and innovative cheeses. The course combines interactive lectures with strong hands on experience. Our special guests and international dairy specialists are Dr. Francisco Pérez Elortondo, from the University of Country Vasque and technical adviser for Idiazábal cheese (PDO); and Alfonso Zamora, a Master Cheesemaker with degrees in Food Technology and Chemistry and owner of IBAR Cheeses. Participants will learn how to make three different varieties of cheeses: a blue cheese, a soft variety with a natural rind and a semi hard cheese and have the opportunity to gather feedback from the experts about technical issues with their cheese. Fee: \$715.00

### **Spanish Cheese and Wine Pairing**

*December 4, 2007, 6 pm-9 pm*

Join VIAC's special guests from Spain for an evening of tasting and education in the traditional cheeses and wines of Spain. Guides for the evening will introduce participants to the diversity and history of Spanish cheeses, the traditions behind the

production of these traditional and innovative Spanish cheeses. The cheeses will be paired with spectacular Spanish wines from different regions of the country. Firehouse Gallery. Fee: \$45.00

### **Essential Principles and Practices of Cheesemaking**

*February 4-6, 2008, 8:30am-4:30pm*

This three-day course is divided into two-parts. The first part introduces the participants to the different families of cheese, and the basic principles of cheese manufacturing and aging. The second part includes practical hands on demonstrations in making two different varieties of cheese (a fresh acid-coagulated cheese and a bloomy rind cheese) the basics of quality control and assurance. Wrapping up the course, the instructors will discuss practical approaches for setting up an outside laboratory and routine testing program. Fee: \$715

### **Quality and Chemistry of Milk**

*February 7, 2008, 8:30am-4:30pm*

This one-day course will offer knowledge about how characteristics of the raw material (milk) affect the manufacture and quality of cheese and other dairy products such as yogurt. How characteristics of the major milk components changes due to animal origin, stage of lactation, feeding, storage conditions and how heat treatment's affects the manufacture and quality of the final product. Also, covered will be the physical properties of milk, enzymes characteristics and the microbiological aspects necessities to produce cheese and dairy products with high quality standards. Fee: \$255

### **Hygiene and Food Safety in Cheesemaking**

*February 8, 2008, 8:30am-4:30pm*

This one day course will explore hazards of a biological nature which are capable of causing food borne illnesses if present in cheese. Not only will these hazards be identified, but their source and control during the process of cheese production will be explored. Topics addressing the control of these hazards will include good manufacturing practices, cleaning and sanitizing issues and temperature (i.e. heat treatment). Physical and chemical hazards in cheese will also be addressed with emphasis on the identification and eradication of potential sources of those hazards. Fee: \$255

*For more information and to register, contact: Jody Farnham, Program Coordinator for VIAC, 255 Carrigan Wing Building, The University of Vermont, 109 Carrigan Drive, Burlington, VT 05405-0044, call (802) 656-8300, or visit <http://nutrition.uvm.edu/viac/>*

*I thoroughly enjoyed the ACS held in Vermont this year. I found the caliber of speakers and topics covered this year at ACS to be exceptional. It seems continue to fine tune as each year passes. The reception at the breeding barn at Shelburne Farms was an absolute incredible turnout of some of the finest cheeses being produced in the country all displayed in their glory, all under the same roof, and what a roof it was! The ambience was unforgettable as were the cheeses and producers themselves. This conference goes down as the best I have attended yet. Thank you.*

*—Tristan Ambrose, Fromagère, Metropolitan Market, Seattle, WA*



# 2007 Results at ACS Competition

## **Bonnieview Farm, Craftsbury Common, Vt.**

- 2nd place—Mossend Blue (category: Blue-Veined, Sheep's Milk)
- 2nd place—Ewe's Feta (category: Feta, Sheep's Milk)

## **Cabot Creamery Cooperative, Cabot, Vt.**

- 1st place—Cabot 3 Year Old Cheddar (category: Cheddars/Aged 3-4 Years)
- 1st place—Cabot Unsalted Butter (category: Butters/Unsalted, Cow's Milk)
- 1st place—Cabot Salted Butter (category: Butters/Salted, Cow's Milk)
- 1st place—Cabot Crème Fraiche (category: Cultured Milk Products, Crème Fraiche, Cow's Milk)
- 2nd place—Cabot Clothbound Cheddar (w/Jasper Hill)(category: Cheddars/Aged 1-2 Years)
- 2nd place—Cabot Select Cheddar (category: Cheddars/Aged <1 Year)
- 2nd place—Cabot Whey Cream Butter (category: Butters/Salted, Cow's Milk)
- 2nd place—Cabot 75% Reduced Fat Cheddar (category: Fat Free and Low Fat Cheeses)
- 3rd place—Cabot Private Stock Cheddar (category: Cheddars/Aged 1-2 Years)
- 3rd place—Cabot Vintage Choice Cheddar (category: Cheddars/Aged 2-3 Years)
- 3rd place—Cabot 83 Unsalted Butter (category: Butters/Unsalted, Cow's Milk)

## **Champlain Valley Creamery, Vergennes, Vt.**

- 2nd place—Organic Champlain Triple (category: Triple Crème Soft Ripened)

## **Crowley Cheese, Mount Holly, Vt.**

- 3rd place—Colby Mild (category: Colby/Cow's Milk)

## **Franklin Foods, Enosburg Falls, Vt.**

- 1st place—Hahn's Yogurt & Cream Cheese (category: Cultured Products, Cow's Milk)
- 2nd place—Hahn's Yogurt & Cream Cheese Blueberry Dream (category:

- Low Fat, Flavored)
- 2nd place—Vermont Gourmet Blue Cheese & Chive (category: Cheese Spreads, Flavor Added)

## **Grafton Village Cheese Company, Grafton, Vt.**

- 3rd place—Maple Smoked Cheddar (category: Smoked Cheddars)

## **Jasper Hill Farm, Greensboro, Vt.**

- 2nd place—Bayley Hazen Blue (category: Farmstead Cheeses/Open Category, Cow's Milk)
- 2nd place—Cabot Clothbound Cheddar (w/Cabot)(category: Cheddars/Aged 1-2 Years)

## **Maplebrook Farm, Mount Holly, Vt.**

- 3rd place—Smoked Mozzarella (category: Smoked Cheeses, Italian Styles)

## **Neighborhood Farms of Vermont, Randolph Center, Vt.**

- 1st place—Organic Colby (category: Colby, Cow's Milk)

## **Shelburne Farms, Shelburne, Vt.**

- 1st place—Shelburne Farms Smoked Farmhouse Cheddar (category: Smoked Cheddars)

## **Thistle Hill Farm, North Pomfret, Vt.**

- 2nd place—Tarentaise (category: Farmstead Cheeses, Aged >90 days)

## **Twig Farm, West Cornwall, Vt.**

- 3rd place—Twig Farm Square Cheese (category: Farmstead Cheeses, Goat's Milk)

## **Vermont Butter & Cheese Company, Webster, Vt.**

- 1st place—Vermont Fresh Crottin (category: Fresh Goat's Milk Cheeses, Open Category)
- 2nd place—Vermont Creamery Goat Cheese "Roasted Red Pepper" (category: Fresh Goat's Milk Cheeses, Flavor Added)
- 2nd place—Crème Fraiche (category: Cultured Milk Products, Crème Fraiche, Cow's Milk)
- 2nd place—Vermont Cultured Butter Unsalted (category: Butters/Unsalted, Cow's Milk)

- 2nd place—Vermont Bijou (category: Aged Goat's Milk Cheese, Open Category)
- 3rd place—Vermont Quark (category: Cultured Milk Products, Fromage Blanc & Quark)
- 3rd place—Vermont Cultured Butter Lightly Salted (category: Butters, Salted, Cow's Milk)

## **Vermont Shepherd, Putney, Vt.**

- 1st place—Vermont Shepherd (category: Farmstead Cheeses, Sheep's Milk)

## **Willow Hill Farm, Milton, Vt.**

- 2nd place—Alderbrook (category: Soft-Ripened Cheeses, Sheep's or Mixed Milks)
- 2nd place—Sheep Yogurt (category: Cultured Milk Products, Sheep's Milk)
- 3rd place—Vermont Brebis (category: Soft-Ripened Cheeses, Sheep's or Mixed Milks)

## **Woodcock Farm, Weston, Vt.**

- 2nd place—Timberdoodle (category: American-Made/Int'l Style, Open Category, Sheep's Milk)
- 2nd place—West River Feta (category: Feta Cheeses, Sheep's Milk)
- 3rd place—Magic Mountain (category: Farmstead Sheep's Milk Cheese)

## **Woodstock Water Buffalo Company, South Woodstock, Vt.**

- 1st place—Buffalo Mozzarella - Ovalini (category: Italian Type Cheeses, Fresh Mozzarella Types)

*To me it's just amazing that within the last few years, specialty cheese have grown so rapidly. I thought the meeting in Burlington was educational, and it was good to hear the feedback and experience of some of the speakers. As a distributor this conference has good networking opportunities in a casual setting.*

— Dominique Fourcin, Director of Specialty Cheeses, Peterson Company, Auburn, WA



# The American Cheese Society

## Vermont's 2007 American Cheese Society Blue Ribbon Winners

*Vermont cheesemakers had an impressive showing at the American Cheese Society 2007 competition including ten First Prize winners, shown here.*

### **Buffalo Mozzarella - Ovaline Woodstock Water Buffalo Company**

The Buffalo Mozzarella of Woodstock Water Buffalo Company, one of only two water buffalo dairies in the U.S. making authentic buffalo mozzarella, is made in the same fashion as the great Italian mozzarella di bufala, by their Italian trained Vermont Artisans. Making small batches of fresh mozzarella at their state-of-the-art facility in South Woodstock, VT, enables their cheesemakers to pay attention to each and every phase of the process. Fresh cheeses, such as buffalo mozzarella, have a life cycle measured in days. Woodstock's Water Buffalo Mozzarella is first offered to consumers at the beginning of its life cycle when it is firm and mild in flavor. As the cheese ages, the center becomes soft and creamy with a little extra tang. The special characteristics of fresh buffalo mozzarella make it the perfect ingredient for traditional Mediterranean dishes like caprese salad, pizza, pasta, and vegetable dishes.

#### *Where to find it:*

Woodstock Water Buffalo Mozzarella is available year round at natural food



stores and specialty shops in Vermont. It is also available at select locations in Boston and New York City. For more information please visit the website [www.woodstockwaterbuffalo.com](http://www.woodstockwaterbuffalo.com).

### **Hahn's Yogurt & Cream Cheese A product of Franklin Foods**

The award-winning Hahn's Yogurt & Cream Cheese is at the forefront of modern probiotic dairy technology and the patented approved process blends premium cream cheese and real non-fat yogurt into a delicious spread. Made from fresh milk not treated with synthetic growth hormones, the Hahn's patented approved process allows the live and active yogurt cultures to help boost immunity and promote digestive wellness.

#### *Where to find it:*

For more information on where to find this award winning spreadable cheese, visit [www.hahnscheese.com](http://www.hahnscheese.com).



### **Vermont Fresh Crottin Vermont Butter & Cheese Company**

Vermont Fresh Crottin is a younger, lighter version of Vermont Butter & Cheese Company's Bijou, their acclaimed



aged goat cheese. They wrap the cheese just after it is shaped by hand and skip the aging process to deliver a fresh, slightly floral, lemony and creamy cheese. In 2007, Vermont Fresh Crottin also won Best of Class at the U.S. Championship Cheese Contest.

#### *Where to find it:*

VB&C products are found in specialty food stores, cheese shops, supermarkets, and natural food coops. To find the location nearest you, visit VB&C's web site and enter your zip code. <http://www.vtbutterandcheeseco.com/atTheMarket.php>

You can also buy VB&C products on-line through Artisanal Cheese Center, Murray's Cheese or Igourmet Specialty Products



**Shelburne Farms Smoked Farmhouse Cheddar**

**Shelburne Farms**

This 6-9 month cheddar is smoked to perfection over hickory wood by the Monks of New Skeet Farm, a monastic community located one-half hour northwest of Bennington, Vermont in upstate New York. The smoked cheddar which offers rich, savory flavors that evoke an open wood fire, is hand made at Shelburne Farms from the fresh, raw milk of our Brown Swiss cows as is all Shelburne Farms cheddars.

*Where to find it:*

Shelburne Farms Smoked Farmhouse Cheddar is available at their retail store the Farm, as well as on their web site ([www.shelburnefarms.org](http://www.shelburnefarms.org)), and at finer retail outlets in and outside of Vermont.

**Vermont Shepherd Farmstead Cheese Vermont Shepherd**

Vermont Shepherd's flagship, award-winning cheese was first created in 1993. It is the oldest and most well known of the country's sheep milk cheeses. The flavor is smooth and creamy; the flavor rich and earthy, with hints of clover, wild mint and thyme. Made from their farm's unpasteurized sheep's milk, Vermont Shepherd is a seasonal cheese, it is only made during Vermont's warmer months, when their sheep are grazing the pastures



and fields. Available August through April. Aged 3-6 months.

*Where to find it:*

Vermont Shepherd is available throughout Vermont as well as in major cities in the northeast. It can also be ordered on-line at [www.vermont-shepherd.com/eform.html](http://www.vermont-shepherd.com/eform.html).

**Organic Colby Neighborly Farms of Vermont**

Colby cheese, is a member of the cheddar family and considered a cousin of Monterey Jack. Colby was created by Joseph F. Steinwand in 1885 in Colby, Wisconsin. Neighborly Farm's Organic version of Colby is mild, almost sweet with nutty overtones.

*Where to find it:*

Neighborly Farm cheese can be purchased right at the farm and at Natural Food stores and Co-ops throughout New England, New York, Pennsylvania and California. To find a location near you, visit <http://www.neighborlyfarms.com/locations.html>.

Bob Eddy/First Light Studios



**Cabot 3 year old Cheddar Cabot Cooperative Creamery**

Cabot's newest extra sharp cheddar is a chip off the ol' award-winning block, featuring the legendary texture and nuanced sharpness for which Cabot is known in a random-weight, 2-lb block. The farmers who own Cabot are honored to receive a blue ribbon for Cabot 3 Year Old Cheddar in its first ACS Contest appearance.



**Cabot Unsalted and Salted Butter Cabot Cooperative Creamery**

Fresh cream and expert churning are the secrets to Cabot's creamery butters, which are available in both retail and foodservice sizes. Cabot butters are repeat winner's of ACS blue ribbons.

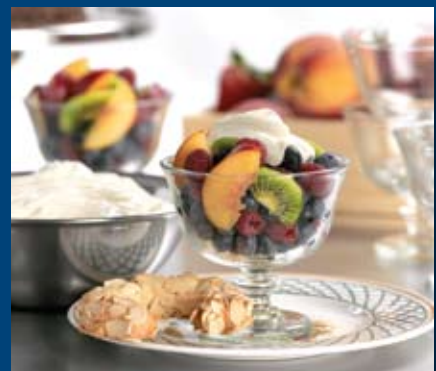


**Cabot Creme Fraiche Cabot Cooperative Creamery**

Cabot provides the perfect match of texture and tartness for this culinary staple, available in foodservice sizes. Introduced in 2005, Cabot Creme Fraiche has won the ACS blue ribbon two-years running.

*Where to find it:*

Cabot products are available coast to coast in major grocery chains and specialty shops. You can also purchase Cabot cheese at outlets located in Cabot, Quechee and Waterbury, Vermont as well as on line at <https://www.shopcabot.com/quickBuy.php>.





# A View from the Podium

*One Vermont cheesemaker's experience at ACS*

*By Linda Dimmick,  
Neighborly Farms*

The day before the Conference actually got underway, we were one of four Vermont cheesemakers included on a pre-conference tour and one of only two farmstead tours. We had a great time hosting the ACS folks, about 80 people came by bus to see our organic farmstead operation in Randolph Center.

I really enjoyed showing people around; they were so interested! Unlike the tourist who typically visits here, I was talking to many farmers and many cheesemakers who knew something about our business, lifestyle and process already – so I couldn't fudge on answering their knowledgeable questions! One funny moment happened when Paula Lambert from the Mozzarella Company in Texas asked me where my support came from in the beginning when we started this operation, and I replied that I had called her my first year for help! I had found her name in the ACS member book and knew she was making fresh mozzarella which I was also making. I don't think she remembered me calling her years ago, but it was good for a laugh. Another woman from Alabama who makes feta did remember me calling her that year though! Meeting them both face to face was an unexpected pleasure.

When we actually got to the conference and it was my turn to take the podium, I was nervous. Basically, I told the story of our



*Linda and Robert Dimmick of Neighborly Farms, just minutes after winning a Blue Ribbon for their Organic Colby.*

farm, showing many pictures of our operations as well as charts that explained how we finally reaching our break-even point on the farm after 6 1/2 years in operation. Our session was interesting because the three presenters represented cow, sheep, and goat cheesemakers and

were surprisingly different from one another. At our farm, we hire a lot of outside labor, while one of our co-presenters relies heavily on volunteer labor from their family. Our audience was very interested in our personal stories and what motivated us to want to make cheese. They asked lots of good questions.

When it came time for the awards, we were thrilled and honored to win first place for our Colby! We have a distributor that has been raving about this cheese to us for the last three years, so when we won he said he wasn't surprised. I remarked to my cheese consultant how close ours tasted to the Wisconsin colby that took second and she said it was because we were both making it exactly as it should be made.

All in all, the ACS experience was a whirlwind but a wonderful experience for my husband and I. It is so important to get off the farm periodically and reflect on what it is that you are doing and accomplishing. It gives you that boost to go back, put in the long days, and continually perfect your product.

*The ACS was a wonderful event. Our Vermont cheesemakers did a great job of showcasing their cheeses picking up a record number of awards for their efforts – 41 wins and 10 first places. It seems we're well on our way to fulfilling Allison Hooper's prediction's that Vermont would become to cheese what the Napa Valley has become to wine. The visitors I spoke with enjoyed the conference immensely and commented on the great collaboration and cooperation that exists here in Vermont among and between the cheesemakers and the state. We recognize the importance of value-added to our dairy industry. On-farm cheese, as well as cheese from our bigger producers, is bringing the Vermont dairy industry to buyers, restaurants, and citizens across the country.*

— Roger Allbee, Secretary, Vermont Department of Agriculture



## Dairies of Distinction

The Vermont Department of Agriculture has come out with its 2007 list of Dairies of Distinction. There are 170 Dairy of Distinction dairy farms in Vermont and these farms were recognized with a luncheon on August 30, 2007 at the Champlain Valley Fair. The Vermont Dairy of Distinction Program awards were developed to recognize farms that maintain a well-kept farmstead. Those VCC members who have received this prestigious recognition include: **Willow Hill Farm**, Milton; **Shelburne Farms**, Shelburne; **Lakes End Cheeses**, Alburg; **Taylor Farm**, Londonderry; **Thistle Hill Farm**, Pomfret; and **Woodstock Water Buffalo Co.**, Woodstock.



*Shelburne Farms*

- **Green Mountain Blue Cheese's** Brother Laurent, a raw cow's milk, washed-rind, Muenster-style cheese with a Canadian strong amber ale, called Seigneuriale.
- The buttery, natural rind Bayley Hazen Blue from **Jasper Hill Farms** with Shakespeare Stout from Oregon.

Participants were delighted with the experience and the pairing.

ACS attendee Shane Feirstein from Portland, Oregon said he had attended many such pairings while working for Murray's Cheese Shop in New York City. He gave these choices very high marks, concluding "I was blown away." The session also received favorable coverage in an article written by Ann Cortisoz, which appeared in the August 8 edition of *The Boston Globe*.

## Pairing Cheese and Beer

One of the most popular sessions at ACS featured the pairing of Vermont cheeses with beers from across North America. Brewmaster Garrett Oliver from Brooklyn Brewery along with Matt Jennings from Farmstead, Inc., in Providence, Rhode Island and Dennis D'Amico from The University of Vermont took participants through a delicious journey to taste and savor four paired beers and cheeses, contending that it is beer, not wine, that marries best with cheese. The pairings were:

- **Vermont Butter & Cheese Company's** ash coated semi-soft goat's milk cheese, Bonne Bouche, with a Belgian inspired strong golden ale from Brooklyn Brewery called Local 1.
- The semi-firm, alpine style Ascutney Mountain from **Cobb Hill Cheese** with Old Brown Dog, a full-bodied, well hopped English style Brown ale.

## Update on UVM Raw Milk Study

A study completed by The University of Vermont in the summer of 2006 evaluated the overall milk quality and prevalence of four target pathogens including *Listeria monocytogenes*, *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Salmonella* spp., and *Escherichia coli* O157:H7 in raw milk destined for cheesemaking in Vermont. Raw milk samples were collected weekly (June-September) from 11 Vermont farmstead cheese operations manufacturing raw and/or pasteurized milk cheese from cow (5), goat (4) and sheep's (2) milk.

The findings of this study indicate that the majority of raw milk intended for cheesemaking is of high microbiological quality. Although pathogenic microorganisms were detected in farmstead raw milk, the incidence is low in comparison to other surveys and population levels are extremely low. It is, however, apparent in the variation from farm to farm, regardless of species, that some operations practice more strict

hygienic controls and additional efforts are needed on others. Overall these data form a basis for determining microbiologic quality standards for the farmstead cheese industry. Furthermore results of this study form part of an exposure assessment and risk reduction plan to promote continuous production of microbiologically safe artisan cheese.

Copies of the final manuscript will be made available through The Vermont Institute of Arisan Cheese at The University of Vermont following official publication.

### Vermont Cheese Council Officers, 2007

**President:**

Jon Wright, Taylor Farm

**Vice President:**

Laini Fondiller, Lazy Lady Farm

**Treasurer:**

Mark Fischer, Woodcock Farm

**Secretary:**

Wendy Brewer, Grafton Village Cheese



## SMALL BITES

The Boucher Family Farm, makers of **Green Mountain Blue Cheese**, is in the preliminary phase of an on-farm manure and crop digester (methane-powered electricity plant). It will power all three family homes on the farm, the barns and buildings, and still have plenty to sell to the utility (632 kw per hour). Excess heat from the generator will be used to heat homes and buildings, and provide enough after that to run a greenhouse. The project, which employs a German design, was recently featured in the Summer 2007, Vermont Electric Co-op newsletter, and is supposed to be the first of its kind in the United States.



**Cabot Cooperative Creamery's** results at the 2006-2007 World Championship Cheese Contest in the Mild, Medium, Sharp and Extra Sharp Cheddar categories included two 1st place, one 2nd place and one 3rd place awards. Cabot captured five of the twelve total cheddar trophies, with only one other competitor earning as many as two.



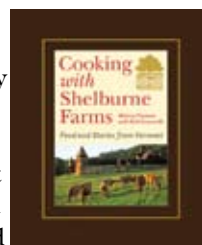
Vermont's capital city, Montpelier, hosted a Fall Art Walk which featured fine Vermont cheeses at a number of art venue along with fine art. This self-guided tour through historic downtown Montpelier included over 20 venues including galleries, stores, restaurants, and government buildings. Participating VCC cheese makers were, **Taylor Farm, Cabot Creamery, Woodcock Farm, Grafton Village Cheese, Jasper Hill Farm, Maplebrook Farm, Vermont Butter & Cheese Company, Blythedale Farm, Shelburne Farms** and **Neighborly Farms**.



Franklin Foods has secured a contract to provide its innovative Hahn's Yogurt & Cream Cheese Spread to the school meals program of New York City — the largest school district in the United States. In NYC, it will be available to 1.1 million students. Rocco Cardinale, Director of Marketing for Franklin Foods said of the contract, "It is company-changing." The award winning spread, a patented blend of real yogurt and cream cheese has 60% less fat, 33% less sodium and 33% fewer calories than traditional cream cheese. The spread is also being made available to schools in Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine. A second patent for the product was also recently approved. In September, Franklin Foods was featured in a New England Cable News segment regarding the success with Hahn's Yogurt & Cream Cheese and the NYC School System.



**Shelburne Farms** new cookbook, *Cooking With Shelburne Farms* brings to life the working landscape of Vermont and of the Farm itself—from the smoky steam of the sugarhouse after the sap starts running to the sweet, milky aroma of the daily cheesemaking process. The 100 recipes included offer a feast for the senses and the palate with a positive message about why and how we can make a difference through what we eat. It is written by Melissa Pasanen, a Vermont-based freelance journalist specializing in food and agriculture and



Rick Gencarelli, the head chef at the Inn at Shelburne Farms. For more information, contact the publisher, Viking, a division of Penguin Books, <http://us.penguingroup.com>.

### Other Members in the News

In June, food products from **Consider Bardwell Farm** was the focus of a piece on the *New York Times* Wednesday Food Section. The piece, complete with photo, included discussion of two of their cheeses – Dorset, an aged washed-rind cow's milk cheese and Manchester, a smooth, mountain-style goat cheese.

John & Jeannine Putnam, co-owner/cheesemakers from **Thistle Hill Farm** were interviewed in August for both Vermont Public Radio and National Public Radio. Listen to the interviews about Thistle Hill Farm's journey toward creation of their award winning Tarentaise, on their website: <http://www.thistle-hillfarm.com/>.

**Maplebrook Farm** in Bennington has announced that it will be introducing new to their fresh mozzarella line this Fall: Ciliegine \_ oz., Bocconcini 2 oz., and the Ovaline 4 oz. The company reports that there has already been a tremendous amount of interest into the new products. Newspapers, including the *Boston Globe*, *Bennington Banner* and *Rutland Herald* have run stories on the fast-growing and award-winning Maplebrook Farm. The closed circuit RSN TV (shown at ski areas in VT) has included Maplebrook in their segment called "Made in Vermont", which will run from October 2007 to April 2008.



*I always enjoy the conference but it was special in Vermont. The country side in the lake region was beautiful .You have great terroir for cheesemaking and I loved seeing all the small dairy farms like our area of Wisconsin. It reminded me of home and all the fast changes taking place in the worlds we live in. It made me happy to see the people of Vermont that are still farming and making a rural life living, and making a living, on the land.The conference was the biggest ever and I was glad to see so many Canadian Company's represented. All the French being spoken made it a truly international event.*

*The best part for me is being in a room with 1200 different cheeses .....and people being excited about all of them.... it was a amazing event....*

— Master Cheesemaker Sid Cook, Carr Valley Cheese Company, La Ville, WI

## Join the Vermont Cheese Council!

We welcome membership and donations to the Vermont Cheese Council. Principal (voting) cheesemaking members will be listed on our Vermont Cheese Trail map and web site, while Associate Members and Friends will receive our semi-annual newsletter and notice of Vermont cheese events.

### Membership options:

- Principal (Voting) Member:** Representing a licensed Vermont cheese making company. Dues based on your gross annual sales. Please see our website for more info: [www.vtcheese.com/membership](http://www.vtcheese.com/membership).
- Associate (Non-voting) Member:** A company or retail store that supplies materials for the manufacture, packaging, distribution or consumption of cheese made by Vermont cheese companies.  
\$75.00 per calendar year
- Friends of the Vermont Cheese Council:** Supporting The Vermont Cheese Council's dedication and advancement of Vermont Cheese:  
 \$25     \$50.     \$75.     Other \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Website \_\_\_\_\_

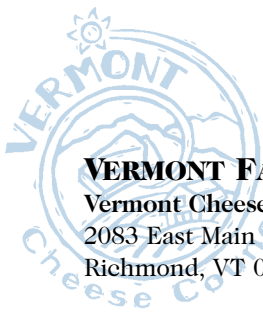
Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Fax Number \_\_\_\_\_

*Please make checks payable to: The Vermont Cheese Council  
 Mail to: c/o Ellen Ogden, P.O. Box 1007 Manchester Village, VT 05254  
 More info: 866.261.8595 / e-mail: [Info@Vtcheese.com](mailto:Info@Vtcheese.com)*

## Vermont Cheese Council Member Cheesemakers

- Blue Ledge Farm
- Blythedale Farm
- Bonnieview Farm
- Cabot Creamery
- Champlain Valley Creamery
- Cobb Hill Cheese
- Consider Bardwell Farm
- Crawford Family Farm
- Crowley Cheese Inc.
- Dancing Cow Farm
- Doe's Leap Goat Farm
- Franklin Foods
- Frog City Cheese
- Grafton Village Cheese Co.
- Green Mountain Blue Cheese
- Hope Farm Sheep Cheese
- Jasper Hill Farm
- Jericho Hill Farm
- La Fromagerie du Royaume
- Lake's End Cheeses
- Lazy Lady Farm
- Maplebrook Farm
- Neighborly Farms
- Orb Weaver Farm
- Peaked Mountain Farm
- Shelburne Farms
- Taylor Farm
- Thistle Hill Farm
- Three Owls Sheep Dairy
- Twig Farm
- Vermont Butter & Cheese Co.
- Vermont Milk Company
- Vermont Shepherd
- West River Creamery
- Willow Hill Farm
- Woodcock Farm
- Woodstock Water Buffalo Co.



**VERMONT FARM BUREAU**  
Vermont Cheese Council  
2083 East Main Street  
Richmond, VT 05477

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Barre, VT  
05641

## Calendar of Upcoming Events

*November 15 & 16, 2007*

### **The Northeast Dairy Women's Conference**

*Albany, NY*

For more information: [c-creed@state.pa.us](mailto:c-creed@state.pa.us)

*Fall/Winter 2007/2008*

### **Vermont Institute of Artisan Cheeses**

*At The University of Vermont, Burlington, VT*

Courses for novice and expert cheesemakers.

For more information, call Jody Farnham at (802) 656-8300  
or visit <http://nutrition.uvm.edu/viac/>.

### *The Vermont Cheese Council*

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food professionals.

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Richmond, VT 05477

866-261-8595

[www.vtcheese.com](http://www.vtcheese.com)

*"The highlight of my trip was the tour of Jasper Hill Farm. It is incredible to witness two true visionaries, Mateo and Andy, with their families taking cheese to the next level in this country. Everytime I sell a piece of Bayley Hazen or Constant Bliss I can share the story with our customers "your are supporting the future of American Artisan Cheese!"*

—Tristan Ambrose, Fromagère,  
at the Metropolitan Market in Seattle, Washington

