

# Vermont Cheese Council

Spring 2007 • Vol. 7, Issue 1

## August Finds ACS in Vermont

*“Sustainability” is Theme*

Marshall Webb

*The Breeder's Barn at Shelburne Farms — scene of ACS' Opening Night.*



**B**urlington, Vermont will play host to an estimated 1,000 cheesemakers, retailers, distributors and cheese enthusiasts as the American Cheese Society's Annual Conference is held this year from August 1 – 5 at the Sheraton Hotel and Convention Center. In this issue of the Vermont Cheese Council newsletter, you'll find ways to make the most of your visit to Vermont and its heralded cheesemakers, before, during and after ACS. Officially kicking off the conference is the opening reception, appropriately named Celebrating Vermont's Bounty, to be held Thursday August 2 from 6:30 to 9:00 P.M. at Shelburne Farms. Shuttle busses from the Sheraton will transfer conference folks to Shelburne Farm's majestic Breeder's Barn

where 50-60 vendors will offer attendees an assortment of Vermont's finest cheeses as well as other agricultural products from the Green Mountain state including maple, beef, horticulture and chocolate — all showcased in a traditional, open air Farmers' Market venue.

This “Green Event” — where only biodegradable paper products will be used — will include live music, a multi-media presentation of Vermont's working landscape and guest appearances by notables including (we hope) Vermont Governor Jim Douglas. Lead sponsors for the event include the Vermont Cheese Council, the Vermont Agency of Agriculture and the State of Vermont. For a complete overview of the entire conference, visit the ACS web site [www.cheesesociety.org](http://www.cheesesociety.org).

*continued on page 6*



## President's Message

# The Things We Do For Love

**I**t is April 12th as I sit to write this. Often by this time of year, we are spreading manure, fixing fences, making a steady supply of cheese and responding to countless other demands on our lives.

Today, things are relatively quiet. It has snowed about eight inches and it continues to come down at a steady pace. I look from my office window up to my new cow barn built last fall. The scene could easily be December. A good day to reflect on where we've been and where we're going

I have had the great privilege during the past two and a half years to serve as the President of a small renegade group of cheese makers known as the Vermont Cheese Council. Now numbering about 38 producers, this group had very humble beginnings 10 years ago with a small handful of visionaries. Among that group was someone familiar to many of you and currently the President of The American Cheese Society, Allison Hooper. I first heard of Allison through an article in *Vermont Life Magazine*. The article described a remarkable young woman and her simple beginnings with the Vermont Butter & Cheese Company. Of course, the article made it sound so easy. It was partly this story which inspired me to embark on my own cheese making adventures at Taylor Farm. I was not guided, so much by a grand

business plan in those early days, as by the love and inspiration that I felt from people like Allison. I sense that this is true for many of us. Our better judgment would have told us to pursue other vocations but our love carried us on.

Many of us have become seasoned enough now to shake our heads in wonder as we listen to younger folks inspired by what we do. We cast knowing glances back and forth amongst us, knowing that our words will not guide them, they must learn from their own experiences. We know all too well the relentless chore schedule, the irregularities of the seasons, concerns of marketing and the pressures of tough business decisions. Yet, if we stop for a moment and reflect back, we can recapture that naive, unbridled enthusiasm that propelled us on. That sense that our wildest dreams are possible and that with hard work and true love, we can endure!

As we sample an exceptional batch of cheese made from our land, our cows, our milk and share it with our friends, we remember that these are all the thing we do for love!

I look forward to seeing you all in August if not sooner!

Take care,

— Jon Wright, Taylor Farm



VCC President Jon Wright and daughter Leah enjoy an early spring picnic.



# Seminar on Proper Care and Handling of Cheese

*By Christopher Coutant Wainhouse,  
Marketing Director,  
Provisions International Ltd.*

**I**n early December, over 130 New England cheesemakers, retailers, and chefs met at Provisions International in White River Junction, Vermont for a daylong workshop that they sponsored jointly with the Vermont Cheese Council. Provisions, a fine foods distributor, sell a great deal of cheese and promotes Vermont cheese in particular. After years of discussion with the makers of the cheese and the customers who buy it, a meeting of the two to begin a dialogue seemed desirable. Three issues were clear priorities; cost, consistency, and care of cheese.

Provisions has listened to cheesemakers frustrated by what they perceived was mishandling of their product by retailers: their beloved cheese, badly wrapped, under marketed, neglected. Retailers complained of product inconsistency, soaring pricing, insufficient labeling, and lack of information about the cheese they put on their beloved shelves. But how much did one group really communicate with the other? What did the retailer or chef know about the making of the cheese, about its journey from animal to store, about the costs involved in transforming milk into cheese, about the conditions necessary to keep the cheese at its peak? How much does the average small Vermont cheesemaker know about the realities and limitations of the retail marketplace or the restaurant kitchen?

## Caring for Cheese

Rubiner's Cheese Mongers and Grocers is one of the most beautiful retail cheese stores in New England. Matthew Rubiner, the featured morning speaker shared his marketing ideas and cheese handling practices, with practical advice about display and sampling. Matthew says sampled cheese always sells very well, more than covering the amount given away. He contends that sampling is the most important marketing tool available to cheese retailers. If a cheese is on its way to being over-ripe or dry, it is sampled out and usually disappears in a day or two instead of becoming a loss.

The care and handling of cheese done at Rubiner's Cheesemongers is labor intensive. All cheese is cut-to-order. Matthew wraps, unwraps, wipes and coddles each piece of cheese at least once a day. Each and every cheese is examined by hand and eye when it is delivered and then dealt with according to its condition. Cheese that looks like it is drying out is wrapped in damp cloth. Cheese that is getting too ripe is left out in the air to dry. If a cheese develops an unwanted mold it is brushed off or washed off with diluted vinegar.

Cheesemakers love the care that their cheese receives at Rubiner's. Other retailers, especially those in larger coops where staffing and space are major factors, react with dismay to the thought of the labor and training involved. Most regional retailers have a cash and carry set up or only cut-to-order a small number of special cheeses. But the use of sampling and the development of clear and informative signs are relatively labor free and could benefit

any type of store.

Many voiced the opinion that both retailers and restaurants needed to embrace the limited availability and seasonality of local farmstead cheese. Better to offer a small quantity of well-cared-for seasonal cheese than try to carry all types of cheese all year long. In the afternoon panel discussion, Sam Hayward of Portland, Maine's Fore Street Restaurant talked passionately about his love of local, artisanal food, especially cheese. Through diligent communication with customers, by the restaurant staff and in their printed menu, Fore Street has established a strong and popular cheese board. By enthusiastically embracing the local and seasonal, a wide ranging and eclectic cheese plate can be developed that changes throughout the year.

## Pricing of Cheese

"There is a big difference between expensive cheese and overpriced cheese," said Matthew Rubiner. Retailers should talk with customers about the time, money, and effort necessary to turn out a wheel of artisan cheese. Vermont cheesemaker Willow Smart of Willow Hill Farm talked about the frustration of having to justify the cost of her award winning Willow Hill Sheep Cheese. Does the retailer know that the average yield of milk for sheep is 2 to 5 pounds of milk per day? Goats produce 10 to 20 pounds per day. Cows produce an average of 60 pounds per day. This discrepancy can hugely affect the cost of cheese. Cheese makers and other panel members encouraged retailers and chefs to visit the farms

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## Seminar on Care and Handling of Cheese

*continued from page 3*

that produce the cheese they sell. The visual impact of seeing how much physical work is involved in making cheese and the benefits of personal contact cannot be over emphasized. When the retailer or chef can talk about the farms, animals, and individuals involved in the making of cheese, that cheese may not then seem overpriced. Mateo Kehler of Jasper Hill Farm asked how many consumers, or retailers for that matter, think about the fact that cheese makers as a group have almost no health care protection or workman's compensation?

### Consistency of Cheese

Tyler Hawes of Larkin Cold Storage brought up the issue of communication between cheese makers and their customers regarding consistency. A cheese that has arrived in a certain state of ripeness may appear in a new batch looking completely different. The cheesemaker has a responsibility to communicate the reason for these changes to the customer. Perhaps it rained all week or a spell of extremely hot weather affected milk quality. Or perhaps the maker has run out of a more aged version of their cheese and is substituting a younger. They need to make a telephone call or enclose an information sheet that explains the reasons for the difference.

Retailers need to educate their customers concerning the qualities of seasonal locally made cheese. After one store put stickers on a particular cheese that said, 'mold does not affect the quality of this cheese', sales rose perceptibly. Retailers and chefs can feel confident about a cheese, even if its qualities vary from time to time, if they know the cheesemaker will provide them with information they can then convey to the consumer.

## NEW MEMBER

### Maplebrook Farm

*Deriving Success from Old World Inspiration*

**N**ew VCC member Maplebrook Farm has experienced near meteoric success by artisan cheese standards. It was just four years ago when Johann Englert, a retired teacher from Boston, tasted the hand-made mozzarella made by Michael Scheps, the son of the owner of Al Ducci's Italian Pantry in Manchester, and a third generation cheesemaker in his own right. Johann describes the encounter as a "40-year flashback."

The texture and taste of Michael's cheese brought back welcome memories of the hand-made mozzarella she and her Venetian mother procured from small shops in Italy while Johann was a college student. Ever the entrepreneur, Johann set out to see if there was a market for this delicious product in Boston where she lived at the time. Armed with 10 balls of Mozzarella and a conviction that others would respond, Johann headed east. The response was overwhelmingly positive. From those first 10, was born the business that

is now Maplebrook Farm based in Bennington, Vermont. Overseeing a staff of 16 in 2006, Johann and Michael's undertaking produced 304,000 pounds of handmade, hand wrapped Mountain Mozzarella Cheese – 10 to 12 balls at a time. The cheese, devoid of any additives and made with 100% BGH-free milk from Vermont cows, is finished in a light sea salt bath; a few batches are lightly smoked each week over cherry-wood chips. Demand for the cheese which is not stocked, but made fresh to order, has grown fast, requiring the business to expand into a second production facility in Hardwick, Vermont. Also expanded is their product line which now includes Hand-Dipped Ricotta and Cheddar Cheese Curd Snacks in addition to their Mountain Mozzarella. Maplebrook Farm Cheeses can now be found in select locations up and down the east coast, including many Whole Foods Markets.

For more information on retail locations, visit their web site: [www.mountainmozzarella.com](http://www.mountainmozzarella.com).



*Maplebrook Farm's Mountain Mozzarella*



# Awards and Accolades Here and Abroad

## U.S. Cheese Championship

The nation's oldest and largest cheese and butter competition, the 2007 United States Championship Cheese Contest, hosted by the Wisconsin Cheesemakers Association, was held in March. Vermont Cheesemakers who went home winners included **Cabot Creamery**, **Franklin Foods** and **Vermont Butter & Cheese Company**. Cabot and Vermont Butter & Cheese both went home with a Best of Class ribbon. Overall results as follows:

### **Cheddar, 'Medium'**

BEST OF CLASS

Ken Hall

**Cabot Creamery Cooperative**

Cabot, VT

*Vermont cheddar cheese, medium*

### **Reduced Fat Cheese & Lowfat Cheese**

SECOND AWARD

Fred Hart

**Cabot Creamery Cooperative**

Cabot, VT

*Vermont jalapeno reduced fat cheddar*

THIRD AWARD

Team Franklin Foods

**Franklin Foods**

Enosburg Falls, VT

Strawberries & cream yogurt & cream cheese spread

### **Soft Goat's Milk Cheeses**

BEST OF CLASS

Adeline Folley

**Vermont Butter & Cheese Company**

Websterville, VT

*Vermont fresh crottin*

SECOND AWARD

Don La Rose

**Vermont Butter & Cheese Company**

Websterville, VT

*Vermont chèvre*

### **Semi-soft Goat's Milk Cheeses**

BEST OF CLASS

Allison Hooper

**Vermont Butter & Cheese Company**

Websterville, VT

*Bonne bouche*

### **Retail Packaging**

SECOND AWARD

Adeline Folley

**Vermont Butter & Cheese Company**

Websterville, VT

*Bonne Bouche*

## World Cheese Awards

Also held in March, The World Cheese Awards gave out awards in 60 categories recognizing what they consider to be "the best cheeses of their kind in the world" at their London-based

competition. Vermont's sole gold went to **Vermont Butter & Cheese's** fresh, soft goat's milk cheese, **Vermont Chevre**. Vermont Butter & Cheese also captured a silver. **Cabot Creamery** walked away with two silver awards in the vintage cheddar category.

### **Soft Goats' Milk Cheese Plain: Fresh**

GOLD

*Vermont Chèvre*

**Vermont Butter & Cheese Company**

SILVER

*Vermont Creamy Goat Cheese*

**Vermont Butter & Cheese Company**

### **Vintage Cheddar made in a creamery before 10/31/05**

SILVER

*Cabot Old School Cheddar, 5 yrs.*

**Cabot Creamery Cooperative**

SILVER

*Cabot Vintage Choice Cheddar*

**Cabot Creamery Cooperative**

## Vermont's Highest Milk Quality Awards

Awards were handed out at the Vermont Farm Show in January to those Vermont's farms with the demonstrated highest quality milk. All of Vermont's 1,140 dairy farms strive to produce high quality milk. The production of high quality milk begins with sound animal husbandry and the cleanliness of the cow and continues through the milking process including the cleanliness and maintenance of the milking and milk storage equipment. To maintain the production of high quality milk, attention to detail is a must with many farms monitoring milk quality on a daily basis. The production of quality milk takes exceptional management and is a 24 hour per day, 7 days a week for 365 day effort.

Two Farmstead Cheesemakers, and VCC members, were among those recognized with Certificates of Nomination. They are: **Blythdale Farm** in Corinth and **Jasper Hill** in Greensboro. Jasper Hill was also recognized as third runner up for Highest Milk Quality Award & Lowest Standard Plate Count.



# Meet Our Cheesemakers:

## *Taste Our Cheese Before, During and After ACS*

### Pre-Conference Tours

Two, organized pre-conference tours are being offered this year for an additional fee. Tours will take place from 8 am – 2 pm on Wednesday, August 1; boxed lunches as well as transportation is provided. Refer to the Vermont Cheese Trail Map included in this issue. Tour #1 is the Creamery Tour with stops at Vermont Butter & Cheese Company in Websterville and the Cabot Cooperative Creamery in Cabot. Tour #2 is the Farmstead Cheese Tour with stops at Woodstock Water Buffalo in S. Woodstock and Neighborly Farms in Randolph. Refer to the Cheese Trail Map included in this issue for relative travel distances.

### Tours on Your Own from ACS

If you've got down time in your conference schedule and want to make a visit to a reasonably close-by cheesemaker, we suggest Willow Hill Farm in Milton or Shelburne Farms, site of the opening night reception, in Shelburne. Again, refer to the map for locations.

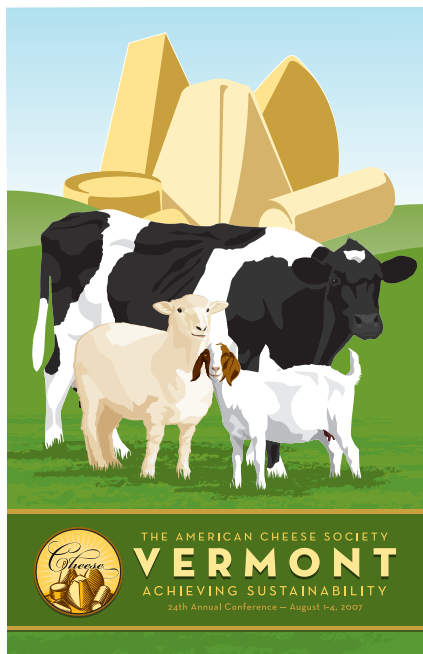
### Touring as You Travel

For those who plan to drive to ACS, there are numerous potential cheesemaking stops along the way. For details on hours of operations, consult the map enclosed in the issue and, for best results, call ahead.

### Coming from Boston:

Once you cross into Vermont from New Hampshire as you travel up Rt 89, options for easy stops include:

- Thistle Hill Farm, North Pomfret
- Neighborly Farms, Randolph



- Vermont Butter & Cheese Company, Websterville
- Cabot Creamery, Cabot (or outlets in Quechee and Waterbury)

### Coming from New York City area:

After entering Vermont on Route 91, your stop-over options include:

- Peaked Mountain Farm, Townshend
- Grafton Village Cheese Company
- Taylor Farm, Londonderry
- Woodcock Farm, Weston
- Crowley Cheese, Healdville
- Frog City Cheese at the Calvin Coolidge Homestead, Plymouth Notch

### Coming from Albany:

The Route 7 corridor from Bennington to Burlington offers multiple stops along the way:

- Consider Bardwell Farm, West Pawlett

- Crawford Family Farm, Whiting
- Blue Ledge Farm, Leicester
- Dancing Cow Cheese, Bridport
- Twig Farm, West Cornwall
- Orb Weaver Farm, New Haven
- Shelburne Farms, Shelburne

### Coming from Canada:

If you're driving down from Canada, consider the following stops off Route 89:

- Lake's End Cheese, Alburg
- Green Mountain Blue Cheese, Highgate Center
- Willow Hill Farm, Milton

### Optional but Recommended:

#### August 3:

#### Friday evening's Spirit of Ethan Allen Dinner Cruise

Join with other ACS attendees for the ultimate view of Burlington's waterfront. Enjoy the breathtaking views of the Green Mountains and the Adirondack Mountains from the Spirit of Ethan Allen as you cruise beautiful Lake Champlain. In addition to a memorable dining experience with regional specialties including pears and dungeness crabs all the way from Oregon, the evening offers beer, wine and a sumptuous assortment of, what else – cheese?

### After ACS:

#### Cheese Sale:

#### Sunday August 5, 10 am.

Don't miss out on the chance to get some of the best and most exclusive cheeses in the country at rock bottom prices. The sale will be held at the Conference site beginning at 10 am on Sunday.



**Vermont Fresh Network Forum:  
Sunday, August 5th, 5 pm**

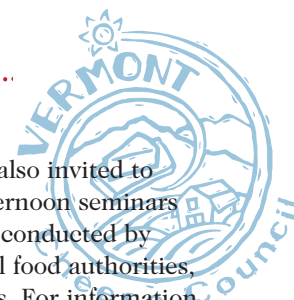
For those who can arrange to stay in Vermont for the whole day, plan to attend the Annual Vermont Fresh Network Forum, held at the spectacular Shelburne Farms Coach Barn. The Forum Program includes:

- Inspiring keynote speaker Gary

Nabhan, PhD, renowned author, lecturer and conservation scientist.

- Delicious Walk-Around Dinner featuring fresh, local, seasonal ingredients by 20 of the best chefs and farmers in Vermont!
- And an ice cream bash brought by Strafford Organic Creamery.

Attendees are also invited to participate in afternoon seminars on related topics conducted by local and national food authorities, chefs and growers. For information or to procure tickets, email [info@vermontfresh.net](mailto:info@vermontfresh.net) or contact Meghan Sheridan 802-434-2000.



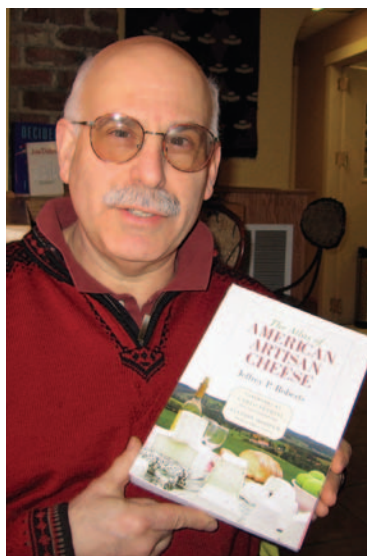
## CHEESE BOOKS

### New Cheese Atlas Covers the US

**J**eff Roberts has been a life-long “foodie.” Growing up outside of New York City, Jeff recalls the central role that good, fresh

foods played in his home. After stints in the Navy, at an arboretum, as associate dean at the University of Pennsylvania Veterinary School, and with the Vermont Land Trust, Roberts decided to turn his interest in food into a career. He recalls, in 1995, the first time he tasted cheese made by Lazy Lady Cheesemaker Laini Fondiller at the Montpelier Farmer’s Market. It was a “eureka” moment when Laini announced “I made it.” Since then, Jeff has done everything possible to support and promote the hand-made cheeses of Vermont. He has been active in Slow Food USA as a director and treasurer of the national board and a Northeast Regional Governor. He co-chaired “Artisan Cheeses of

America” at Cheese 2001 and 2003 and the US presence at Salone del Gusto (Turin) 2002 and 2004. He is an organizer of Slow Food USA’s



*Author Jeff Roberts holds a copy of The Atlas of American Artisan Cheese.*

American Raw Milk Cheese Presidium. As co-founder and principal consultant to the Vermont Institute for Artisan Cheese at the University of Vermont Jeff has produced a comprehensive, 450 page tomes entitled The Atlas of American Artisan Cheese. This fully illustrated guide to contemporary artisan cheeses and cheese-makers is designed to familiarize consumers, retailers, restaurateurs, and food professionals

with the breadth and quality of American products. Available for sale at ACS, the book can also be purchased by contacting Jon-Mikel Gates, [jgates@chelseagreen.com](mailto:jgates@chelseagreen.com) at Chelsea Green Publishing, 802-295-6300 x111.

### Other Vermont Cheese Books Also Available at ACS

*The Vermont Cheese Book* by Ellen Ecker Ogden is an exploration of the Vermont landscape and the cheeses that put Vermont on the global epicurean map. Divided into county, each chapter includes detailed maps and history of the farms for cheese lovers to visit and savor the terrior of the cheese produced by the 35 VCC members. Available in bookstores throughout New England or visit [www.vermontcheesebook.com](http://www.vermontcheesebook.com). Ogden, the new VCC Coordinator, can be reached at 866-261-8595

*American Farmstead Cheese: The Complete Guide to Making and Selling Artisan Cheeses*, by Paul Kindstedt PhD, University of Vermont (UVM) Professor and Co-director of the Institute for Artisan Cheese

Please join these and other cheese book authors at a book signing “corner” in the lobby at the ACS conference.



# Members and Retail in the News

**Green Mountain Blue Cheese's** Goredawnzola was featured in the Better Homes and Gardens holiday issue focused on appetizers. The article, "Get Happy; Think Blue" featured recipes using blue cheeses and a pictorial of eight American blue cheeses, of which Goredawnzola was one.

Mark Fischer of **Woodcock Farm Cheese**

graced the cover of the Brattleboro Food Coop's November issue. The issue hailed Woodcock Farm as "producer of the month."



The January 12 edition of *Cheese Reporter* featured a full-page story on Tarentaise: the award-winning Alpine style cheese of **Thistle Hill Farm**.

**Blue Ledge Farm** was among the cheesemakers mentioned in "the people and places section" in the Friday, February 23 edition of *The Rutland Herald*. The item was headlined, "Artists Pursue a Better Cheese".

**Taylor Farm** and its award winning cheese was the subject of the article "Great Gouda!" which appeared in the February issue of *Farming Magazine*.

The Hardwick, Vermont cheese-making operation of **Maplebrook Farm** and their collaboration with new VCC member **Vermont Milk Company** earned a front page story in the Sunday, April 7th edition of central Vermont's *Rutland Herald*.

## Retail News From the Farm

Many of Vermont's cheesemakers have taken to offering cheeses other than their own for sale on premises. Among those are:

### Lakes' End Cheeses, Alburgh

Joanne James of Lake's End Cheeses reports that the planned expansion of a larger retail store plus an Ice Cream stand should be completed by early summer with a grand opening held in June 2007. The Champlain Lake shore front operation will be showcasing an expanded selection of Vermont cheeses for sale – "as many as we can fit into the showcase," says Joanne.

### Cabot Creamery, Cabot, Waterbury and Quechee

All three of Cabot's retail stores carry cheeses from other Vermont cheesemakers including Taylor Farm, Vermont Butter & Cheese Company, Neighborly Farms, Blyethdale Farms, Grafton Village Cheese Company, Vermont Gourmet (Franklin Foods), Crowley Cheese, Maplebrook Farm and Frog City Cheese.

Locations and hours are:

#### CABOT VISITORS CENTER

Open daily, 9AM to 5PM

Guided tour fee is \$2, children under 12 free. 800-837-4261.

#### CABOT ANNEX, WATERBURY

Open daily, 9AM to 6PM  
802-244-6334.

#### CABOT QUECHEE STORE

Open daily, 9:30AM to 5:30PM.  
802-295-1180.

### Frog City Cheese, Plymouth Notch

Frog City Cheese is a family owned and operated cheese-manufacturing business located at the Plymouth

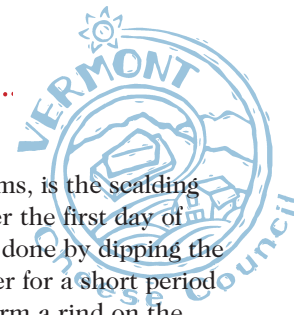
Cheese Factory on the President Calvin Coolidge Historic Site in Plymouth Notch, Vermont. Since October 2004, cheesemakers are once again producing granular curd cheese which was made by the Coolidge family for generation At the retail shop other Vermont cheeses are available a space permits, including selections from VCC cheesemaking members: Vermont Butter & Cheese Company, Taylor Farm, Grafton Village Cheese Company, Cabot Creamery, Shelburne Farm and Blythedale Farm.

The factory, where visitors can watch the cheese making process through several viewing windows, and the retail store are open every day from 9:30-5:00 until the end of October. Call 802-672-3650, [www.frogcitycheese.com](http://www.frogcitycheese.com)

### Taylor Farm, Londonderry

Located at the bend of the road, right on Route 11 in Londonderry, Taylor Farm has been making hand-made Gouda — a creamy, semi-firm cheese which one of Manhattan's finest cheese shops calls, "better than Holland's best" since 1992. The past few years they have also been carrying cheeses from other Vermont cheesemakers – in their expanded retail center. Currently, you can find cheeses from the following producers: Grafton Village Cheese, Cabot Creamery, Cobb Hill, Consider Bardwell, Crawford Family Farm, Crowley Cheese, Dancing Cow, Frog City Cheese, Green Mountain Blue Cheese, Lazy Lady, Orb Weaver, Shelburne Farms, Thistle Hill, Vermont Butter & Cheese Company, West River Creamery, Woodcock Farm and Woodstock Water Buffalo as well as a number of other cheeses from throughout New England. Call (802) 824-5690, or visit [www.taylorfarmvermont.com](http://www.taylorfarmvermont.com)





## Shelburne Farms Cheesemaker Visits England

**S**helburne Farms Assistant Cheesemaker Brent Seward, brought back to Vermont a lot of good information about cheese making from his recent trip to Somerset County in England. Brent spent a week at Montgomery Cheese makers, a third generation cheddar maker in Somerset county. This visit marked a continuation of a long relationship with Montgomery's that began when Shelburne's first cheese makers, Marshall Webb and

Bill Clapp, spent time there learning the basics of making cheddar in the early 1980s. Brent's time in England included spending a day making cheese with four Montgomery cheese makers, touring other cheddar makers in the area including Keens and Westcombe, and also getting a chance to see a state of the art culture laboratory that supplies bulk starter cultures to many small cheddar makers. One of the techniques he learned, and will apply

at Shelburne Farms, is the scalding of the cheese after the first day of pressing. This is done by dipping the wheel in hot water for a short period of time to help form a rind on the cheese and seal any cracks that may have developed. At Shelburne Farms, they will also start pressing their cloth wrapped wheels for three days instead of one to help develop a solid rind and to press the muslin cloth into the cheese for added protection from cheese mites and other damage during the aging process. Brent's educational trip concluded with a day in London and visiting Neal's Yard Dairy to taste some great cheeses from around the country.

## Update: The Farmstead Cheese Risk Reduction Project

**D**uring February-March, 2007 approximately 70 cheesemakers from New England and New York state attended informational seminars about HACCP planning and verification for small-scale artisanal and farmstead cheesemaking. The turnout exceeded expectation, particularly in the New England region. Based on surveys, 24 cheesemakers have expressed interest in participating in a pilot project for the next two years.

Starting this May-June, the 24 cheesemakers will receive training in developing HACCP-type plans for their cheese operations. Participants are committed to their plan development; sampling and testing

milk, cheese, and the environment of their creameries to verify that their plans are working, and keeping records of all activities. Peter Dixon, the technical field person for the project will provide the training. Linda Brushett, the cooperative development specialist will be researching the most effective way to organize the pilot project participants into an association that can administer the verification system and provide training and testing services for new members.

For more information, contact Peter Dixon, PO Box 993, Putney, VT 05346, 802-387-4041, [dixonpeter@mac.com](mailto:dixonpeter@mac.com).

## Courses from The Vermont Institute for Artisan Cheeses (VIAC)

**F**all is an ideal time to visit Vermont. Plan ahead to take advantage of upcoming cheese classes at VIAC, located on the campus of the University of Vermont.

### October:

- 1:** Starter Cultures (1 day)
- 2-3:** Cheese Chemistry (2 days)
- 4:** Basic Sensory Evaluation (1 day)

### November 5-7:

Artisan Cheese Practices:  
United States & Canada (3 days)

*For more information and to register, contact:*

Jody Farnham  
Program Coordinator for VIAC,  
255 Carrigan Wing Building/  
UVM, 109 Carrigan Drive,  
Burlington, VT 05405-0044.  
802-656-8300



*Vermont cheeses, as showcased at Provisions International.*



## SMALL BITES

On Saturday December 9th, and Sunday, December 10th, Sissy Hicks, chef and owner of the Dorset Inn hosted a wine and cheese event in her restaurant. In addition to showcasing individual cheeses to her many guests, Sissy created special dishes using Vermont cheeses like fondue, savory cheesecake and Panini. VCC participants included **Consider Bardwell Farm, Grafton Village Cheese, Green Mountain Blue Cheese, Shelburne Farms, Taylor Farm, Crawford Family Farm, Vermont Butter & Cheese Company** and **Woodcock Farm**.

**Urban Pastures**, an online database of small production cheese makers and their products is under development. The database will be a free resource and is searchable through in interactive map and an advanced search feature with the goal being to help consumers learn about new and different products and help grow the small production cheese industry. Vermont cheesemakers who have showed an interest in participating are Twig Farm, Willow Hill Farm and Thistle Hill Farm. For more information, contact Mark Goldman, UrbanPastures, Portland,

OR. mark@urbanpastures.com;  
503.922.3866 office.



The Discover New England 12th Annual New England Tourism Summit was held March 26-28 at the The Equinox Resort & Spa, Manchester, Vermont. The opening reception, held at nearby Orvis headquarters, was in partnership with Vermont Fresh Network. Among the Vermont cheesemakers showcased at the reception were **Cabot Creamery, Grafton Village Cheese, Shelburne Farms, Jasper Hill Farm, Consider Bardwell Farm, Crawford Family Farm, Blue Ledge Farm, Taylor Farm, Twig Farm, Woodcock Farm, Woodstock Water Buffalo, Orb Weaver, Frog City Cheese, and Maplebrook Farm**.



**Vermont Butter & Cheese Company** was the showcased Cheesemaker at Boston's famed restaurant L'Espalier for "Cheese Tuesdays" on April 3. Two days later, on April 5th, VB&C participated

in The Taste of the Nation — a 10-year-old event in the campaign against hunger. At this years' Boston Taste, there were over 1000 people attending and food and wine was served by 70 restaurants and 30 wineries. Recipients to the fund raiser include Share Our Strength and The Boston Food Bank.

The Vermont Hospitality Council, held its annual "Taste of Vermont" Legislative Reception Thursday evening, April 5th in Montpelier. VCC members who shared their wares included **Cabot Creamery, Vermont Butter & Cheese, Taylor Farm, Shelburne Farms, Lazy Lady Farms, Crawford Family Farms, Woodstock Water Buffalo, and Maplebrook Farms**.



Allison Hooper, **Vermont Butter & Cheese Company**, was honored to be invited to participate as a judge at the Concours de Paris on March 5. Hooper was only the second American (and the first American cheesemaker) to ever officiate as a judge at this 20-year-old competition.



On December 30, (l to r) Wendy and Jeff Brewer (**Grafton Village Cheese**) and David Phiney and Willow Smart (**Willow Hill Farm**) battled the elements to ride the gondola up to the highest restaurant at the summit of Mount Mansfield. There, Chef Jeff Egan paired wines with several cheeses from both Willow Hill and Grafton for a pre-New Year's celebration. Behind in the photo, you can see the snow bank outside was waist high!



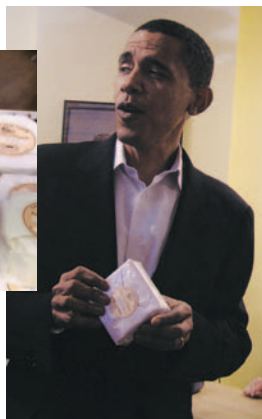
## New Cheese

*Intrepid, and ever-creative cheesemaker Laini Fondiller of **Lady Lazy Farm** has a new cheese in her retinue she calls "Barick Obama."*

*When asked how this name evolved, Laini said, "I was looking at it and thinking brick...brick ....block.....*

*brrrrick.....baaarick...oh my gosh.....barick obama".*

*The candidate, with a similar name, liked it in New Hampshire.*



## 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  
 Franklin Foods  
 Frog City Cheese  
 Grafton Village Cheese Co  
 Green Mountain Blue Cheese  
 Hope Farm Sheep Cheese  
 Jasper Hill Farm  
 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 Company  
 Vermont Milk Company  
 Vermont Shepherd  
 West River Creamery  
 Willow Hill Farm  
 Woodcock Farm  
 Woodstock Water Buffalo Company

## 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. Call for details.
- ☐ **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 \_\_\_\_\_

*The Vermont Cheese Council is a non-profit 501-C organization.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_  
 State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_  
 Website \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Fax Number \_\_\_\_\_

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





## VERMONT FARM BUREAU

Vermont Cheese Council  
2083 East Main Street  
Richmond, VT 05477

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## Calendar of Upcoming Events

*May 24, 2007*

### **Vermont Cheese and Chocolate Evening**

Shelburne Museum, Shelburne  
Contact Renee Compagna,  
(802) 985-3346 x3396

*June 1-3, 2007*

### **Strolling of the Heifers** (see caption below)

*June 15-17, 2007*

### **Stowe Festival**

*July 14, 2007*

### **Killington Festival**

*July 20-21:*

### **Vermont Brewer's Festival**

Burlington, Vermont  
Contact: Willie Docto  
vba@vermontbrewers.com

*August 2-5:*

### **American Cheese Society Annual Conference and Cheese Competition**

Contact: [www.cheesesociety.org](http://www.cheesesociety.org)

*August 5:*

### **Vermont Fresh Network**

Shelburne Farms, Shelburne  
Contact: Meghan Sheridan  
802-434-2000.

*September 15 & 16:*

### **Flynn Center, Fine Wine and Food Festival:**

Contact: Paula Roberts, Flynn  
Center: [proberts@flynncenter.org](mailto:proberts@flynncenter.org)

*September 23:*

### **Plymouth Cheese and Harvest Festival**

Plymouth  
Contact: Coolidge State Park,  
Bill Jenny 802-672-3773

*October 6 & 7:*

### **Autumn Harvest Festival**

Taylor Farm, Londonderry  
Contact: Jon Wright 802-824-5690

### *The Vermont Cheese Council*

*Newsletter* is published for  
food professionals.

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reprinting is encouraged.

*Contact:*

### **THE VERMONT CHEESE COUNCIL**

Ellen Ogden, Coordinator  
c/o Vermont Farm Bureau  
2083 East Main Street  
Richmond, VT 05477  
866-261-8595  
[www.vtcheese.com](http://www.vtcheese.com)



*June 1-3, 2007*

Victoria Peila, age 8, with Dreamer. Her six-year-old sister, Megan, walks Faith down Brattleboro's Main Street at the **Annual Strolling of the Heifers**, held this year June 1-3. The parade takes place on June 2. See the VCC booth at the Dairy Fest immediately following. For information, contact Orly Munzing 802-258-9177; [orly@sover.net](mailto:orly@sover.net)

