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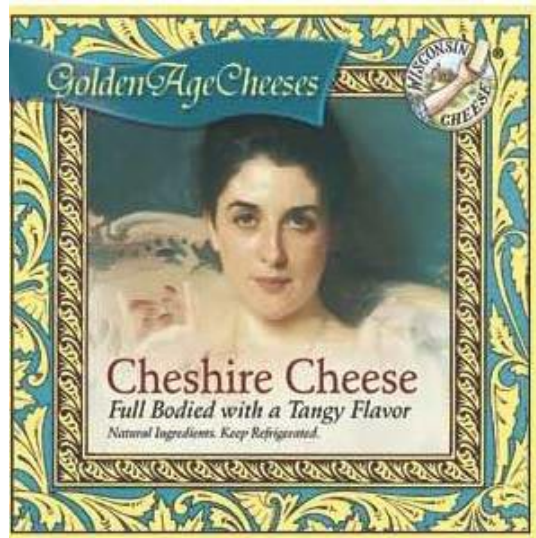
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1. Harmony Specialty Dairy Foods Unveils Golden Age Cheeses

A fifth generation Wisconsin dairy family crafting cheese from the milk of their own herd has launched a new line of English-style cow's milk cheeses.

Golden Age Cheeses, a line of four English-style cheeses, including: Cheshire, Double Gloucester, Caerphilly and Abergele, are produced by Harmony Specialty Dairy Foods, Stratford, Wis. The milk comes solely from the Bredl family's Harmony-Ho Dairy, resulting in a 'single farm cheese' with a consistent depth of flavor and richness in texture.

Wisconsin dairy producers Ralph and Sharon Bredl, along with their daughters Martine and Rachel, own and operate Harmony-Ho Holsteins - a 450 cow registered Holstein dairy. With the addition of daughter Martine to the Harmony-Ho management team in 2004, and in response to a changing economic environment, the Bredls decided to embark on a strategic change in direction – to pursue “value” rather than “volume.” Upon hearing of the closure of the “Cloverbelt” dairy plant near Edgar, the Bredls realized the plant represented a key element of their “value” search by providing the tool to process the milk from their dairy farm into high value, handcrafted, single farm cheeses. In May of 2007 the Bredls purchased the recently closed plant and established Harmony Speciality Dairy Foods, LLC. With the expert guidance of the former 'Cloverbelt' cheesemakers -- Gary Miller and Al Graveen -- the first vat of cheese was produced on June 13, 2007.



The goal of Harmony Specialty Dairy Foods, LLC is to produce cheeses only from the milk of the Bredl family dairy -- Harmony-Ho Holsteins. By producing a “single farm cheese,” the Bredls believe the consistency of flavor and texture profiles are greatly enhanced to the delight of both the cheesemaker and the customer. For more information about Golden Age Cheeses, visit:

<http://www.harmonyspecialty.com/products.html>

2. DBIC Monthly Message: Questions That Bear Repeating



This month, we hear from **Dan Strongin**, DBIC Client Strategy & Marketing Services. Dan provides us with **“Questions That Bear Repeating.”**

Too often, advice comes in the form of being told what to do, but more often, the thought process that led to good advice is more important than the advice itself. Like the adage, "give someone a fish and feed them for a day; teach them to fish and they eat for a lifetime," questions force you to think. More importantly, the quality of questions asked determines the quality of thought required in answering. Sometimes the same advice can be good in one situation, but bad in another. The questions that follow will help lead you to the kind of thinking that breeds success.

Marketing Your Product

1. Are you working from the outside in, meaning from the customer backwards, seeing through your customer's eyes? Who are your customers and what's in it for them? Build your marketing around the benefit and not the qualities.
2. Do you have a strategy? Are you using tools based on who your customers are and what they want?
3. Are you building momentum step-by-step through meet-and-greets and phone calls?
4. Do you travel to meet face to face? At some point all sales and marketing boils down to "putting the goods in your saddle-pack and riding into town."
5. Are you matching production to demand? Be market driven vs. supply driven. Supply-driven companies go out of business.

Chain of Distribution

1. Are you pulling product through to the consumer? It is not enough to sell out your back door. You must follow your products all the way through to the consumer, pulling the product through the distributor by finding them customers, and through their customers by doing demos and providing useful point of sale, especially to help train their service personnel.
2. Are you packaging well, or following the line of least resistance, i.e. whatever is available and cheap?
3. Labeling effectively: be sure to scream benefits on the back label, while using the front label to get attention. Consider actually taking a mock-up to the store, putting it on a piece of cheese and watching to see if people notice it. Remember that what you like is not as important as if it gets attention and tells who you are.
4. Are you invoicing on time?
5. Do you call customers on the 29th day of your 30-day terms to remind them payment is due?
6. Do you track all batches (to be ready)?

Remember, it's all about creating loyal, long-term customers. Build your brand!

3. Goat, Sheep & Mixed Milk Cheeses Take Top Honors at 2008 ACS

It's no secret goat, sheep and mixed milk cheeses have steadily increased in production and popularity in Wisconsin during the past decade. Nowhere was that trend more evident than in Chicago at July's prestigious American Cheese Society competition, as Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker Sid Cook, Carr Valley Cheese, took two of the three Best of Show winners out of 1,149 cheeses for a goat's milk cheddar and aged sheep's milk cheese.

Carr Valley captured a total of 18 ribbons, but took home top honors with Snow White Goat Cheddar and Second Runner-Up Best in Show with his Cave Aged Marisa. In fact, of the record-breaking 91 total awards Wisconsin claimed at the 2008 ACS Competition, more than one-third were for goat, sheep or mixed milk cheeses.

Wisconsin cheesemaker Al Bekkum is a prime example of the growing trend of creating American Original mixed milk cheeses. In his first showing at the competition for Nordic Creamery, Bekkum captured a Best of Class blue ribbon for Capriko, an artisan cheese made from goat and cow's milk, and took second for his American Original: Feddost, a blend of goat and cow's milk crafted with a curd infusion of cumin and cloves, a Norwegian flavor tradition. "I am speechless," Bekkum said moments after accepting his ribbons. "To take home two awards in my company's first year is very gratifying."

Hidden Springs Creamery cheesemaker Brenda Jensen, no stranger to the awards ceremony podium, beat her personal best by taking home six awards for her fresh and aged sheep's milk cheeses: Driftless and Ocooch Mountain. In addition, Natural Valley and Pasture Pride cheesemakers Tom Torkelson and Kevin Everhart captured another half dozen awards, four of which were for goat's milk cheeses: Guusto, Redstone Robust, Smoked Alpine and Goat Cheddar.

Meanwhile, Wisconsin Sheep Dairy Cooperative captured three awards for its Dante, Mona and Dante Lamb; Dreamfarm cheesemaker Diana Murphy took second for her Fresh Goat's Milk Cheese; Montchevre-Betin took three thirds for its goat's milk cheeses: Aged Crotin, Chevre in Blue, and its Fresh Goat Cheese Log in Lemon; and Cedar Grove Cheese won three awards, including second for its Goat Cheddar.



Wisconsin goat, sheep and mixed milk cheesemakers pictured top to bottom: Brenda Jensen, Hidden Springs Creamery, Sid Cook, Carr Valley Cheese, Diana Murphy, Dreamfarm, Al Bekkum & family, Nordic Creamery.

In all, Wisconsin cheesemakers captured more awards than any other state. For a complete list of all North American winners, visit: <http://www.cheesesociety.org/> Congratulations to all!

4. Industry News

- ❖ **Second Round of VADI Grants Now Open:** The Value Added Dairy Initiative Dairy Processor Grant program has opened its second round of grants. If you are involved with processing dairy products in Wisconsin, apply now. Applications are due Sept. 30. The program offers grant dollars to individuals or groups, businesses and organizations. A total of \$300,000 is available this year, with the maximum grant award per project being \$35,000. Eligible project expenses include working capital, marketing expenses, and professional services necessary to implement the project. Grants cannot be used to buy land, buildings, or equipment; pay indirect overhead costs; pay off existing debt; or for expenses such as lobbying and tuition. Details on the request for grant proposals and application materials are available at <http://www.datcp.state.wi.us/mktg/business/marketing/val-add/initiative/> or by calling Matt Lange, DATCP, at 608-224-5081.
- ❖ **Cheese Vat for Sale:** Holland's Family Cheese is selling its 396 gallon cheese vat, as the company plans to expand production and has ordered new equipment. For information, contact Marieke Penterman at 715-669-5230.



5. Upcoming Important Dates

For a complete listing of upcoming events, visit: www.dbicusa.org and click on Calendar of Events

- **Sept. 5: Wisconsin Specialty Cheese Institute Member Meeting. Cashton, Wis.**
The next WSCI meeting will be held at the Badger Crossing Pub & Eatery, 909 Front St., in Cashton at 10 a.m. Featured speaker is Scot Wall, Bank of Cashton. Wall led the creation of the community's green energy park and created the company, BEST Energies, Inc.. Prior to the meeting, a tour of K&K Cheese near Cashton will be available. For more information about the WSCI or how to join this member organization, contact Kathy Brown at 866-740-2180.
- **Oct. 11: Summer Goat Field Day. Mt. Horeb, Wis.**
The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture's Value-Added Dairy Initiative invites you to attend a goat farm field day on Oct. 11 at the Ethel and James Jenson farm in Mt. Horeb. Field days are a great opportunity to ask questions, share information, and learn how different farms operate. The event is free to the public but advance registration is required. For more information and to register, call 608-224-5121.

The **Dairy Business Innovation Center** offers technical assistance to dairy producers and processors in developing value-added dairy products, business planning and market development. For more information, visit www.dbicusa.org or contact Jeanne Carpenter at 608-358-7837, email: Jeanne@wordartisanllc.com.