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1. Otter Creek Organic Seasonal Cheddar Debuts With Four Seasonal Labels

A new Wisconsin farm cheese with a savvy label is preparing its market debut. Otter Creek Organic Seasonal Cheddar - made from milk produced by the Zimmer family dairy herd near Spring Green, Wis. - is currently in production at Cedar Grove Cheese in Plain, Wis. Master Cheesemaker Bob Wills and the Zimmer family are crafting cheese from milk produced during each of the four seasons and labeling it as spring, summer, fall and winter cheddar.



Gary and Rosie Zimmer started their Wisconsin farm in the 1970's, raising their children on the land and instilling in them an interest in agriculture and conservation. In 1994, Gary, Rosie and their son Nicholas bought Otter Creek Farm in the rolling hills of Spring Green. Originally a crop farm, the family decided to move into organic dairy and bought 40 dairy cows. Nicholas Zimmer and three other families now run Otter Creek Organic Farm, a 1,200 acre farmstead that includes 250 cows, pasture-raised beef and hogs, as well as free-range poultry.

The Zimmers are now turning their high quality milk into a high quality organic, pasture grazed, raw milk Cheddar cheese. Cheese is produced with milk during each season and labeled accordingly. For example, labels read: "**Spring** -- the cows that produced this cheese grazed on our Wisconsin pastures of clover, rye and green grasses." "**Summer**: the cows that produced this cheese grazed on Wisconsin pastures of mixed grass, young corn, sorghum, alfalfa and clover." "**Fall**: the cows that produced this cheese grazed on Wisconsin pastures of mature rye, alfalfa, clover & late season annuals." "**Winter**: the cows that produced this cheese were fed on fermented alfalfa and grasses from our Wisconsin pastures."

The seasonal cheddars will join a line of additional Otter Creek cheeses, including a Pesto Cheddar, which won a 3rd place award at the 2007 U.S. Championship Cheese Contest in the Flavored Hard Cheese category. Otter Creek organic cheeses and meats are marketed through the *Local Choice Farm Market* in downtown Spring Green, Wis., as well as in Midwest specialty stores. Visit <http://www.localchoicefarmmarket.com/index.html> to learn more.

2. DBIC Team Member Monthly Message: Andrea Neu



This month we hear from Andrea Neu, DBIC Client development Specialist. She discusses “Protecting Your Brand Assets.”

The U.S. cheese market has changed dramatically in the past 10 years with the addition of hundreds of wonderful “American Original” cheeses in the artisan, farmstead/farmhouse and specialty cheese categories. Entries into the American Cheese Society and U.S. Cheese Championship contests have been at record numbers with new categories for the entrants expanding each year. This is great news for small cheese plants in Wisconsin seeking to add value to their businesses and cheese lines, and also providing cheesemakers with new challenges and the creativity and pride that comes with creating exceptional proprietary cheeses. It’s what the “Art of Cheesemaking” is all about!

From a business and marketing perspective, it has also created a new segment of cheeses that require brand name development and protection, as well as hundreds of “fanciful” variety names that identify these unique cheeses that do not meet the Federal Standard of Identity for specific varieties. There is no longer a standard list of cheeses with definitions and guidelines. This creates a new opportunity for cheesemakers and marketers to select a unique name for their specific artisan cheese, as well as creating an exclusive brand name and logo that can be claimed as their own.

As that brand and new variety names are developed into a marketing plan, and they invest a great deal of time and monies for the development of this brand and product image, it should become increasingly clear that it is just a matter of good business practice to protect that investment by spending a little bit more time and dollars to utilize and register the names and marks/logos properly.

The DBIC strongly recommends our clients consistently place a TM after their brand and/or business name, as well as the unique variety names, when using those names, marks/logo type, on labels, packages and all marketing materials. This is a practice that the business—meaning all of its employees—should apply from the onset of creating a new product and brand, so they can prove the first date when marked goods and services were provided to others in the marketplace.

The following are a few of the frequently asked questions that the law firm of DeWitt Ross & Stevens (specialists in trademark and patent law in Madison, Wis.) answered during an excellent seminar recently conducted on this important business management topic:

- **What are trademarks, service marks?**
These are “marks”—words, symbols, packaging, or other matter which is publicly used to identify goods and services, and distinguish them from the goods and services of others. Trade names can serve as marks if they are used to identify and distinguish goods and services.
- **Do I need to register my mark?**
While registration isn’t mandatory, federal registration provides numerous benefits to the registrant that are not available for unregistered marks. It is generally far more difficult and expensive to protect a mark from infringement unless it’s federally registered.
- **Who can file a federal registration application for a mark?**
An application can only be filed by (or on behalf of) the owner of the mark—the party who controls the use of the mark. (Note: Because of the legalities involved, a trademark attorney is generally retained to prepare, at least some part, and file the application.) If you are interested in reading more answers and information from DeWitt, Ross & Stevens Law Firm, visit: <http://www.dewittross.com/>
- **Who provides registrations for marks?**
Federal registrations are granted by the U.S. Patent & Trademark Office (USPTO)—division of the U.S. Department of Commerce—when a proper registration application is filed. State registrations are

granted by trademark offices within state governments. These offices only decide issues of whether marks are registrable...issues of whether a mark is infringing another mark are decided by courts.

There are many other questions that a company must address regarding this important business procedure, and there is also a great deal of information at the USPTO website to help you start the registration process. www.uspto.gov/main/trademarks.htm

If you are interested in learning how to protect your brand assets, let the Dairy Business Innovation Center know, as we are always looking for business management workshop topics that will benefit our clients and the Wisconsin dairy industry.

3. Industry News

❖ **Food Artisans in Residence at Washington Island:**

Indulge your taste for all things food-related at The Washington Hotel Culinary School this summer when Food-Artisans-in-Residence share their food passions with visitors. Savor their creations and leave equipped with new cooking techniques and recipes to try at home. Anne Topham and Judy Borree of Fantôme Farm, Farmstead Goat Cheese, Ridgeway, Wis., will be featured on Monday, July 16, from 2 - 4 p.m. Fee is \$55 & includes wine pairings.



A six-course dinner featuring Fantôme Farm goat cheeses previews the class on Saturday, July 14 – cost is \$65. To reserve your spot, call The Washington Hotel at 920-847-2169. For a full schedule of summer classes taught by Wisconsin food artisans, visit www.thewashingtonhotel.com.

- ❖ **WMMB Debuts New Retail Toolboxes:** The Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board has developed a new line of nine Wisconsin Cheese Promotions to fit retailers' plans and messages. The new tools allow retailers to personalize POP materials, such as counter cards and recipe brochures with their logo. Themes include: New Store Openings; Italian; Cheese of the Month with 12 varieties for 12 months; Holiday; Hispanic Cheese theme; Award-winning cheeses; Grilling with Wisconsin Cheese; Big Cheese promotion and Meet the Wisconsin Cheese Expert. For more information, contact the WMMB at 608-836-8820.

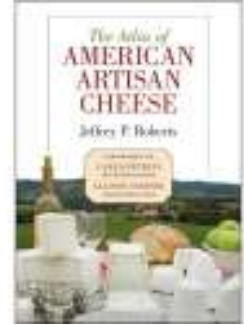
- ❖ **Living on the Wedge to Premiere in New York:** Living on the Wedge: Wisconsin's Dairy Artisans will premiere this week in New York at the NYC Food Film Festival. The showing will be on Friday, June 15 at 10 p.m. More info: <http://www.watertaxibeach.com/film/>

4. Beyond Wisconsin

A look at what's happening in the artisan & specialty cheese world:

- ❖ **New York:** Brian Keyser has been serving fine food it for almost a decade as a waiter at some of New York's top restaurants, most recently *The Modern*, where he ran the cheese program. Now he and Joe Farrell have opened *Casellula Cheese & Wine Café* at 401 West 52nd Street. About three dozen varieties of artisan cheeses will be available at a time. The menu incorporates artisan cheese into nearly every dish, from flatbread with cider-poached apples, bacon and Rogue Creamery blue cheese to lemon tart with pistachios and goat-cheese ice cream.

- ❖ **Vermont:** Jeffrey Roberts' new book: *Atlas of American Artisan Cheese* proclaims to be the first reference book of its kind. Organized by region and state, the Atlas highlights more than 350 of the best small-scale cheeses produced from cow, sheep, and goat milk in the United States. Roberts, who co-founded the Vermont Institute for Artisan Cheese at the University of Vermont, notes that 190 artisan cheesemakers have begun production since 2000, and cheesemakers are located in 43 states. According to Roberts, California is home to the most artisan cheesemakers, with 36; Vermont has the most per capita, with 34, while Wisconsin weighs in with 22 artisan producers. More info: <http://astore.amazon.com/forkbott-20/detail/1933392347>



5. Upcoming Important Dates

- **June 2007: June Dairy Month Breakfast on the Farm. Wisconsin - Statewide.**
June Dairy Month takes on a whole new dimension in Wisconsin, as more than 40 counties and dairy groups host annual breakfasts on local dairy farms throughout the month of June. For a complete listing of events statewide, visit the Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board website at: <http://www.wisdairy.com/SpecialOffers/jdm/totaldisplay.aspx>
- **August 1-4: The American Cheese Society Annual Conference. Burlington, Vermont**
Considered one of the world's most influential and prestigious competitions in recognizing the art of artisanal and specialty cheesemaking, the American Cheese Society's annual judging competition is held in conjunction with the American Cheese Society's 24th Annual Conference - held this year in beautiful Burlington, Vermont. Watch the ACS website for more announcements regarding conference schedules and competition entry dates: <http://cheesesociety.org/index.cfm>
- **August 21-22: Affinage - The Aging of Cheese Short Course. Madison, Wis.**
This course, offered by the Wisconsin Center for Dairy Research, will cover the art and science of aging cheeses to develop the texture, flavor and aroma of each unique finished cheese. This short course is intended for all cheesemakers interested in production of unique aged cheeses and for cheese affineurs that finish artisan or specialty cheeses. It is also of value to brokers and distributors handling artisan or specialty cheeses. Learn more by visit: <http://www.cdr.wisc.edu/courses/affinage07.html> or call Bill Wendorff at 608-263-2015.
- **November 13-15: Turning Chaos Into Control - Continental Style Cheeses. River Falls, Wis.**
This three-day conference is for cheesemakers who want to make artisanal cheeses. While Continental Style Cheese has many connotations to many people, it may mean a typical Edam or Gouda from the Netherlands, Saint-Paulin from France, or any other number of European style cheeses. In any case, the manufacturing technology is basically the same. Attendees will examine the most important steps in the cheese making process. Making small manipulations at critical times in the process can result in a unique cheese. Join Neville McNaughton - Consultant Cheesemaker and Rane May - University Wisconsin-River Falls, Dairy Specialist as conference coordinators for an enlightening technology session that can put you in control of your cheese making. More information: <http://www.uwrf.edu/food-science/institutes/artisinalCheese.html> or call 715-425-3704.

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, 608-358-7837.