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1. Italian Cream-Filled Fresh Mozzarella Reborn in Wisconsin at BelGioioso Cheese

A creamy fresh Italian cheese born in the Puglia region of southern Italy 30 years ago is today influencing a culinary revolution with top American chefs, thanks to a dedicated cheesemaker determined to resurrect a favorite delicacy of his youth. Cheesemaker Mimmo Bruno, born in Italy, and now a Wisconsin cheesemaker, was the first artisan in the United States to recreate Burrata, a cream-filled fresh mozzarella. Today, he handcrafts the Italian delicacy for BelGioioso Cheese in Denmark, Wis.

Derived from the Italian word for butter, Burrata (pronounced boor-AH-tah) is known for its creamy, soft center and rich flavor. A favorite of chefs and cheese connoisseurs, the cheese is finding a growing audience in the United States.

"Burrata is a very delicate cheese that must be made by hand – it's a labor of love," Bruno says. "Because it's filled with fresh cream, it must be very carefully handled. It's truly an artisan cheese."

Growing up in the Puglia region of Italy, Bruno remembers when the first local cheesemaker introduced Burrata in the 1970s. "It quickly became a regional favorite – everybody was soon trying to make it. But when I left Italy in 1986, Burrata was still very much a regional cheese – if you went 100 kilometers out of Puglia, no one knew what it was."

An entire new generation around the globe is now discovering Burrata, thanks to Bruno. A 30-year cheesemaker veteran, Bruno got his start at a local factory in Italy when he was 11 years old, scrubbing cheese vats and washing floors. Whenever he got the chance, he hovered around the veteran cheesemakers, watching and listening, and soon learned the trade. At 12 years old, he made his first vat of fresh mozzarella. "It was good – I didn't get fired," Bruno says with a smile. Soon he was making 2,000 lire a week, equivalent to \$1. The neighborhood cheese plant eventually became his after school destination, full-time summer job and "my home away from home."



After a career in the Italian army, Bruno set out for the United States and started making cheese in California, eventually owning two different cheese factories on the West Coast. In 2006, after he sold his second plant, Bruno began working for BelGioioso Cheese Inc., and has since stamped his trademark “Delizie Di Mimmo” translated to “Mimmo’s Delights” on the Burrata cheese he now handcrafts in Wisconsin.

BelGioioso’s Burrata lends itself to a wide range of menu applications. Made to order and available in 8-oz hand-formed balls packaged in water, the cheese makes a striking appetizer when cut into pieces and drizzled with olive oil and plated atop a nest of arugula greens. The Italian delicacy also makes for a unique alternative to buffalo mozzarella, whether it’s added to a bowl of hot pasta or added to flatbreads and specialty pizzas. For more information about BelGioioso Cheese and its specialty line of Italian cheeses, visit www.belgioioso.com.

2. DBIC Team Monthly Message: Jim Cisler & Norm Monsen

This month we hear from **Jim Cisler & Norm Monsen**, DBIC Co-Directors of Client Services and dairy development specialists for the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP). Jim & Norm discuss “**The Importance of Food Safety.**”

Part of our work at DATCP includes working as individual client managers for dairy processors who are working with the DBIC. We are occasionally faced with being the first person called by clients who are concerned about the many hoops our compatriots in Food Safety have them jumping through. Having both worked on dairy farms and in dairy plants ourselves, we are well aware of the rigors sometimes imposed through Food Safety inspections.

However, we are here to tell you that Food Safety is indeed a great friend to the dairy industry. You might think that the work we do to grow the dairy industry in Wisconsin might be hindered by Food Safety’s strict requirements. This is not the case, and we believe it has actually helped the Wisconsin dairy industry continue to grow. If you want to be the best, you have to hold yourself to a higher standard. Whether it is equipment requirements, cheese and butter maker licensing, labeling requirements, or other regulations, Wisconsin has the highest standards of anyone for dairy. And because of this, our quality is known throughout the world as the best. When was the last time a dairy product made in Wisconsin was recalled or caused sickness? You may not be able to remember an incident because there hasn’t been one.



The next time you see your inspector or someone from Food Safety, instead of thinking of how they are going to make your life miserable today, we encourage you to thank them for what they have done over the last 100 years to help make Wisconsin "America's Dairyland". Food Safety knows they can still improve and get better. They have worked hand in hand with us to try and make changes when they can to make things less cumbersome and more sensible for everyone while still keeping the safety of all people in mind.

We recently came across a brief summary of all Food Safety does for Wisconsin agriculture. We were amazed at all they do and wanted to share it with you:

SAFE FOOD: Food Safety protects your food from farm to fork. We watch over more than 30,000 businesses that feed Wisconsin and the world. We keep bacteria, drugs and other bad things out of food, and check for clear, true labels so you know what you are eating. On the farm, we protect the food supply by watching for healthy animals and clean conditions; by making sure farmers handle manure and farm chemicals properly; and by registering places where food producing animals are kept so we can trace disease threats quickly. In the food processing pipeline, we work to assure clean safe plants. We oversee milk pasteurization, critical to protecting public health. Canning, freezing, brewing, or baking - it all happens under our watchful eye. We inspect slaughter plants, and meat processing to be sure it is humane for animals and safe for you. Transportation, warehousing, grocery stores - we guard it all with inspectors, investigators, veterinarians, micro-biologists, and food graders working to protect you and your family.

3. DBIC Honors Two Wisconsin Dairy Entrepreneurs: Sid Cook & Bob Wills

Two Wisconsin cheesemakers were recognized by the DBIC this month for their leadership and dedication to growing Wisconsin's dairy industry.

DBIC Founder and Chairman Dan Carter and Manager Jim Gage presented the third annual "DBIC Innovation Zone Awards" to highlight the accomplishments of cheesemakers Sid Cook, Carr Valley Cheese, and Bob Wills, Cedar Grove Cheese.

Cook was recognized for leading the creation of a new category of "American Originals" in Wisconsin artisan cheeses. Cook is the most decorated artisan cheesemaker in the state's history and has garnered 173 national and international awards in the past four years, including 28 awards at the 2007 American Cheese Society Competition in Vermont. He has also acted as a leader in developing the sheep and goat milk industries in the state, by partnering with dairy farmers to craft and market mixed-milk cheeses.

"Many years ago, 'American Originals' were just a vision, and not a perfectly clear vision," Cook said. "The reality is that someday Cocoa Coardona, Gran Canaria, Mobay and other original cheeses will be commonly known in the United States and the world. They will have originated in a world class dairy region called Wisconsin."

Wills was honored for his impeccable role as the "incubator" for Wisconsin artisan cheese and start-up cheesemakers. He is responsible for helping launch at least a half dozen Wisconsin dairy artisan operations, including Dreamfarm, Northern Meadows, Otter Creek, Sugar River Cheese, Uplands Cheese and the Wisconsin Dairy Sheep Cooperative. Wills not only crafts quality, award winning artisan cheese; he remains committed to helping fellow cheesemakers develop recipes, perfect techniques, and craft cheese in an environmentally sustainable manner at his facility in Plain, Wis.



Pictured from left: Dan Carter, DBIC founder and chairman; Tom Jenny, accepting the award on behalf of Sid Cook, Carr Valley Cheese; Bob Wills, Cedar Grove Cheese; and Jim Gage, DBIC Manager.

“We’re experiencing a remarkable time in the calibre of the Wisconsin dairy industry – similar to the Renaissance centuries ago,” Wills said. “I am proud to be a part of it.”

“In choosing these individuals, the DBIC team sought to recognize innovation in two categories: product and technology. Sid Cook leads Wisconsin artisan dairy by continuing to craft new, innovative artisan cheeses year after year, while Bob Wills is dedicated to partnering with start-up artisan cheesemakers and helping launch some of the most sought after artisan cheeses that have emerged from Wisconsin in the past 10 years. Congratulations to all,” Gage said.

4. Protecting Your Brand Assets: New Web Resources Available

The U.S. cheese market has changed dramatically in the past 10 years with the addition of hundreds of “American Original” cheeses in the artisan, farmstead, farmhouse and specialty cheese categories. 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.

The DBIC strongly recommends our clients consistently place a TM after their brand and/or business name, as well as 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.

Andrea Neu, DBIC; Charles S. Sara, DeWitt Ross & Stevens; and Les Lamb, business consultant, outline the steps needed in a new Protecting Your Brand Assets paper and Trademark Seminar presentation, available on the DBIC website at: <http://www.dbicusa.org/planningoptions/research+papers/default.asp>

5. Governor Doyle Commends DBIC Founder & Chairman Dan Carter

More than 100 industry leaders gathered for a private reception on Nov. 6 at the Governor’s Executive Residence to pay tribute to a man credited for helping reinvigorate Wisconsin’s dairy industry. Governor Jim Doyle presented Dan Carter, DBIC Founder and Chairman, with an official Certificate of Commendation, thanking him for his strong leadership in creating the Dairy Business Innovation Center.



Pictured from left: Wisconsin Agriculture Secretary Rod Nilsestuen, DATCP Administrator Will Hughes, Dan and Jane Carter, Governor Jim Doyle.

“Wisconsin’s dairy farmers and cheesemakers have reinvested more than \$1.5 billion into their farms and dairy processing plants and this reinvestment has resulted in an incredible growth in the production of farmstead, artisan and specialty dairy products. This growth could not have taken place without strong

leadership and the creation of the Dairy Business Innovation Center. The State of Wisconsin recognizes the generous contributions of time, effort, and expertise made by cheese marketing pioneer Daniel J. Carter to the commitment of growing Wisconsin artisan and specialty dairy," Governor Doyle said.

Congratulations from the DBIC and all of its partners to Dan and Jane Carter for this award.

5. Upcoming Important Dates

- **January 24-25: Midwest Value Added Conference & Local Foods Summit. Eau Claire, Wis.**
The 10th annual Midwest Value Added Conference this year will be held in conjunction with the Wisconsin Local Food Summit. The Summit celebrates the diverse array of local food initiatives underway in Wisconsin. Last year the first ever Summit was held in January in Stevens Point. Major issues explored included the need to address challenges related to distribution of products. Registration information to be available soon at: <http://www.rivercountryrcd.org/>
 - **March 11-13: 2008 World Championship Cheese Contest. Madison, Wis.**
Cheesemakers and buttermakers from around the world are invited to compete in the 27th Biennial World Championship Cheese Contest, hosted by the Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association with assistance from dozens of industry volunteers. Since its inception in 1957, the World Championship Cheese Contest has grown rapidly and is now the largest international cheese and butter competition in the world. The most recent Contest in 2006 drew a record-breaking 1,795 entries from 18 nations. The competition is open to public viewing. Key contest dates include:
 - Entry Deadline - February 11, 2008
 - Entries Delivered - March 5, 2008
 - Contest Judging - March 11-13, 2008
 - Awards Banquet - April 24, 2008Download registration forms or learn more at: <http://www.wischeesemakersassn.org>
 - **April 15-18: Cheesemakers Workshop and License Short Course. River Falls, Wis.**
This four-day short course is designed for farmstead cheesemakers as well as apprentice cheesemakers from industry. Sessions focus on the basic steps in cheese manufacturing and provide opportunities to gain "hands-on" experience in the cheesemaking process. Completion of this short course will give the student six months credit toward their apprenticeship requirement for the state cheesemakers license. This short course is jointly sponsored with the University of Wisconsin-River Falls Department of Animal and Food Science, UW-Madison Department of Food Science and UW-Extension and sessions will be held on the UW-River Falls campus. For more information, visit: <http://www.uwrf.edu/food-science/institutes/CheesemakersCourse.html>
 - **April 22-24: 2008 International Cheese Technology Exposition. Madison, Wis.**
The Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association and Wisconsin Center for Dairy Research will host cheese manufacturers and suppliers from across the nation and world at this biennial event. An intensive combination of morning seminars combined with two full afternoons of Expo trade show and evening events, it is the world's largest gathering devoted solely to the multi-billion dollar market for cheese and related dairy products. To learn more, visit: <http://www.wischeesemakersassn.org>
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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.