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**1. Roth Käse USA Unveils New Culinary Education Center & Affinage Facility**

Roth Käse USA celebrated 15 years of specialty cheesemaking in Monroe, Wis. by opening a new Culinary Education Center and Affinage Facility on Oct. 6. A ribbon-cutting and anniversary celebration, attended by Wisconsin Agriculture Secretary Rod Nilsestuen and more than 100 industry leaders from around the nation, officially marked the opening of the new addition.

The culinary education center has been part of Roth Käse USA's plans since the early days of locating in Wisconsin, says Kirsten Jaeckle, Director of Marketing. The state-of-the-art facility, which was used during the opening celebration for the first time by "Taste This TV" host Chef Joseph Ciminera, is part of Roth Käse's two-phase expansion and marks the conclusion of three years of construction and planning. The new addition also includes an expanded affinage facility where cheesemakers will age washed rind specialty cheeses, a spacious area to house the company's new brine system and an expanded packaging area.

Roth Käse USA receives 350,000 pounds of milk per week from more than 80 local farms and serves more than 300 customers. Since its beginnings in 1991, it has increased from 50 to 100 employees; increased its production and marketing from three to more than 50 varieties of cheese; and has earned more than 100 awards in regional, national and international competitions. Congratulations to Roth Käse USA from the DBIC and its partners.



*Photo courtesy of Roth Käse USA*

*Pictured from left: Steve McKeon, president; Ulrich Roth, owner; Agriculture Secretary Rod Nilsestuen; Fermo Jaeckle, owner; Felix Roth, owner.*



*Chef Joseph Ciminera of Taste This TV prepares a cooking demonstration at the new Roth Käse USA Culinary Education Center.*

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## 2. DBIC Team Member Monthly Message



This month we hear from **Jim Cisler, Dairy Development Specialist**. Jim describes the ways in which Wisconsin dairy farmers and processors are working to ensure Wisconsin is always "**America's Dairyland**."

"During the past decade, Wisconsin's agricultural community has come to embrace many types of dairy farming. Today, four categories of farming have emerged: 1) traditional or conventional style; 2) large scale confinement; 3) grazing and 4) organic. Many agencies and organizations have partnered with the Department of Agriculture's Grow Wisconsin Dairy Team during the past three years to prioritize resources and assist our state's 14,490 dairy operations to modernize and enhance farm management skills.

We have come to realize that all types of dairy farms are needed and must be embraced to continue to grow America's Dairyland. Every farming style is welcome as long as they are good stewards of the state's natural resources. The increase we've seen in milk production over the last several years, along with the message that Wisconsin's doors are open to dairy businesses has sent a clear message to the world that Wisconsin is THE place to dairy farm.

Do we need more milk? Yes. Currently, to run all the Wisconsin's dairy plants effectively, 10-15% of the milk used comes from farms outside of the state. Our cheesemakers continue to make the best cheese in the world as evidenced by the many awards won at various prestigious contests. This increases consumer demand and requires more high quality cheese to be made.

In recent years, the public spotlight has shone on specialty, artisan and farmstead cheeses. There is no doubt that Wisconsin's future is strong in these areas. However, many larger Wisconsin processors are also working hard to add value to their styles of cheese, many of which have long been considered commodity products. Many of these processors have worked with the Dairy Business Innovation Center to add value to their operations, including:

- **Alto Dairy** - Black Creek aged cheddar – this cheddar has long set the benchmark for quality cheddar by graders across the nation – now this top-quality product is marketed nationally under its own Alto Black Creek label.
- **Foremost Farms** – this cooperative recently implemented unique new equipment to increase efficiency to its loaf provolone slicing.
- **Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery**– adopting innovative technologies to enhance fresh curds and implementing a national sales plan.
- **Land O'Lakes in Kiel** – Kiel Select – this private label aged cheddar has taken five first place awards at the U.S. Cheese Championships since 1997 and has updated its labels to reflect its heritage and future.
- **Organic Valley** – its new, state of the art warehouse technology is improving national distribution efficiencies.

Most of these cooperatives are over 100 years old. Some might argue their plants are too old, too large and too set in their ways to change quickly enough to keep pace with a changing competitive market. Wrong. With the innovation I've seen occur at these cooperatives in the past three years, these industry leaders have proven they are on the cutting edge. They continue to work smarter and produce some of the best cheeses in the world using the best milk in the world – from Wisconsin dairy farmers.

Wisconsin's dairy farmers and cheesemakers continue to work together to support and enhance each other's operations. Together, they send a clear message that Wisconsin is THE WORLD'S DAIRYLAND."

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### 3. DBIC Launches Dairy Innovator Peer Network

In November, the DBIC will launch the state's first Dairy Innovator Peer Network, a group of six to eight entrepreneurs who will share information and act as a consistent and confidential peer group. The network has been opened specifically to entrepreneurs whose business goals include developing their businesses into sustainable homestead operations or larger businesses. According to a recently published study from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, peer networks help participants tackle deep-rooted problems common to many companies, and extensive sharing of information allows companies to strengthen and grow as they become exposed to a wide range of business practices.

The DBIC will coordinate eight sessions per year, each facilitated by a seasoned dairy business leader with a speaker whose expertise is specifically targeted to small, entrepreneurial dairy businesses. In addition, an individual coaching session will be scheduled between group meetings to help each entrepreneur address the many challenges they face running their businesses.

It is the DBIC's intention that this group will be the first in a series of groups to reap the benefits of the Peer Network model, adding value to Wisconsin's dairy industry by facilitating a power base of support for leading dairy innovators in the state. For more information, contact Abby Bachhuber at (608) 658-3392 or email [awind23@gmail.com](mailto:awind23@gmail.com).

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### 4. Register Now for DBIC Business and Market Assessment Workshop

The DBIC is pleased to offer a one-day "Business and Market Assessment Workshop" to DBIC clients on November 15, 2006 from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. The course will feature specific information on tools and techniques helpful for assessing new business strategies and markets for value added dairy products. Topics include:

- Can my business successfully enter my target market?
- How do I structure my business operations to address the market?
- How do I re-assess my business based on new market opportunities?
- Will my business require new capital?
- What sales and distribution issues are important to my business and market assessment?

The workshop is limited to the first 12 companies that register and complete a short confidential informational survey that will help focus the course content. The course fee is \$75 per company. A maximum of two people per company may attend.

The Business and Market Assessment workshop is the first in a series of value-added workshops that will be offered by DBIC to current clients. Three subsequent events will be held this winter on the following topics: public and private financing; on-site retail operations and agritourism; and business value and market potential of entering cheese competitions. To register and complete an informational survey, contact workshop coordinator Abby Bachhuber at [awind23@gmail.com](mailto:awind23@gmail.com) or 608-658-3392.

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## 5. Industry News

- **New Wisconsin Cheesemaker:** A recent immigrant to Wisconsin is one of the state's newest licensed cheesemakers. Mareaka Penterman, who with her husband and family moved from the Netherlands to Wisconsin in 2003 to operate a 480-Holstein dairy farm, now plans to use her new cheesemakers license to craft farmstead cheese in the style of her home country. The Pentermans broke ground on their new dairy plant last month and construction is moving along rapidly. Look for the first offering of Hollands Family Cheese by the end of this year.
- **Dutch Dairy Expert Visits Wisconsin:** The DBIC welcomed Eric Verstappen, a Dutch national with more than 15 years experience in goat and sheep nutrition to Wisconsin in September. Verstappen consults with European producers seeking to maximize milk production, build or improve infrastructure capacity, and develop business management strategies. Joined by his wife Louise, who takes care of the daily management of their 1,000 head sheep herd in Holland, Verstappen toured 15 Wisconsin farms and gave several presentations to several groups of producers, educators, and processors including the Fox Valley Technical College in Appleton; Community Center in Ladysmith; Southwest Technical College in Fennimore; and Carr Valley Cheese. The DBIC thanks Larry Hedrich (Quality Goat Producers), Rich Toebe (Jump River Shepard's Dairy), Ron Hampton (Southwest Technical College), Sid Cook (Carr Valley Cheese), and Paul Dietmann (UW Extension) for helping arrange the tours, luncheons and presentations. A special word of thanks to Judy Kapture from Portage for her insight and suggestions for the week. Verstappen's presentation will soon be published on the DBIC website. For more information, contact Case Dorresteyn at 608-231-1514 or email [casedorresteyn@charter.net](mailto:casedorresteyn@charter.net)

**DBIC Innovation Zone Awards:** Three Wisconsin dairy entrepreneurs were recognized by the DBIC at the recent Great Milk, Great Markets International Conference for their leadership and dedication to growing Wisconsin's dairy industry. DBIC Founder and Chairman Dan Carter and Manager Jim Gage highlighted the accomplishments of cheesemaker Anne Topham of Fantome Farm, and Gaylon Emerzian and Mariana Coyne, of Trillium Productions. Topham was recognized as a pioneer in Wisconsin's artisan cheese renaissance and for her commitment to local foods, her involvement with the Dane County Farmers Market in Madison and her continual effort to share her knowledge and mentor future cheesemakers. Emerzian and Coyne innovatively helped tell the stories of Wisconsin cheesemakers through the documentary, *"Living on the Wedge: Wisconsin's Artisan Cheesemakers."* The film has been seen by more than 70,000 people since its first airing on Wisconsin Public Television in May 2006. In choosing these individuals, the DBIC team sought to recognize innovation in two categories: product and technology. Congratulations to all.



*Pictured from left: DBIC Founder & Chairman Dan Carter; Fantome Farm Cheesemaker Anne Topham; "Living on the Wedge: Wisconsin's Dairy Artisans" Host Mariana Coyne; DBIC Manager Jim Gage*

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## 6. Upcoming Important Dates

- **October 19: American Dairy Goat Association National Convention & VIP seminar. Milwaukee, Wis.** The ADGA invites specialty retailers, chefs and food service professionals to a special VIP seminar on artisan goat cheese during its annual dairy convention on Thursday, Oct. 19 at the Four

Point Sheraton/Milwaukee Airport (4747 Howell Ave, Milwaukee). Topics: an Overview to Artisan Goat Cheesemaking and Cooking Applications for Food Service Professionals. Time: 9:30 - 11:45 a.m. Presenter: Sid Cook, Master Cheesemaker and owner of Carr Valley Cheese, Wisconsin. To RSVP, email Larry Hedrich at [laclare@tcei.com](mailto:laclare@tcei.com) and Sara Bredesen at [stbrede@hotmail.com](mailto:stbrede@hotmail.com). For more info, contact Larry Hedrich at 920-850-4733. For more information about the American Dairy Goat Conference, visit: [www.movinggoatsforward06.com](http://www.movinggoatsforward06.com)

- **October 20-22: Madison Food & Wine Show. Madison, Wis.** Experience Madison's premier gourmet tasting event, offering the opportunity to sample the best food and the finest beverages from throughout the area, including the Wisconsin Marketplace - an entire aisle dedicated to showcasing more than 25 Wisconsin cheese and specialty food companies. A dueling chef competition and culinary demonstrations round out this three-day show. Learn more at <http://www.madisonfoodandwineshow.com/>
- **October 24: Future of Farming Forum. Wausau, Wis.** Wisconsin citizens have one more opportunity this year to help shape a vision for healthy and sustainable agriculture and rural life in a public forum Oct. 24 in Wausau. The forum is part of the Future and Farming and Rural Life Project of the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters. The forum at Northcentral Technical College will take a close look at livestock agriculture, immigration issues in rural Wisconsin and the implications of the 2007 Farm Bill. This will conclude a series of six forums that started in May. A final statewide conference May 14-15, 2007, in Madison, will be the culminating event for the project, and a final report with policy recommendations will be issued in mid-2007. Registration details, resources from previous forums and an array of related information can be found at [www.wisconsinacademy.org/idea](http://www.wisconsinacademy.org/idea).
- **Nov. 4: Caprine Field Day. Arlington Research Farm, Arlington, Wis.** Four educational presentations, informational displays, a goat kid auction, and a youth program will be featured at this year's caprine field day, sponsored by the Wisconsin Dairy Goat Association. The presentations are directed at commercial producers and hobbyists. For more information, contact Clara Hedrich at 920-849-2926 or email [laclare@tcei.com](mailto:laclare@tcei.com).
- **Nov. 9-11: Great Lakes Dairy Sheep Symposium. LaCrosse, Wis.** The Dairy Sheep Association's announces its 12th Great Lakes Dairy Sheep Symposium, to be held in La Crosse, WI on Nov. 9-11. This international event brings together dairy sheep producers, researchers and processors from across North America and Europe to discuss current industry issues. Features of this year's conference include a tour of Carr Valley Cheese and a visit to a farmstead artisan cheesemaker and sheep producer. For more information, visit [www.dsana.org](http://www.dsana.org) or contact Yves Berger at [yberger@facstaff.wisc.edu](mailto:yberger@facstaff.wisc.edu) or 715-635-3735.

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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](http://www.dbicusa.org) or contact Jeanne Carpenter, 608-358-7837.*