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**PRESS RELEASE**

**Contact: Jeanne Carpenter**  
**Communications Director**  
**Dairy Business Innovation Center**  
**Phone: 608-358-7837**  
**jeanne@wordartisanllc.com**  
**www.dbicusa.org**

## **Wisconsin Earns 92 Awards at American Cheese Society Competition**

AUSTIN, Texas -- Wisconsin cheesemakers swept the 2009 American Cheese Society Competition, capturing 92 ribbons, including a prestigious Runner-Up Best of Show prize.

Of 1,327 total entries, Wisconsin cheesemakers scored nearly one third of all awards bestowed, more than any other state. America's Dairyland's awards included 24 firsts, 34 seconds and 34 third places. Cheesemakers from 197 companies in 32 U.S. states, Canada and Mexico were represented.

Winning Best of Show was Rogue River Blue, made at Rogue Creamery in Central Point Oregon. Second Place Best in Show went to Red Hawk, crafted by Cowgirl Creamery in Point Reyes Station, California. Tying for Third Place Best in Show was Cave Aged Mèllage, a mixed milk cheese made by Sid Cook, Carr Valley Cheese, LaValle, Wis., as well as Rupert, an aged Jersey cow's milk cheese produced by Consider Bardwell, in West Pawlet, Vermont.

Master Cheesemaker Sid Cook of Wisconsin dominated the competition, landing 19 ribbons for his American Originals. Meanwhile, cheesemaker Brenda Jensen, Hidden Springs Creamery, Westby, Wis., captured the second most ribbons for Wisconsin, with a total of 8 awards for her farmstead sheep's milk cheeses. Cheesemaker Marieke Penterman at Holland's Family Cheese in Thorp, Wis., took home six ribbons with her range of farmstead Dutch-style Goudas. Wisconsin cheesemakers earning first place ribbons included:

- BelGioioso Cheese Inc., Denmark: Burrata
- Carr Valley Cheese, LaValle: Four-Year Cheddar, Cave Aged Mèllage, Cocoa Cardona
- Crave Brothers Farmstead Cheese, Waterloo: Les Frères Reserve
- Edelweiss Creamery, Monticello: St. Mary's Grass-Fed Gouda
- Hidden Springs Creamery, Westby: Driftless Honey Lavender, Farmstead Feta
- Holland's Family Cheese, Thorp: Marieke Gouda Clove
- Klondike Cheese, Monroe: Dill Havarti, Lowfat Feta
- Meister Cheese, Muscoda: Roasted Red Pepper Mozzarella
- Montchevre-Betin, Belmont: Mini Log Flavored with Honey
- Organic Valley, La Farge: European Style Cultured Butter, Pasteurized Pepper Jack Cheese
- Pasture Pride Cheese, Cashton: Redstone, Guusto
- Roth Käse USA, Monroe: St. Otho, Gran Queso, Valfino
- Sartori Foods, Plymouth: Merlot BellaVitano, Black Pepper BellaVitano, SarVecchio Asiago, Pastoral Blend

In addition to landing the most first place awards, Wisconsin cheesemakers swept five categories, including: American Originals Mixed Milk or Sheep's Milk Cheeses; American Made/International Style, Dutch Style; American Made/International Style Mixed Milk or Sheep's Milk Cheeses; Italian Type Cheese, Grating Styles; and Fresh Sheep's Milk Cheeses, Flavor Added.

For a complete list of all ACS winners, visit: <http://www.cheesesociety.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](http://www.dbicusa.org) or contact Jeanne Carpenter, 608-358-7837.*