

CHEESEMAKING SIMPLIFIED

These recipes are for both cow and goat milk. After making the **Basic Recipe**, you can make one of three different cheeses: "Boursin", "Chevre" and several hard cheeses.

Before starting, be sure all of your equipment and the counters you work on are very clean. Wash with hot, soapy water and rinse with a 10% bleach solution. Rinse bleach off any equipment that will come in contact with the milk or cheese because bleach kills the cheese culture and enzymes.

Heat Treating Milk

Heat treating milk is not pasteurizing it, but it does kill most of the harmful bacteria that can screw up your cheese without killing most of the good enzymes that are in the milk.

To **Heat Treat** milk: Put it in a double boiler or directly on the stove, stirring often to prevent scorching. Heat to 145 degrees and hold for 7 seconds. Chill quickly in a cold water bath. When the temperature has cooled to 80-90 degrees you can start the **Basic Recipe**.

Basic Recipe

1. Heat treated milk at 80-90 degrees.
2. Make rennet mix, using 2 drops rennet per gallon of milk. Add rennet to 1/4 cup clean, cool water and stir well.
3. Add freeze-dried cheese culture to milk, following directions on package (generally about 1/8 teaspoon per gallon). It can be sprinkled dry on top of the milk or mixed separately into warm water or a bit of the milk, stirred well, then added to the milk. In any case, once it's in the milk, stir thoroughly and let sit to "ripen" for 30 minutes (optional).
4. To add rennet mix: start stirring the milk from the bottom up. Once you've got a good current going, dribble the rennet mix around the top of the milk. Continue to stir gently for about 15 seconds.
5. Cover container, place in a warm, draft-free place and let it sit without stirring or moving it until there is a firm curd with a thin layer of clear whey on top, usually 12-24 hours.
6. At this point the curd is ready to be made into one of several cheeses. Start by pouring or scooping off as much of the whey as you can without disturbing the curd too much.

Boursin (soft) Cheese

1. Gently scoop thin slices of curd into a cheesecloth-lined colander. Tie corners of cheesecloth and hang to drain for 8-24 hours depending on how firm you want the cheese to be.
2. Remove curd from cheesecloth, add salt to taste and chopped fresh or dried herbs (try an Italian herb mix with fresh pressed garlic or garlic powder or chopped fresh chives, black pepper, etc. Experiment... go wild!!)

French Goat Cheese (Chevre)

1. Gently scoop thin slices of curd into individual molds placed on a rack over a pan. Small tuna cans, cream cheese or margarine containers or plastic cups are good. Poke holes in the sides and bottom from the inside out, using a hot nail or ice pick for plastic.

2. Drain the cheese for 1-2 days, or until the sides of the cheese pull away from the mold slightly.
3. Unmold the cheeses and lightly salt on all sides. They can also be salted then rolled in cracked black pepper or chopped herbs.

Hard Cheeses

1. Line a fairly rigid, medium size mold (cottage cheese container, aluminum food or coffee can with holes poked in bottom and sides from the inside out) with fine cheesecloth.
2. Gently scoop thin slices of curd into mold. Let settle for about 30 mins and refill to top.
3. Fold cheesecloth over top of curd then insert a “follower” (a can top or piece of wood cut to just a hair smaller than the container) into the mold.
4. Place mold on a rack over a pan and apply weights (bricks) or pressure to the follower for 2 days.
5. Remove cheese from mold, gently remove cheesecloth and proceed with one of the following:

For a **Plain Hard Cheese**: sprinkle outside of cheese lightly with salt and store in refrigerator.

For **Aged Cheese**: salt outside of cheese, let dry for a day or two then dip in hot cheese wax and store in a cool, dry area for up to 6 months.

For **Feta**: when making the **Basic Recipe**, thoroughly mix 1/8 tsp lipase powder per gallon of milk into 1/4 cup of the warm milk and add this mixture after you have added the regular culture. Allow to ripen for 30 mins before adding rennet. This is not authentic Feta, but will do in a pinch.

Sources for Cheesemaking Supplies

Caprine Supply
PO Box Y
DeSoto, KS 66018
1-800-646-7736
www.caprinesupply.com

This is an excellent & informative catalogue of goat supplies and equipment, including cheesemaking stuff.

New England Cheesemaking Supply Co.
Box 85
Ashfield, MA 01330
413-628-3808
www.cheesemaking.com

Excellent source for the homestead cheesemaker, but expensive on a larger scale.

Dairy Connection
800-810-0127
www.dairyconnection.com

Source of rennet, cultures and lipase for the larger producer.

Glengarry Cheesemaking and Dairy Supplies
888-816-0903

Excellent source of cheesemaking equipment & supplies, Including cultures. Very fair prices, especially at Canadian exchange rates.