

# CHEESE-A-HOLIC



**CHEESELINKS**

The ultimate newsletter for cheese enthusiasts, cheesemakers and cheese-a-holics everywhere!

CHEESE-A-HOLIC  
Issue 8

October 27th 2009

## From the Editors

Dear fellow cheese-a-holics,

It is the time that of the year that we start to get really busy with-summer just around the corner.

Coming up in the next few months are our extremely popular Christmas Fetta workshops,



held on Dec 3-6. We have now sold out three workshops, and we have two places left in the final workshop on Sunday December the 6th, so please contact us as soon as possible if you would like to attend.

The last few months have been exciting and we have a lot of news to report. Carole was a feature presenter at Floriade, Canberra's prestigious flower show.

Carole's demonstrations were extremely well received, as over the week she presented to hundreds of enthusiastic prospective cheesemakers.

Carole also travelled to Queensland and conducted two weekends of work-

shops at Witches' Chase Cheese.

We are excited to announce that starting next year there will be regular workshops on the premises run by Witches' Chase cheesemaker, Tim, in conjunction with Cheeselinks. Carole will continue to run workshops there as well.

During the school holidays Carole and Tracy visited the South Gippsland Dairy Expo, where dairy farmers and local residents braved the weather to learn to make yoghurt, camembert and fetta.

Over the last couple of months Carole also conducted a number of new workshops designed for more advanced home-cheesemakers. There were the three weekends in August during which we made Tri-

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ple Cream Brie, Raclette and Swiss Cheese. We also conducted a Romano, Gruyere and Cheddar workshop in Duck Under the Table in Wingham. As more and more of our customers develop skills, knowledge and expertise in their cheesemaking, it is a new and exciting challenge for us to continue to create opportunities for them to learn more, to expand their repertoire of cheeses and to increase their knowledge of the theory and

science of cheesemaking.

We are also planning a series of workshops where we will be focusing on cheese maturing and cheese appreciation, so that you can get a better idea of what makes a good cheese, or why particular cheeses win awards, so watch out for these next year.

We've just about finished setting our dates for next year's workshops and already nearly every weekend has been allocated! So take a look

online for whichever workshops are in your local area next year, work out which ones you are planning to attend and put the dates on your calendars. Remember to book in early to avoid missing out!

Carole Willman



## Feature Cheese:

This Month the feature cheese isn't even a cheese at all. Because of my Polish heritage I have decided to select Tweed Valley Whey's 'Kefir' as our feature. For those of you unfamiliar with kefir, it is a sweet yoghurt style drink which is very popular in Eastern Europe. One of the features



of kefir is that as well as producing some acid, it also produces a small amount of alcohol! The kefir from Tweed Valley Whey is sweeter than some other kefir available. If you get the opportunity it is well worth a try.

This is sold at various farmers markets in the Northern Rivers area of NSW.

## What am I?

**Not born but from a mother's body drawn.**

**I hang until half of me is gone.**

**I sleep in a cave until I grow old.**

**Then valued for my hardened gold.**

**See page 4 for answer.**



*'Your extensive knowledge delivered with your sense of humour made for a run day... A truly memorable experience'*

## Letters/Problem solving/Q&A Section

### Letters of the Month

Dear Carole,  
I attended the Camembert class earlier in the year down at Red Hill (was it April?) Since then I've made a few batches and things are going well. I've finally managed to source some lovely fresh goats milk (the nanny had day-old kids - how cute! Lovely creamy milk) and the resulting cheese is maturing nicely now. I've also done cheese-making at a local kinder (where my younger son attends) and a primary school (where my older son attends). We didn't attempt a sterile environment in the kinder, what with all the coughs and sneezes (which is a shame because it was lining up to be a ripper!) but the primary school one

should be very edible. They all loved getting involved, seeing the curds and whey happening. What a fantastic learning experience!

So thank you so much for the expert tuition and here's to a new generation of cheeseoholics!

- Richard

Hi Carole

You would have to have one of the best jobs on the planet being so immersed in all things cheese.

The Camembert workshop was fabulous, it meet all my cheese needs and then some. Your extensive knowledge delivered with your sense of humour made for a really fun day, being in a working cheese factory was awesome and the beautiful environment of

Witches Chase made it a truly memorable experience.

My cheeses made it home safely and although my Mascarpone is almost a distant memory but, wow, what a good one!

Finding my massage hot stones heater has a dual purpose meant keeping my Mascarpone at the 35 degrees was too easy so



can't wait to make the next batch. I'm going to a party on Saturday and will take my Quarg along so I can bask in the praise of "how clever are you!" and will wait patiently for my Camembert to mature (although patience was never a strong point of mine) so I can see that I will have to have quite a few batches on the go so that they have a chance to reach their peak before I devour them. Now if only I could get a job in cheese – I'd be soooooo happy!

Thanks again for a great day.

Cheers Carol

### My Curd Is Too Runny!

I have been making very successful fetta from my goats' milk for a couple of

years now, thanks to one of your workshops I attended in Leura. I originally used Type A Starter, then last year I tried Type B and really liked that too. In August this year I ordered new supplies of starter B and rennet. My goats have kidded, and produced twins and triplets, so there hasn't been a lot of milk available for cheese-making. I have just made 2 batches so far with the new culture, and have found that the cheese is different. It is not firming up as much as it has in the past, and though the curds blend together and the cheese holds its shape when it comes out of the baskets, it is really soft. Is this something to do with using the B starter, or could the starter culture be faulty? I

keep it in the freezer, in a sterilised jar as suggested by you.

Andrea

Hi Andrea,

It is unlikely to be the starter. If you are making a prepared starter and it is setting properly, this tells you that the starter is working and the problem is not with the starter.

The problem is most likely to be related to the milk, which is often a problem with goat's milk, but it intensifies at certain times of the year, especially when goats have just kidded. If the curd is a little soft this indicates that there is not enough

free calcium in your milk, and without this free calcium the rennet won't work properly. Adding calcium solution should make a firmer curd.

This does emphasise one of the problems with cheesemaking. Even when the animal is the same, we are starting with a new raw material every day and have to make adjustments as we go.

### Camembert Too Wet?

Hello Carole,

I'm a bit stumped. I've been doing quite well with my camembert for a number of batches but my last two (and it's looking like this one as well) have been failures. I've basically been following the course notes to the letter but, after brining, my cheese is not drying within the 12 hour

period. I've ended up putting it in storage still damp and of course the cheese has failed to grow mould quickly enough and has gone off. Do I need to let it drain it's whey for longer before brining, is it something to do with it being winter, ph levels, not stirring the curds enough????? I don't know – any hints?

Kind regards, Carmen

Hi Carmen,

It sounds like the cheese is too moist in the making. There are a few questions that you'll need to consider. How long is the cheese taking to set and when it sets is it a firm or soft curd? Is the starter setting properly? Don't put the cheese into stor-



age while it is too wet. You could leave the cheese for 24 hours to dry out if you needed to. The main problem with the cheese not drying out is the starter not working properly. This can be because it is getting too

cold. If this is the case, you could try making the milk a little warmer before you add the starter. Then if it cools down it won't be too cool. Also if your cheese is too wet, don't seal it in the maturing container. You can do more damage to your cheese by sealing it when too wet than by leaving it to dry out too much

### Mouldy Spots on my Gruyere!

I attended the cheese making workshop at



## Letters/problem solving/Q&As continued

Wingham at the end of August and made a comte cheese whilst there. Unfortunately I have noticed that my cheese has begun to grow sooty black mould spots instead of a nice orangey brown coat. Is it now doomed? From my first line advice (Carole's cheese making book) it doesn't sound good. I suspect the humidity may have something to do with it as I had trouble drying my cheddar and parmesan cheese post workshop. Is there anything I can do to remedy this?

Regards Mandy

If the cheese is growing mould you can

either try to rub the cheese with salt which should help kill off the mould, or you could just cut off the mould. Then wash it with more of the washed rind solution, and when it has become slightly orange, just plastic coat it and wax it and put it in the fridge for a month or so. Then it will be able to be eaten! Also if you have trouble drying the cheeses, try putting them in the fridge. Even a few hours in the fridge will dry them out considerably.

### Washed Rind not turning orange

Good afternoon Carole

I'm having trouble with my washed rind Gruyere. It has been nearly 4 weeks now and I have been washing and turning every



couple of days, with a sterilised paintbrush, and I have only achieved about four, 5 cent piece sized orange dots.

Initially I had the cheese too cold, so I have tried to store it warmer, in a Tupperware container with a rack on the bottom and some water in it.

I am getting growth of something. There is always condensation inside the lid, which is making the cheese quite moist in parts. There is a white film around the cheese, some black spots (not so great) and the orange spots present have darkened considerably. The smell is obvious too. Should I continue to try and wash the cheese, or just store it now as is?

The description of your cheese doesn't sound too good! The first thing to do is to either rub the black spots with salt or just cut them off. If the cheese is looking a bit slimy, put it uncovered in the fridge for a few hours and it

should dry out. And the smell should be like smelly socks! If that is it, you can actually wrap it or even plastic coat and wax it. This will stop any more mould from growing on the outside. Then you can leave it maturing for a month or so and then eat it anytime from then.

### My cheeses are too open

Of late the cheeses that I have been making have been more open than I would like. What influences the openness of cheese?

Leigh

There are many factors that affect the openness of the cheese. What cheeses have you been making that are open? In theory, if they are hard cheeses then they may not have been pressed enough or are

cooling down too much. If they are soft cheeses, you may be leaving them too long before hooping or not turning enough after hooping.

### Halloumi chewy and tough

Hi Cheeselinks

Can you help me with a couple of cheese-making problems please? Firstly, my halloumi turned out really chewy and tough and my camembert ripens much faster around the edge than in the middle so we have to eat the edge and then wait for the middle to ripen. I use our own housecow's milk and pasteurise it and have your starters

etc.

It sounds like the halloumi was left in the hot whey for too long. Try taking the cheese out of the whey when it rises and see if it seems

any better. Haloumi cheese should be squeaky when it is made, If the camembert is ripening too fast on the outside it is probably because the curd is too moist. Try either cutting the curd a little



[shop.cheeselinks.com.au](http://shop.cheeselinks.com.au)

smaller or stirring a little more when you are making the cheese. It could also be kept a too warm during maturing. In this case just try to keep it a little cooler.

### Ricotta not working

Hi there to the master cheesemaker, I am having trouble making ricotta from my whey. As soon as I have hooped up I then start on the ricotta, heating to 60 degrees then adding whole milk and salt, then heating and stirring till temp reaches 95 degrees when I add vinegar diluted in water, stirring in well but then nothing. Could it be poor quality vinegar that is the problem as it was only a home brand vinegar, or could it be the whey from the

modern camembert, hope you will advise in the next newsletter, as this is the second time it has happened. By the way, the newsletter is great, I hang out for each edition, shame that it is only out every couple of months, but I do know Carole is extremely busy.

Regards Helen

The ricotta forms when the acidity and temperature are correct, which means that you can get the ricotta to form by adding a greater amount of vinegar at a lower temperature. Conversely, if the whey is more acidic, then the ricotta will form at a lower temperature sometimes even before you have added any vinegar. If this happens, you

need to be careful not to be stirring it when the ricotta is forming. If you are stirring the whey as the ricotta is trying to form you can break it all up by stirring at this stage and then you will not get a very good yield or none at all. You need to watch the whey to make sure that it isn't starting to coagulate while you are stirring. You will see little flecks starting to appear in the whey if it is starting to coagulate. When this happens, add the vinegar quickly and mix for a short time and then leave the ricotta to settle. It is unlikely to be poor quality vinegar as this will mean that you get less yield and the whey that is left is still milky, meaning that you should have added more vinegar.



## Melbourne Specialist Cheese Show



For the first time, Cheeselinks had a stall at this year's ASCA show at the Palladium at the Crown Entertainment Complex. And what a wonderful day it was! With so many cheese-lovers in the one place, what could be better? It was a day spent tasting the best Australian cheeses, coupled with

complementary glasses of wine to match the cheese!

Janet Clayton, the new manager of Cheeselinks was there with her husband, Alan, talking cheese and wine at the Cheeselinks stand throughout the day. They were rapt to see so many Cheeselinks customers there - almost all the exhibitors are commercial customers, and there were also so many of our home cheesemakers there too!

We were so proud of our Australian cheese industry and the specialist cheesemakers who make events like this one possible. Carole was delighted to discover that one of the gold medal cheeses was the

Blue Vein made under her supervision during the Intensive Practical Cheesemaking course at the NCDEA in Werribee! Meredith Dairy has a great day, winning the people's favourite cheese for their marinated feta. We want to congratulate our customers on their awards: Yarra Valley Dairy, Boosey Creek Cheese, Meredith Dairy, Witches Chase Cheese, Red Hill Cheese, Maffra Cheese, Milawa Cheese, Main Ridge Dairy, Apostle Whey Cheese and of course, the NCDEA. For a comprehensive list of the award winners see the next page.



## Cheesemaker of the month: Ros Garstone



This month we would like to introduce you all to our feature cheesemaker, Ros Garstone. Ros is an experienced

cheesemaker, and a much loved member of the Cheeselinks team. Living on a dairy farm, Ros began to make cheese as a way to add value to her family farm. In 2008 Ros was one of the recipients of the Dairy Australia Cheese Scholarship, and she was able to increase her knowledge

and experience through intensive cheesemaking workshops, theory courses and practical experience in cheese factories. Hailing from Cowaramup in the Margaret River area, Ros assisted Carole with dozens of Cheeselinks workshops over the years, before last year joining our teaching team. Her background as a home economics teacher makes her a real asset, and we have had excellent feedback from our Western Australian workshop participants.

Ros is also making the first moves towards her own cheesery, under the name Cow Town Cheesery (which is what Cowaramup is often called). Watch out for this in the near future.

## Answer to riddle:



**Cheese, of course!**

## RECIPE IDEAS: HALAWAT L'JIBN - DESERT USING MOZZARELLA

This month we are excited to share with you all a recipe that one of our customers sent us. Glenda is one of our many frequent workshop participants, and when she mentioned this desert made using mozzarella cheese I knew that the I wanted the recipe so I could share it with fellow cheese-a-holics. Thanks so much to Glenda for sharing with the following recipe with us:

*"The dessert is called Halawat l'jibn, traditionally made with akkawai cheese, but mozzarella is a good substitute as it doesn't need to be soaked to remove the salt, as the akkawai does.*

500 g mozzarella  
225g fine semolina  
120ml rose water  
Ground pistachio nuts (optional)

Syrup:  
400g sugar  
1tspn lemon juice  
1/2 Tblspn orange flower water  
1/2 Tblspn rose water

For the syrup: Combine sugar and water over a low heat, stirring until sugar is dissolved com-

pletely. Bring to the boil, add the lemon juice and simmer over medium heat for 8 mins, or until it reduces to a syrupy consistency. Add the orange flower and rose waters. Stir, simmer for a few seconds, remove from the heat and set aside.

Rinse, dry and shred the cheese. Melt in a thick-bottomed non-stick pan over low heat. Measure 110 ml of syrup and pour into the melted cheese, stirring vigorously. Add the semolina and rose water, still stirring vigorously all the time, until the dough pulls away from the sides of the pan. Spread some of the remaining syrup over a clean 45cm work surface. Put

hot cheese mixture onto the syrup-covered work surface. moisten a rolling pin with a little syrup, roll the dough into a rectangular shape 3mm thick and leave to cool. Cut across, or tear, the dough at 4cm intervals, then cut/tear lengthwise into 6cm intervals. Roll each piece of dough into a small bite-size sausage shapes and then in pistachios. The shapes can be filled with kashta (cream) or mozzarella prior to rolling. The shapes or torn pieces can be placed into more of the syrup.





# Bringing cheese and yoghurt making to the kitchens of Australia!

Cheeselinks is an Australian business that is both family-owned and operated. The company was established in 1986 as Home Cheesemaking Supplies, specifically to provide quality cheesemaking ingredients and education to people who wanted to learn to make cheese in their own homes.

Over time the business expanded and began to supply small cheese factories with cultures, baskets, and other equipment. The name was changed to Cheeselinks in 1999, to reflect the increasing service provided to commercial manufacturers. With master cheesemaker Carole Willman at the helm, Cheeselinks has over 20 years experience in cheesemaking training and education, serving both commercial cheese manufacturers, and home cheese and yoghurt makers.



## 2009 Melbourne Specialist Cheese Show Awards

### Grand Champion Cheese 2009

National Foods, Tasmanian Heritage – Red Square (washed rind)

### People's Favourite

Meredith Dairy – Marinated Goat Fetta



### GOLD MEDALS

#### Fresh curd

Jannei Goat Dairy – Buche Blanc  
Meredith Dairy - Ashed Pyramid (goat)  
Yarra Valley Dairy – Black Savourine

#### Fresh curd textured

Boosey Creek Cheese – Yarrawonga White Fetta  
The Riverina Cheese Group – Full Cream Fetta  
Puglia Cheese Company - Mozzarella

#### Fresh curd matured

Witches Chase Cheese Co – St. Mor  
Red Hill Cheese – Paradigm Log  
Jannei Goat Dairy – Bent Back

#### Fresh curd marinated

Meredith Dairy – Marinated Goat Fetta  
Yarra Valley Dairy – Persian Fetta  
Main Ridge – Marinated Chevre

#### White Mould

Lactos, Tasmanian Heritage – Traditional Camembert  
Milawa Cheese Company – Milawa Brie  
Maffra Cheese Co – Farmhouse Brie  
King Island – Seal Bay Triple Brie



#### Blue Mould

Meredith Dairy – Sheep Blue  
NCDEA (National Centre Dairy Education Aust) – Gil Blue  
National Foods, Tasmanian Heritage - Signature Blue

#### Washed Rind

National Foods, Tasmanian Heritage – Red

Maffra Cheese Co – Cloth Ashed Cheddar  
Ashgrove Cheese - Clothed Matured

#### Semi-hard Cooked Style

Maffra Cheese Co - Raclette  
Heidi Farm – Raclette  
Heidi Farm – Tilsit

#### Hard Cooked Style

Donnybrook Farmhouse Cheese – Parmesan  
Donnybrook Farmhouse Cheese – Pasterello  
Pantalica Cheese Co - Pecorino



#### Square

Apostle Whey Cheese – The Grotto  
King Island – Stormy Washed Rind

#### Cheddar

Warrnambool Cheese & Butter Factory – Black Wax Vintage

What's on at Cheeselinks - October-December 2009	
Oct 31- Nov 1	Blue Vein and Romano Workshops at Margaret River, WA
Nov 1	Washed Rind Workshop at CERES in Melbourne
Nov 7-8	Camembert and Fetta Workshops at Small Cow Farm, NSW
Nov 14	Cheddar Workshop in Little River
Nov 15	Mozzarella and Halloumi Workshop at CERES in Melbourne
Nov 21-22	Camembert and Purely Goat Workshops in Wingham NSW
Nov 28-29	Blue Vein and Camembert Workshops at Red Hill
Dec 3,4,5,6	Little River Christmas Fetta Workshops
Dec 6	Christmas Fetta Workshop in Melbourne at CERES
Dec 22	Cheeselinks' last day of business for Christmas and New Year Period
Dec 23- Jan 3	Cheeselinks holiday!
Jan 4, 2009	Cheeselinks re-opens for business!