ALL YOU NEED TO SELL CHEESE SUCCESSFULLY

CHEESE BUYER

2025

From the publishers of SPECIALITY FOOD

MAGAZINE

LE GRUYÈRE® SWITZERLAND AOP

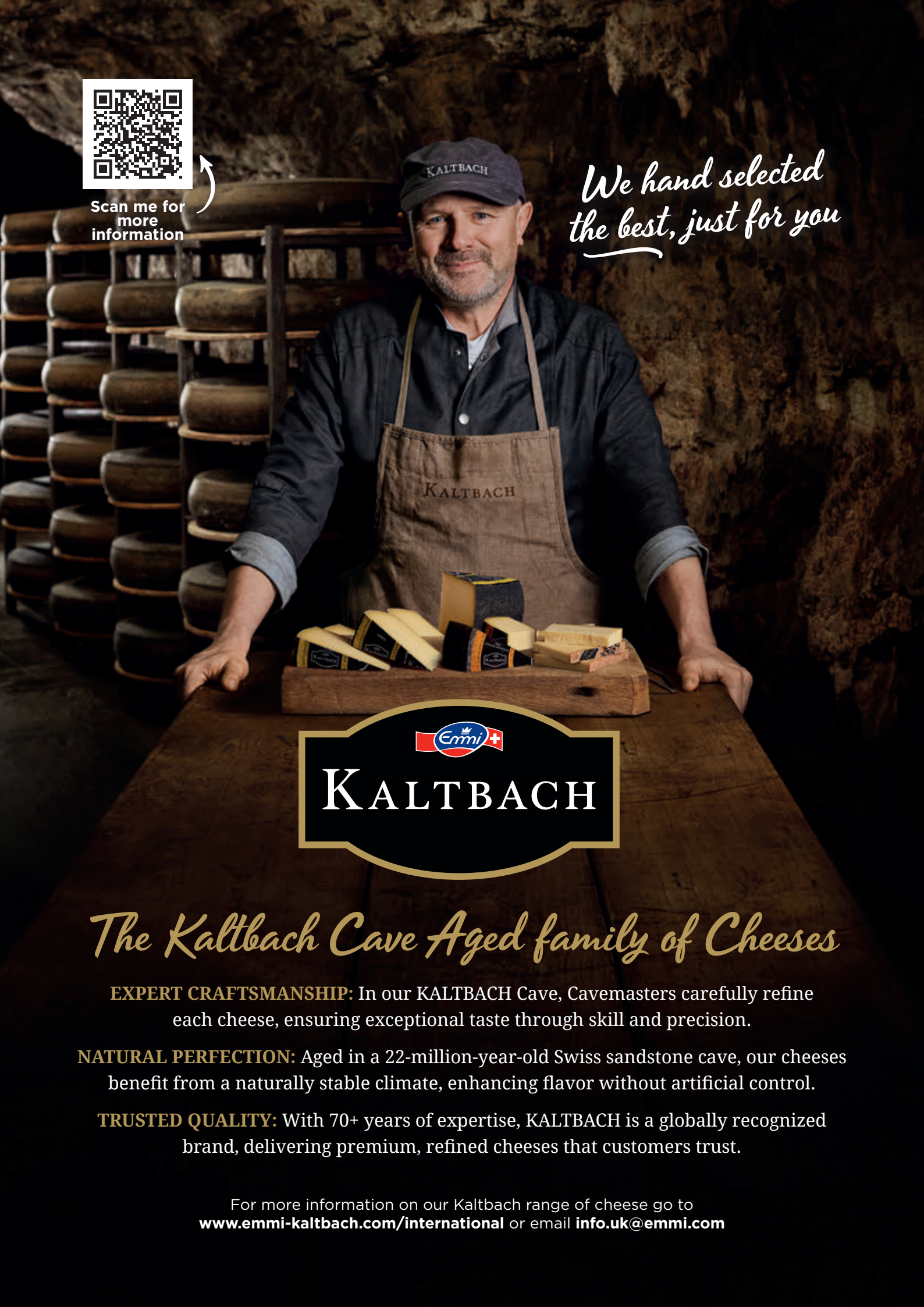


LE GRUYÈRE AOP
Crafted Through the Ages

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WELCOME TO CHEESE BUYER



Welcome to *Cheese Buyer*, brought to you by the team behind *Speciality Food*.

It is always a pleasure to dive headfirst into the world of cheese, but never more so than now, when the sense of comradery within the sector – between cheesemakers and the retailers who stock them – is more tangible than ever. It is a challenging time for both industries (find out more in our report on p4) so it is reassuring to witness.

Elsewhere in this issue you'll find expert advice on topics as diverse as display, messaging and education, and the American cheese opportunity, so I am confident that within these pages you'll find plenty of inspiration to power you through another year in cheese.

We also share the stories behind some of the most loved cheeses and their makers to help boost your sales skills, as well as the accompaniments we're most excited to get our teeth into this year.

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INSIDE THE CHEESE INDUSTRY

What's impacting the world of cheese and dairy right now? *Cheese Buyer* reports

There's plenty to appreciate and celebrate across the cheese market in 2025, as a number of new makers and new products enter the scene.

But, as anyone working within the industry will tell you, these highlights have been muddied by what's been a tricky (and some say unbearable) few months, in which both farming and retail have been rattled by new Government legislation, as well as pricing and supply issues.

Farmers continue to fight IHT ruling

When new Labour Chancellor Rachel Reeves set out her stall last Autumn, it caused outrage within the farming community. Reforms on Agricultural Property Relief (APR) and Business Property Relief (BPR) from Inheritance Tax are due to be sanctioned from next April. This means tax relief will be capped at £1 million (£3 million in some cases) and any amount above the threshold will be subject to 20%, rather than 40% tax, payable in interest-free instalments over a decade.

Farming organisations, such as the NFU, have repeatedly sought out a better, fairer solution, but have been met negatively at every turn, with several farmers saying they plan to continue protesting until their concerns are heard.

"You get the feeling the Government actually hates farmers," said Ro Collingborn of Brinkworth Dairy in Wiltshire, who added the proposals are like having the rug kicked out from under you. "Every new policy feels like another kick!"

Ro can trace the family's farming roots back to 1485, though the dairy was founded in 1910, today run by her daughter, Ceri Cryer – a fifth-generation cheesemaker.

Brinkworth Dairy was one of the first farms to adopt Friesian herds, operating across 180 acres in the Dauntsey Vale. The business, and others like it, has not been considered properly by Government, Ro explained, adding that Labour has "totally reneged" on its promise to support farming, and "all without proper consultation".

She feels the new rules won't impact investors (the very people the regulations sought to deter), as the IHT rates, "are still good for businesses at the moment. Some will think farmland is still a better investment than a pension".

"Whereas for family farmers it's their living. You farm for your lifetime and pass the farm to your children, without making any money. We do this for the love of the land and animals and our children."

Ro thinks the threshold should be raised to between £5 million and £10 million, and that farmers aged 75 or over, who don't know if they will die within seven years, should be exempt.

"The advice was 'don't plan to hand on to your children yet' because there was a nil rate. That's what farmers were told, and they had no reason to think that would change under Labour because Sir Keir Starmer said it wouldn't!"

Like many others in her position, Ro said she's angry, despairing and disillusioned, having already heard stories of farmers taking their own lives due to the Government's decision.

"The people producing food here are being penalised for doing so. How is that helping the country?" she added. "It's a very long-term tax, and a cruel tax."

Speaking earlier this year National Farmers' Union president, Tom Bradshaw, said there is still time for the Treasury to review its position, adding that the NFU, alongside other organisations, has put forward a proposal that will raise the money needed in a way that removes risk to British agriculture and food security. All eyes will now be on 2025's Autumn Budget.

Cheesemakers report shortage of organic milk

Stocks of organic milk are running low across Britain, say makers. This is devastating at a time when interest in organic food has peaked, with 2024 sales of organic producing reaching an all-time high of £3.7 billion according to Statista.

Penny Nagle, founder of the Organic Cheesemakers' Network, said, "We know other organic cheesemakers in more remote parts of the UK are struggling to find enough organic milk, so diversifying into non-organic cheese production."

She continued, "This compromises the values that organic milk brings in terms of biodiversity, sustainability, nutritional value and animal welfare. Organic certification is the only guaranteed assurance we have of all of these factors being in place on any farm."

Penny added that she is noticing growing demand for organic cheese. "Customers really appreciate the assurance of origin, and that the milk has been produced to the highest possible standards."

Although they've been conscious of it in the past, the team at Godminster say the current shortage of organic milk is particularly heightened.

"About three or four years ago the differential on milk price (after



Covid) between conventional and organic was nothing really. There was no difference between price points," said commercial and operations director, Jessica Kimber-Holloway. "And that is challenging for the organic producer, because it is more expensive to run an organic herd. When the milk price was no longer delivering that added value, a number of farmers said 'why are we doing this? It costs us 20% more, and we're not getting 20% more for our milk'."

The added cost of certification is leading some to opt out of organic, while some aren't considering going organic at all, Jessica said, instead picking up on the interest in regenerative agriculture and choosing that as their core value.

Adding fuel to the fire is the Government's recent IHT legislation, and the fact that many organic farmers can't afford to invest in their businesses due to high input costs and ever smaller financial returns. "That means they might not be as efficient at producing as much milk as we would perhaps like," said Jessica, who added that the weather and its impact on yield has a part to play in the current issue, too. "Our system has not caught up with the changes in our environment. We had hot weather this time last year, then it rained and rained and rained, so milk yields were down. Farmers need to think about altering their systems to produce milk at different times of the year."

What could be done to encourage farmers to put more stock in organic?

For starter's Jessica believes there's a lack of marketing around the benefits of organic produce, which she thinks should go beyond initiatives such as Organic Fortnight. "Organic is currently up against a "framework of regenerative messaging". "The public think they are doing the right thing buying regenerative, and they probably are, it is a step in the right direction. But the organic guys haven't said 'what about us?'."

Jessica said she believes the organic movement has lost its identity and is being seen as "slightly old fashioned. The public perception of organic has been lost."

When you've got big players talking about coming out of organic production, "that's massive".

"We need some big guys to champion it and push it forward. But it all ultimately comes down to money. We've all got to survive and make a living."

Jessica also said we need to pay more for organic milk and cheese, and place greater value on these products if we want to see real change, especially in the dairy industry.

"I think there is a big lack of understanding within the general public that milk should be cheap. When you can walk into a motorway services and pay more for water than a pint of milk, there is something essentially wrong with that, and there's a tendency for milk to be used as a loss leader within retailers."

Consumers need to be better educated on where food comes from, and why it is worth spending their hard-earned cash on it. "We need to be proud of what we produce in this country, including organic. People around the world appreciate it, but that's not necessarily the case in the UK. It's all become about price and is very very price competitive. For businesses like us to be sustainable, we're now having to look across the borders."

Cheese price hikes hit retailers

Delis, farm shops, food halls and cheesemongers are having to rethink their counter stock because of rising cheese costs – notably on products from Europe due to post-Brexit export charges.

"British cheese has gone up a little," said Jessica Summer, founder of Mouse & Grape, "but it's mostly European cheese that's been impacted. Things like French goats' cheese are so much more expensive than they were a few years ago." This could be a boon for British producers, whose homegrown alternatives are proving more attractive pricewise to UK speciality retailers.

"It's starting to become much better value to buy British cheeses made in a similar style," Jessica confirmed.

This is especially true as larger retailers, such as M&S and Waitrose, use their bargaining and buying power to drive down the cost of European cheeses in-store – something small independents can't do.

"We've got a Marks & Spencer here in Pinner which has a good cheese selection," explained Jessica. "They sell Epoisses for about £8. I was getting it in for £10, so I'd have to sell it for £20, and no one is going to buy Epoisses for £20. I think it's so tricky when you can see similar cheeses in the supermarket. Fair enough, you expect to see a Brie, but a £2 Brie that looks plasticky is very different to what an artisan cheesemonger can offer. Also, supermarkets can offer discounts on food as loss leaders, whereas indies don't have that luxury. The bigger stores have more to play with essentially, while we're relying on our brand and customer loyalty."

Jessica says specialist cheese retailers will never be able to compete with the multiples on price, so they have to be "more creative". And this means seeking out products that are different to supermarkets, building customer trust to encourage return visits, and developing relationships directly with cheesemakers and wholesalers to ensure you're always ahead of the curve when it comes to trends and new products.

AN ODE TO NEXT-GEN CHEESEMAKERS



Sam Brice, co-founder of The Real Cheese Project, says the way the British cheese industry has evolved is something to be celebrated

While perusing the finalists in the Best New Cheese category at the British & Irish Cheese Awards this year, it was impossible not to be struck by the quality and diversity of the entries on offer.

Innovation is booming within our artisan cheese scene, and this presents a great storytelling opportunity for retailers, as cheese shoppers approach the counter.

The pace of innovation has increased in recent years, and having taken artisan cheese from the very brink in the post-war era, to become one of the world's leading cheesemaking nations, our cheesemakers are now more confident and creative than ever before.

During lockdown, while working on the British Cheese Weekender, one of the most exciting messages was just how many new cheeses had been born out of necessity – whether to avoid milk going to waste, or to provide a more rounded offering for the sudden spike in demand online.

But momentum has only increased since – and Affineur of the Year has played a big role here. As the competition prepares for only its next instalment it has already amassed an impressive legacy of new cheeses brought to market following successful showings at the event, and has achieved an unimaginably big impact on the mindsets of both makers and mongers when it comes to aging their cheese.

Better still, this flurry of new releases has gone hand-in-hand with a huge drive in sustainable innovations across farming and production.

Many of the nation's newest cheesemakers, like Slow Grown Farm in West Sussex and Lowfields Farm Dairy in Yorkshire, have been founded with considerations around soil health, biodiversity and animal welfare at their heart, and every established farmhouse cheesemaker we speak to is continually striving to reduce energy use, and restore the health of their land.

Great food tastes even better with a story, and this new wave in British cheese has plenty to say for itself – so I'd always encourage cheese shops to save room for a few new releases on their counters.



BACK WITH A BANG

Rowcliffe's entering an exciting new era packed with new launches, innovative approaches and game-changing investment

For decades, Rowcliffe has sat at the heart of the fine cheese industry, earning itself a reputation as one of the foremost providers of fine cheese and high quality foods to discerning retailers up and down the UK.

Since its inception in 1967, when Anthony Rowcliffe scoured French markets to uncover the finest cheeses from small producers, the business has been passionate about sharing the very best cheeses from small-scale makers across Britain and Europe – and now, in 2025, the business is entering an exciting new era full of updates sure to excite the palates of fine food lovers across the UK.

Now part of The Lactalis Group, Rowcliffe retains its crown as Britain's leading importer and distributor of exceptional cheese and other fine foods; and after a period of transition is excited to share two new developments that will offer fine food retailers with a more delicious range than ever.

"For many years Rowcliffe has been a sleeping giant," says Tony Bury, who took the helm of Rowcliffe in 2024, "and the team and I are excited to breathe new life into the business so it reaches its full potential."

With a professional history rich in larger scale dairy experience, Tony is inspired by the expertise of the Rowcliffe team as well as the skills and craftsmanship present within the artisan cheese sphere. "I've worked in the cheese industry for years, but it's been eye-opening to discover the cheeses that are out there," he says. "They're changing my view of the sector, which I'm very much enjoying – especially as a result of Tuesdays AKA NPD days!"

A carefully curated range

Anthony's support of artisan producers has been the lifeblood of Rowcliffe's since the very beginning, and while the team is proud to say that through the years the business has benefitted the wider fine cheese sector and the passionate craftspeople at its heart, their vision has extended far beyond cheese into the best possible products to serve alongside it.

The professionals behind Rowcliffe certainly have grand plans, with 130 new products – including some exclusives – launching into the latest catalogue. The overall range (which historically has sat at over 1,000 products) has evolved to present only the very best to its customers, so that fine food retailers can be confident that each item in Rowcliffe's offering has been expertly hand-selected as the finest of its type.

Rowcliffe Larder – a carefully curated selection of charcuterie, olives and other products that complement their cheese offering – is set to enter the sector later this year, and the business's acquisition of Hawkridge Farmhouse Dairy







Produce is yet another boon, allowing it to offer delicious farm shop favourites including pies, Scotch eggs and dips.

Introducing Rowcliffe Presents...

Now, in 2025, Rowcliffe is proud to release Rowcliffe Presents... into the fine food arena. Consistent with Anthony's original mission, the 18-strong range of truly artisanal cheeses – many made using techniques passed down from generation to generation – offer *Cheese Buyer* readers an unparalleled and convenient way to stock their counters with the very best cheeses Britain and Europe have to offer.

The range will evolve over time, appealing to changing consumer palates, and currently consists of cheese classics such as Colston Bassett Blue Stilton PDO, Westcombe Cheddar, Le Cret Gruyère AOP and Brie de Meaux AOP.

A bright future

Rowcliffe's new era is an exciting proposition for professionals across the sector – particularly discerning speciality retailers, as not only is the product range better than ever but so is the service provided.

Alongside the standout product selection, The Rowcliffe team has also been invested in, to ensure that *Cheese Buyer* readers enjoy the high levels of sales support they require. "Retailers are going to be getting a bigger and better service from us, as we're getting more people on the road and telephones."

With investment across the board, a top-notch service team and unbeatable product range, Rowcliffe's new chapter offers opportunities abound for fine food retailers.

> "For many years Rowcliffe has been a sleeping giant, and the team and I are excited to breathe new life into the business so it reaches its full potential"

NEXT GEN WAXED TRUCKLES

Another exciting development is the launch of The Rolling Cheese Co. brand – a collection of flavour-packed 200g waxed truckles, created with an expertly selected Cheddar base to provide the perfect balance of sweet and savoury notes and lingering flavour. Included in the range are:

- **VICTORIOUS VINTAGE**
  A mature Cheddar aged for 18 months, and also available as a cutting cheese
- **SMOKED SPLENDOUR**
  Mature Cheddar gently smoked over oak
- **ROCKING THE HERBS**
  Mature Cheddar infused with herbs and mild spices
- **TRULY TRUFFLE**
  Mature Cheddar adorned with flecks of black truffle
- **LADY IN RED**
  A vintage Red Leicester
- **KA POW CHILL**
  Red Leicester with cayenne pepper, sweet bell pepper, jalapenos and herbs



CAREFULLY CRAFTED

Rich, buttery and with a perfect balance of sweet and savoury, Clawson's Rutland Red is primed to delight your customers



Red Leicester may be a familiar sight on supermarket shelves, but a particularly special and artisanal option is waiting in the wings in the form of Clawson's Rutland Red®: richly buttered with sweet-savoury notes and a satisfyingly open texture.

Sitting alongside Clawson's famed Stilton® and Shropshire Blue cheeses, Rutland Red® is testament to the team's dedication to harnessing the magic of its in-house master cheesemakers while simultaneously supporting local farming communities.

Heritage at its heart

Sitting at the heart of the stunning Vale of Belvoir, it's only natural that the provenance and heritage of Clawson is a leading light in its present and future plans when it comes to Rutland Red® and the rest of the cheesemaker's range. "We're constantly inspired by being able to trace our products back to the farm where the milk was produced, and the fact that our closest farm is only 1,000 yards from the dairy is a source of genuine pride," says Bill Mathieson, managing director.

This cheesemaker's history is proudly inspiring its future. Having mastered the creation of Stilton across its generations of production, Clawson was inspired to look to the past to create Rutland Red®. With the sales of Stilton® often weighted towards Christmas and production reliant on spring milk, many Stilton-makers created a Red Leicester-style cheese to utilise the milk from other seasons. Clawson reinvigorated Red Leicester in the early 2000s, using traditional methods including open vats, handheld hoops and presses, and turning and grading by hand to create the exceptional Rutland Red® cheese.

Master craftsmen

As valuable to Clawson as its cheesemaking traditions are the talented craftspeople who create it. "We have a number of colleagues here whose families have worked here for generations," says Bill. "Richard, who is our head cheesemaker, is the third generation of his family who have produced cheese at Clawson – his grandmother used to make Stilton here, and a great uncle made a Red Leicester. It's wonderful that these traditional skills have been passed down from generation to generation within our team.

"Indeed, the family of our chairman, Paul Eggleston, were founding members, showing the longevity of involvement and relationships in the community and highlighting this multi-generational vein still runs through everything we do, from farmers to cheesemakers."

To produce cheeses as special as Clawson's, a certain kind of magic has to be present in the form of master cheesemakers, each with a set of individual 'golden rules'. "These will be tweaked throughout the year as milk constantly changes and each cheese is different, but they all have a sense of methodology and consistency to what they do," says Bill.

A bright future

With time-honoured skills and an ethos to be proud of, the Clawson team is set to delight cheese lovers for years to come. "Our vision is to be the number one cheesemaker for provenance and to handcraft consistently excellent cheeses by the hands of master cheesemakers," says Bill.

This passion to be the best has earned the cheesemaker plaudits from across the UK. Indeed, both consumers of all persuasions and awards judges are big fans of Rutland Red®; it won a Gold Medal at the Global Cheese Awards 2024 and most recently a Gold Medal at the British Cheese Awards 2025, testament to the quality and unique taste experience it offers.

HOW TO ENJOY RUTLAND RED

Rutland Red, with its open texture and full-bodied flavour, is clothbound and smothered in butter to retain moisture and boosts flavour. The resultant cheese, the only pasteurised Red Leicester made using traditional methods, is rich in flavour with a flaky texture. Intensely savoury with a hint of buttery caramel and nuttiness on the finish, Bill likes to enjoy it "with a sweet relish on a cracker with a glass of great red wine."



"Clawson reinvigorated Red Leicester in the early 2000s, using traditional methods including open vats, handheld hoops and presses, and turning and grading by hand to create the exceptional Rutland Red cheese"

CLAWSON
19 FARMS 12
MASTER CHEESEMAKERS

At Clawson Farms, we've been a proud farmer-owned cooperative since 1912.

Our Master Cheesemakers are dedicated to ensure exceptional quality, award-winning cheese, every time.



ARTISAN BLUE STILTON® PDO

GOLD AWARD WINNING, WORLD CHAMPION

A well-balanced flavour with a rich & creamy texture & distinctive blue veins. Full bodied, complex savoury flavours and a blend of tangy, earthy undertones. Traditionally crafted, handgraded, hand-turned.

Protected Designation Of Origin (PDO) Status

King of British Cheese Heritage



ARTISAN SHROPSHIRE BLUE

AWARD WINNING, SUPREME CHAMPION

Deliciously creamy, full flavoured with mellow blue undertones. A distinctive golden orange colour, with a golden crust. Traditionally crafted, hand-graded, hand-turned.

From the Master Cheesemakers of Gold Award Winning, Artisan Blue Stilton® PDO



ARTISAN AGED RUTLAND RED®

GOLD AWARD WINNING

Deliciously rich and caramelised flavour. Rich orange, firm but flaky, open texture. Traditionally crafted, wrapped in cloth, hand-buttered and matured over many months.

Perfected over three generations of master cheese makers

The only pasteurised Red Leicester produced in the county of Leicestershire

To find out more, contact our sales team on enquiries@clawson.co.uk or call +44 (0) 1664 822332

www.clawson.co.uk



SUSTAINABLE SUPPLY CHAIN

DalterFood Group offers tailor-made solutions for retail, focused on quality, traceability and sustainability to satisfy discerning consumers

With over 45 years' experience in the dairy sector, DalterFood Group is now one of the main international players in the production, selection, cutting, packaging and distribution of high-quality Italian cheeses. With its headquarters in Italy, the Group enjoys a solid presence in the United Kingdom, partly thanks to its commercial subsidiary, Dalter UK, therefore proving to be the ideal partner for retailers. In fact, thanks to its knowledge of the British market and its proximity to the region, it can help clients swiftly and effectively meet the growing demand for quality, sustainability and authenticity from British consumers, including with tailor-made solutions.

Sustainable supply of Parmigiano Reggiano

Parmigiano Reggiano is at the heart of DalterFood Group's offer and its supply chain stands out for the solid commitment to product traceability and sustainability, perfectly in line with a market, like the United Kingdom, which is increasingly mindful of the origin and environmental impact of what they eat. DalterFood has been able to strengthen its position thanks to its ability to adapt to the new needs of consumers and, consequently, of retailers, not only guaranteeing the finest but also more sustainable products.

The production of Parmigiano Reggiano, one of the most popular and well-known cheeses in the world, is an example of how the Group manages to combine tradition and innovation. This outstanding cheese is made at its two cheese factories – Colline di Selvapiana e Canossa Cheese Factory and Colline del Cigarello e Canossa Cheese Factory – right in the heart of the Reggio Emilia Apennines (in northern Italy). Here the milk is processed from 40 local farms which, thanks to a partnership model strengthened over time, ensure a responsible and sustainable supply. The supply chain is fully traced and monitored to guarantee high quality standards, checking every stage of processing, from collecting the milk right up to distributing the product through the Group's companies.

Sustainability at its heart

Its commitment to sustainability has also led to a series of initiatives involving animal welfare and responsible management of natural resources. In fact, DalterFood Group has obtained Animal Welfare certification for the third year running, issued by Certiquality according to the ClassyFarm protocol, the Italian reference organisation for animal welfare. This certification involves everyone in the Group's Parmigiano Reggiano supply chain and is a hallmark feature that gives the product added value, directly meeting the growing demand for transparency by consumers, particularly those in the United Kingdom, who are sensitive to animal welfare and sustainable production processes.

A wide range of Parmigiano Reggiano varieties

Altogether, 230 whole Parmigiano Reggiano cheeses are produced every day, with various ages, from a minimum of 12 months to over 40 months. Alongside the conventional version, DalterFood Group offers various types of Parmigiano Reggiano: organic, "Mountain Product" certified, and only from Italian Pezzata Rossa cows. The latter in particular has special features that make it highly sought-after and unique. While also being certified as organic and a "Mountain Product", it is made at just one of the Group's mountain cheese factories, the Colline del Cigarello e Canossa Cheese Factory, with milk from one single breed of cow (Italian Pezzata Rossa) reared at just one mountain farm. The characteristics of this excellent cheese make it ideal for retailers wanting to expand their offer with top-quality products, both in terms of their flavour and traceability, capable of satisfying any consumers who are careful about the origin of their food.

All these versions of Parmigiano Reggiano are available in a wide range of cuts and packs, designed to meet retailers' specific requirements. From wedges, with both fixed and variable weights, offered in vacuum packs or thermoformed tray, to grated cheese in doypacks, right up to special cuts such as flakes and cubes packaged in small tubs with a resealable lid. These practical solutions are suitable for home use and can preserve the product's quality and freshness.

A carefully selected range

Alongside Parmigiano Reggiano, DalterFood Group offers a wide variety of traditional Italian fresh cheeses, carefully selected by trusted partners. They include Buffalo Mozzarella and Burrata, icons of Made in Italy cuisine, which are perfect, with their creaminess and freshness, for enriching a simple salad or for enhancing the authentic Italian flavour of a pizza.

DalterFood Group is therefore a benchmark for the UK market and a reliable partner for retailers, thanks to its ability to keep even the most demanding consumers happy. Thanks to its flexible structure, and by carefully and meticulously listening to the client, the company can even create tailor-made solutions. Its long-standing know-how, extensive range and commitment to sustainability make the Group a true exponent of outstanding Italian cheeses, a spokesperson on the British market for a food culture with deep historical roots, well-known all around the world.

> "DalterFood Group's long-standing know-how, extensive range and commitment to sustainability make it a true exponent of outstanding Italian cheeses; a spokesperson on the British market for a food culture with deep historical roots, well-known all around the world"

UNMISTAKABLY SCOTTISH

Millbrook's new 1057 Cheddar offers foodies a taste of Scotland's rugged and romantic landscape



Millbrook Dairy's 1057 is inspired by a defining moment in Scottish history – the year King MacBeth met his end at Lumphanan, marking the fall of one of the last Celtic kings. And today, 1057 Cheddar cheese is crafted exclusively from rich Scottish cow's milk, sourced from dairy herds grazing on the lush pastures of Scotland's glens and lochs. The country's unique climate and fertile landscapes contribute to 1057's deep, complex flavour, making it a true product of its origins.

Scottish provenance is at the heart of 1057. Every element, from the milk to the maturing process, is deeply tied to Scotland's rich dairy heritage. This Cheddar is more than just a cheese – it's a reflection of the land it comes from. The rolling hills, pure air, and traditional cheesemaking expertise all combine to create a Cheddar that is unmistakably Scottish in both character and taste. With its bold, full-bodied flavour, 1057 proudly delivers a true taste of Scotland.

1057 is specially hand-selected from Scotland's finest cheddars and aged for a minimum of 14 months to achieve its signature depth of flavour. The result is a perfect balance of bold and punchy with a smooth, creamy undertone. The texture is firm yet open enough to deliver the rugged, crumbly bite that Cheddar' lovers appreciate. Each mouthful unfolds with rich, savoury complexity, making 1057 a commanding cheese with a regal presence – fitting, given its name.

1057 is a perfect choice for any cheeseboard, best enjoyed with traditional Scottish oatcakes and a rich caramelised onion chutney. It melts beautifully, making it ideal for indulgent thick-cut sourdough toast with a dash of Worcestershire sauce or a luxurious take on mac 'n' cheese. For perfect pairings, try it with a crisp white wine, a full-bodied red, or a well-crafted beer.

1057 is available in 200g, 1.25kg, and 2.5kg packs, catering to both everyday indulgence and larger-scale use. For Christmas 2025, Millbrook will release 200g wax truckles – ideal for gifting or a festive cheeseboard centrepiece.

> "Scotland's unique climate and fertile landscapes contribute to 1057's deep, complex flavour, making it a true product of its origins"



TAKE CARE

Cheese is a precious commodity – one that should be chosen, protected and sold thoughtfully. Here, cheesemongers share their expertise





Artisan cheeses aren't cheap, especially at the moment, with many cheesemongers saying they're working in a world where their key products have gone up in price, at the same time as hikes in staffing and energy costs.

Looking after stock, then, is absolutely crucial. The modern cheese shop simply cannot afford to take their eye off the ball. So, what are the pinch points they need to think about throughout the buying and selling process?

Buying with care

Most experienced cheesemongers will tell you not to overstock. "We don't want to over order, but we also want to have a full fridge that keeps customers coming back," says Victoria Dunthorne of Victoria's Cheeses.

"We are very lucky, and have a great network of suppliers and dairies that we work closely with. This means we have several deliveries a week, so it staggers our intake of stock." Every parcel is temperature checked on arrival, and all cheeses date checked. "If any best before dates fall below 10 to 14 days from receipt, we do reject them," Victoria says, "unless obviously fresh cheeses like Burrata for example, that would be in and out very quickly."

Like Victoria, Svetlana Kukharchuk of The Cheese Lady performs checks on all her stock as it comes in, and insists on at least two weeks shelf life on soft cheeses too. "That's the main thing, especially with those ones that come with their own dates on that are individually packaged. Two weeks doesn't sound a lot, but they are best when they are closest to that date. We have to explain this to customers. A lot of them get nervous, but we say, 'this is when it is most delicious – you're in for a treat'."

Building up a list of reputable suppliers you know you can trust, building relationships so they know exactly what you expect, is one of the best ways to ensure you receive quality every single time. Jessica Summer of Mouse & Grape says this is something she learnt early on in her cheesemongering career. "I ordered Taleggio from one place and wasn't happy with it, and another wasn't artisan enough. You need to be clear about the style of your business. There are different levels of artisan, and you have to define what your shop is, and what you need," she says.

If what lands at the shop isn't up to your standards, she advises taking a picture and letting them know it wasn't what you expected, asking for a replacement. "You're paying for it at the end of the day, and if you're not happy to put the brand forward, you shouldn't be selling it." It's not often, Jessica says, that she has to reject an order, but she admits standards in the industry can slip towards Christmas as demand increases. This is a time of year to be extra cautious.

Storing safely

You should always keep soft, blue and washed rind cheeses separate, and separate these further from hard cheeses, say Svetlana and Jessica.

Svetlana and her team start each day with a check of the counter to see what needs to be restocked, while inspecting for mould and looking at dates to see if anything should be rotated. "If there's any light blooming, that can be gently scraped off," she says. "We don't want it to get out of hand, and if it proliferates on a very rare occasion, we will cut 1/2cm to 1cm off the front of the cheese and discard that."

Blue and white moulds on cheese are fine, she adds, saying it's the pinky-red and brown ones you should be cautious of. If you notice either of these, refer up to a more senior member of the team, or go back to your supplier to find out if it's a usual part of the cheese's ageing process.

To prevent both mould and drying out, keeping cheeses stored in the correct condition is essential, says Mel Wythe of Secretts of Milford, which has a whopping 300 cheeses on display. "We have a large refrigerated display counter which is set to just the right temperature, and all our open cheeses are wrapped to ensure they stay fresh, whilst the customer can still see what they are purchasing."

Cheeses are rewrapped as often as required to keep them in shape, Mel adds. "With so many cheeses on display, this can be a lengthy process, but it enables us to keep on top of quality, ensuring everything is fresh and beautiful for the counter."

Take care with wrapping, Jessica says on this topic. She's been experimenting with recyclable alternatives to clingfilm for glass wrapping, but admits nothing she's tried so far has met her standards. "It is so bad – it doesn't cling at all to the cheeses, so I had to stop using it. It just looked so messy!"

Like Mel, Victoria keeps a keen eye on temperature, checking the counter twice a day. "We keep two blocks of lard in our counter too, which may seem strange, but we probe them (rather than the cheeses) which gives us a clear guide to the temperature of the cheeses, rather than the air temperature."

All Victoria's cheeses are kept in strict date order, with the ripest varieties at the front, and younger examples of the same cheeses in the undercounter fridge. "This might seem obvious, but it takes a lot of time constantly checking and noting dates. We are very fortunate that we are a busy shop, especially at weekends and so our stock turns very quickly."

Cheeses are wrapped overnight and unwrapped with their first cut, Victoria continues. "We try and keep them unwrapped on busy days when they are constantly being cut, but on slower days we rewrap regularly to prevent drying out." The shop keeps everything dated on the reverse of description cards, with every cheese redated after a new example is opened. "We rarely have anything that goes up to its 'use by' or 'best before' date, but if we do, it goes home with us, never home with a customer!"

All that effort is paying off, she adds. "Following our food hygiene inspecting in January we were invited to take part in the UK Health Security Agency's yearlong study of unpasteurised and pasteurised



cheeses, which for us was a no-brainer to give us reassurance that all our products were of high quality. We received clear results across the board, which was another tick that we are handling and keeping our cheeses well."



Making the cut

Ensure you've got plenty of boards and knives to hand for serving, with separate equipment for handling blue, soft and washed rind varieties which can contaminate other types.

Good hygiene is so important, each of the ladies say, for the integrity of the cheeses.

A further issue that needs to be thought about is the physical cutting of the cheese. Staff should be well trained in cutting correctly to minimise waste while keeping an eye on safety – don't set a junior team member off with a sharp knife and a wheel of Parmesan if they're not confident in how to crack it open.

When it comes to service, the devil is in the detail. "When you bring it home it has to look like a little gift," Svetlana says of the cheese wrapping process. "People do pay much more for this type of cheese than they would in the supermarket, therefore it has to look the part. We spend a lot of time on this, and we have guidelines for different shapes and types of cheeses."

Jessica is also very particular about the presentation of her cheeses to customers. "We double wrap in wax and then in branded paper," she says. "I had my training at La Fromagerie, and they're quite precise in their style of wrapping. That's something I've passed down to the team. Each has a label that comes with it with the ingredients on, and we write little tasting notes and wine pairings on there too." This finishing touch is greatly appreciated by customers. "If you want to charge a premium price, you have to work in a premium way," she explains in agreement with Svetlana. "It comes back to your brand. You've got to be consistent."

Svetlana likes to sell cheese in double-layered paper including a layer of plastic, recommending that customers store it in the salad drawer at home, rewrapping with foil if they need to once opened.

A final area where care needs to be thought of in the serving of cheese is tastings – which are Jessica's forte. Some elements are common sense. Take the cheese out well before tastings to let the flavour develop, keeping an eye on the temperature of your shop.

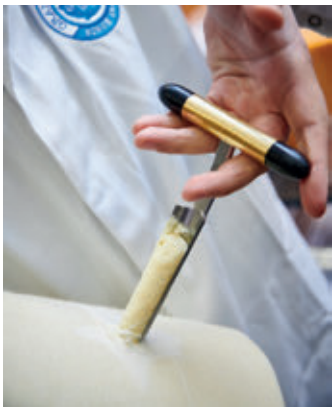
Once laid out, "if something is discolouring or losing its shape, it's not going to look attractive". So keep an eye on how busy the shop is and assess how much you want to put out. And make it attractive. "Think about how you want to present the cheese," Jessica explains. "A nice thing to do is to display cheese on a cracker with a chutney, like a little canapé. That's easy for people to pick up, and showcases more of your products."

> "We rarely have anything that goes up to its 'use by' or 'best before' date, but if we do, it goes home with us, never home with a customer!"
>
> VICTORIA DUNTHORNE, VICTORIA'S CHEESES







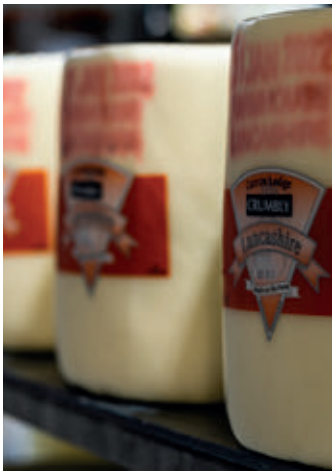


EXPANDING THE TASTE OF TRADITION

Tom Rhodes, director of Carron Lodge, welcomes *Cheese Buyer* readers to an exciting new chapter for the business

At Carron Lodge, cheese is more than just a product – it's a passion passed down through generations. As proud cheesemakers and trusted wholesalers of fine foods, we've long been dedicated to supplying independent retailers, farm shops, and delis across the country with exceptional quality and service.

This year marks an exciting chapter in our journey, as we open a brand-new distribution depot in Somerset. This expansion allows us to enhance our delivery network across Cornwall and Devon – regions known for their love of great food and local produce. Thanks to our own fleet of vehicles, we're able to ensure a seamless, reliable, and personal service that meets the high standards our customers deserve.





We care deeply about the independent retailers we serve. Our team – especially our drivers – take pride in going the extra mile (sometimes literally!) to make sure every delivery is not only on time but arrives with a smile. We believe in building relationships, not just routes, and our drivers love to make a bit of a fuss over our customers.

With this expansion, we're now able to deliver to all parts of Great Britain, with our own vehicles, south of Pitlochry in Scotland. Whether you're nestled in the countryside or in the heart of a coastal town, Carron Lodge is here to bring you the best in cheese and fine foods – delivered with care, consistency, and character.

Farming is at the heart of everything we do, with all our milk still being used for our milk production. We've recently expanded our farm, and in line with our commitment to sustainability, we now run fully on solar energy during daylight hours. Our growing herd of buffalos is also thriving – now up to 38 strong, including a rare and delightful set of triplets born this year.

Innovation is key to our craft, and we continue to explore new frontiers in flavour. Under our Ribblesdale cheese brand, we've recently developed a unique blend of goat curd infused with wildflowers and honey. The result? A delicate, floral sweetness that's as beautiful as it is delicious.

Our Cheddar Gorge Cheese Co. continues to go from strength to strength, with exciting dairy expansion plans set for early next year. We're proud to offer our customers the unique experience of a full tour of the historic caves – where they can witness the magic of our cave-aged cheddar, which remains the only cheddar still made in Cheddar.

At Carron Lodge, tradition and innovation go hand in hand. From our farm to your shop, we're proud to share the flavours of our land – with a smile, a story, and a touch of something special.

CHEESEBOARD MUST-HAVES

- **Ribblesdale Flower & Honey Goat Log**
- **Shipston Blue**
- **Cave Matured Cheddar Gorge**
- **Grandma Singletons Traditional Lancashire**
- **Farm Maid Red Hot Double Gloucester**

> "Whether you're nestled in the countryside or in the heart of a coastal town, Carron Lodge is here to bring you the best in cheese and fine foods – delivered with care, consistency, and character"

Carron Lodge



A trusted cheese and fine food supplier to more than 1,000 independent retailers.

Our Brands

The Cheddar Gorge Cheese Company

the Ribblesdale cheese company

Singletons & Co Cheesemakers & Cheesemongers

Farm Maid

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10 AMERICAN CHEESES TO TRY

Across the pond, cheesemakers are working hard to replicate the success of the modern British craft cheese movement

America might not be the first place you think of when conjuring an image in your mind of artisanal, traditional farmhouse cheeses. However, slowly but surely a dairy revolution is happening.

Driven by rapidly growing consumer interest in natural ingredients, regenerative farming and farmstead produce, a new type of cheesemaker is emerging and evolving in the States. Founded across the country, from the lush pastures of Vermont, to city farms settled just outside of the hubbub of urban life, these are producers experts say we should be taking notice of.

Jen Grimstone-Jones of The Pangbourne Cheese Shop, who last year completed professional qualifications with the American Cheese Society, says there's a huge passion in the country for fine food, adding there are "some incredible cheeses being made".

They are, "proper artisan cheeses, crafted by hand on small farms. We just don't get to see any of it over here. I think a lot of these cheeses would excite our customers, but it's impossible to import them. I would love to be able to showcase some of them in the shop," she says.

Certified cheese professional and educator Kyra James, a member of the American Cheese Society, says makers in the US are paying a huge amount of attention to what's happening on the scene overseas, especially the UK.

There has been, she reveals, a resurgence in the country of speciality food producers since the 80s with a major factor for lack of exporting (apart from trade issues) being the scale of production, which has tended to be small, feeding into local marketplaces.

"In the last 10 to 15 years that scale has grown through more access and more producers. The larger producers get, the more people can enjoy the cheeses. Smaller producers have grown in size whether themselves, or by forming partnerships and co-operatives with other farmers. That has allowed them to have a national footprint," she explains.

Another massive change, that's ongoing, is of the overall vision and perception of American cheese amongst natives. "American is a very industrial country. 90% of our dairy comes from Wisconsin, and a lot of that is industrialised. You have to move to the shorelines and the lush pastures to experience and find these more artisan cheeses."

There is a strong and growing network, Kyra adds, of customers and consumers who appreciate the value of fresh, local food, and supporting the local economy. It's a movement she hopes will continue to flourish.

We know British cheesemongers and wholesalers will be keeping a keen eye on the burgeoning American cheese scene. Here are just 10 varieties Jen and Kyra recommend trying

ROGUE RIVER BLUE, ROGUE CREAMERY, OREGON
This is Jen's favourite, and a top winner at the World Cheese Awards in 2019. Its flavour is influenced by being finished in grapevine leaves soaked in pear spirit. "It has such a complex profile that it's almost impossible to pick out the individual flavours," she says.

HARBISON, JASPER HILL FARM, VERMONT
"This is a top producer with success grown through the support of and support from their local community. With that growth they've been able to sell internationally," says Kyra.

Regeneratively run Jasper Hill Farm operates in a biodiverse landscape, where the cows are grazed on grass, and on homegrown hay, used as sileage in the winter. Their raw milk cheeses are made in the on-site creamery, featuring copper vats reclaimed from France's Jura region.

Jen adores their cheese too. "Their whole set up is amazing, from producing some excellent cheeses, to maturing other makers' cheeses in their own caves. Harbison is a bit like a Vacherin Mont d'Or. It is encircled by a band of locally produced spruce, but when cut the cheese is so soft and unctuous that it runs off the plate – just perfect with a slice of sourdough."

HOOLIGAN, CATO CORNER FARM, CONNECTICUT
Kyra likes this farmstead maker, which produces cheese by hand from a herd of 45 Jersey cows, raised on a pasture-based diet without additives. Hooligan is their signature washed rind variety, made in a single wheel, bathed in brine once a week, and aged for 60 to 75 days. It has a similar taste to French Munster.

KUNIK, NETTLE MEADOW FARM, NEW YORK
"There's nothing better to round off a cheeseboard than this goats' cheese, made from a mixture of goats' milk and cow's cream. They combine into the most delicious,



bloomy rind, triple cream cheese I've ever tasted," says Jen.

PLEASANT RIDGE RESERVE, UPLANDS CHEESE, WISCONSIN
Based at the top of Pleasant Ridge in Southwestern Wisconsin, this dairy grazes its cows across 500 acres of diverse grassland, moving them daily to ensure the continued health of the land and increase biodiversity.

The cows eat only fresh pasture from springtime through to autumn, supplemented with quality grain while they're being milked, which is seasonal and doesn't take place in winter months.

Pleasant Ridge Reserve, "is an Alpine style cheese with an amazing savoury flavour, combined with a rich, fruity finish," says Jen.

PRAIRIE BREEZE CHEDDAR, MILTON CREAMERY, IOWA
Prairie Breeze was Kyra's 'aha' moment. "That cheese for me was where I started to begin to understand it was more than just a product. It's a delicious Cheddar that has a sweetness to it. It's awesome."

The dairy's milk is sourced from farms within a 30-mile radius – all small, and family run, with an emphasis on putting the cows to pasture, where they forage on grasses and legumes.

AFTERGLOW, BLAKESVILLE CREAMERY, WISCONSIN
"This is a goat operation, really focused on sustainability and climate change," says Kyra. "Moving their production from cows to goats helped to lessen their impact on the environment and the cheesemaking process. Every cheese tastes amazing.

Afterglow is a favourite from this maker, which started production during 2020, crafting by hand, and ripening naturally in a state-of-the-art creamery.

It's one of eight in the overall range and is a washed-rind, lactic variety inspired by French Langres, finished with a wash in cherry ale, which brings a clean, fruity minerality to the taste.

TREEHUGGER, PERRYSTEAD DAIRY, PHILADELPHIA
"This is an urban cheesemaker in the heart of the city," says Kyra. "People thought the owner was a bit nuts when he came up with the idea, but now he's getting all sorts of accolades for his innovative thinking – he even has a cheese vending machine! It's amazing you can now get beautiful, delicious artisan cheese from a vending machine in Philly!"

Treehugger is the maker's seasonal cheese, available from November to May. It's made with the enzymes of thistle and lady's bedstraw flowers and belted with spruce bark, which imparts an earthiness. The texture is fudgy, buttery and spoonable.

BAY BLUE, POINT REYES FARMSTEAD CHEESE, CALIFORNIA
Kyra loves this all-female cheesemaking company, which puts sustainability first. The farm runs off methane-powered renewable energy, water is conserved with a reuse and recycle programme, and a great deal of work goes into ensuring the health of the soil and animals.

The family produces 12 cheeses, and Bay Blue is one of their best known. Rustic, mellow and sweet with a hint of salted caramel and a natural rind, it's a local cheeseboard favourite.

MELINDA MAY, MYSTIC CHEESE, CONNECTICUT
This maker, says Kyra, looks to UK styles and traditions to model his cheeses. "He has a lot of love and passion for cheeses made in England, and natural rind styles."

The Gray is his homage to Cheshire cheese, being crumbly, creamy and savoury, with a touch of acidity.





CHEESE FOR ALL

Godminster's new cheeses are not only delicious, but they open the door to a raft of potential new customers too

Somerset-based Godminster, beloved up and down the UK – and beyond – for its carefully curated range of deliciously moreish cheeses, is proud to introduce two new creations to the family: Middlewick Witch and Scarlet Crumb, a mature Cheddar and Red Leicester, respectively.

"They are cousins to the existing range, so very quirky – as you'd expect from Godminster," begins Jessica Kimber-Holloway, commercial and operations director. Quirky is indeed the word many would use to describe the characters of these cheeses, inspired by hunky punks – gargoyle-like figures which are a traditional sight on West Country churches, and the new launches are sure to be fan favourites thanks to their new-to-the-brand format and approachable flavours – not to mention the commitment to sustainability that went into their production.

Future-proofing

"We're working towards making Godminster as green and eco-friendly as possible," explains Jessica. The flow-wrap format of the brand's new cheeses is a case in point – another step in the brand's journey towards sustainability – with work ongoing to ensure that it's as sustainable as can be, plus everything that goes into the brand's cheeses is always consciously sourced.

Sustainably-minded food products often come with a premium price, but that's not the case with Middlewick Witch and Scarlet Crumb; indeed, from day one of their inception the name of the game was to create high quality cheeses which provided the superior taste and quality that Godminster is renowned for, whilst welcoming new budget-conscious customers into the fold.

"We are conscious of where the market currently is economically, and we think creating a cheese that bridges the gap between high value artisanal cheeses and more affordable everyday cheese is the right thing to do," continues Jess. While the milk used in the production of the new cheeses is non-organic, this goes a long way to making them accessible to a wider audience – allowing customers to bring good quality cheese into their day-to-day menus without worrying about the cost.

While there are countless Cheddars on the market – indeed, there are five esteemed cheesemakers located within a tight radius of Godminster's location – Jessica sees this as a boon rather than a threat. "All of our cheesemaking neighbours do things differently and create signature products, and we are honoured to be a part of that tradition. We're approachable and a little bit funky, and with these new launches we hope to invite a wider group of consumers to experience and enjoy great cheese every day."

An exciting opportunity for cheese sellers

Not only are Middlewick Witch and Scarlet Crumb set to be repeat purchases, they provide a unique chance for independents to expand their customer base – without sacrificing the famous Godminster touch. "We're working hard to make these new cheeses stand-out products that are fun for farm shops and delis to stock," says Jessica. "They look and taste different to other options in the cheese counter, and we're excited to be adding this new string to our bow and the counters of *Cheese Buyer* readers."

An appetite for innovation

Followers of Godminster, from newsletter subscribers to social media audiences, were surveyed to find out exactly what they were hungry for, and Red Leicester and a quality, affordable Cheddar came out top. "We're not in it for the one-hit wonders," says Jessica, "these are a carefully considered addition to our range that will stand the test of time. We are confident that it is right for us and our customers."

Both new cheeses debuted at Farm Shop & Deli to rapturous feedback, with loyal customers excited to experience the team's delicious new innovations. "We've become known for our Cheddars, but we've experimented in the past – for example with our Brie – and we're proud to say that we dedicate a lot of time and effort to making sure that everything we do stands up to the high expectations our audience has of our range. Every item in the Godminster range has been very thoroughly considered, and retailers can be confident that the new launches were very much driven by customer demand."

With sales of Middlewick Witch and Scarlet Crumb set to reach heady heights amongst Godminster's loyal fans – new and old – this is, no doubt, an exciting proposition for the independent retail sector.



> "Every item in the Godminster range has been very thoroughly considered, and retailers can be confident that the new launches were very much driven by customer demand"

LEGENDS of the LAND AWAKENED

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BORN IN BRUTON







SWISS MASTERPIECES

Introducing Kaltbach's cave-aged cheeses – finely crafted by centuries-old expertise and provenance

Deep in the mountains of Switzerland's Lucerne canton, a 22-million-year-old sandstone cave plays host to up to 100,000 masterpieces – each carefully presided over by a dedicated team of experts in the craft of cheese. The Kaltbach range of cheeses – Kaltbach Le Gruyère AOP, Kaltbach Emmentaler AOP, Kaltbach Gouda, Kaltbach Appenzeller and Kaltbach Raclette, as well as the unique Kaltbach offerings of Kaltbach Creamy and Kaltbach Truffle – are all optimum examples of their type and boast characteristics entirely unique to the range thanks to their provenance. The Kaltbach cave's naturally constant temperature of 12.5C and humidity levels of 95%, in part thanks to a constant trickle of water from ground level, play an integral part in the optimum quality and resultant worldwide popularity of Kaltbach's range.

An ancient cave with modern value

While today Kaltbach's caves are famed for their labyrinthine nature, this was not always the case, explains Roland Ziswiler, head of operations and cave master of the Kaltbach Cave. Originally discovered by Neolithic farmers, "The Kaltbach caves were initially only 20 meters deep and were used for cheese storage," he says. "They were first mentioned in writing in 1953. Behind this is the visionary pioneering spirit of a small cheese-making business – Refa (Reinhardt and Fankhauser) – which recognized the ideal conditions for cheese refinement in a natural sandstone cave."

The consistently high humidity and mineralized ambient air allowed for a special maturation that significantly influenced the flavour and texture of the cheese, and it took the accumulation of a lot of knowledge and numerous experiments before the maturation process could be optimally controlled. In 1993, Emmi took over the natural cave and has been continuously developing the Kaltbach expertise ever since.

A process helmed by craftsman

The subterraneous passages of the cave, named after Swiss cantons, are populated by 'cave masters' who have honed their craft over a lifetime of hands-on experience. "This is how we create Swiss cheese specialities of the highest quality and finest flavour," says Roland, just one of the professionals who are proud to bring a great deal of passion, dedication and craftsmanship to their invaluable roles.













While Emmi, owner of Kaltbach, is undoubtedly a large-scale business revered around the world, it would be incorrect to assume that the same is true of the stories behind Kaltbach's cheeses. Indeed, the premium quality milk that goes into the production of these fine cheeses is sourced from a small number of diminutive farms – each home to an average of 40 cows.

"Many of the dairies we work with are traditional family and multi-generational businesses – the craft of cheesemaking has been passed down from generation to generation for decades," says Roland. "The Kaltbach team includes numerous long-term employees, some of whom have been with us for over 45 years." This knowledge, developed over the years, is crucial because, especially in cheese maturation, a great deal of experience and a delicate touch are needed to consistently ensure the highest quality.

A unique, expertly honed combination of ingredients go into the making of the cheese itself. "The cheesemaking process is based on genuine craftsmanship, milk of regional origin, and a deep connection to Swiss cheese tradition," explains Roland. In small, local dairies, long-standing recipes are used – about half of the cheeses are made according to the strict guidelines of the AOP specifications, such as Gruyère, Emmentaler, or Appenzeller, all of which are made from raw milk. Other varieties are produced according to other stringent quality standards and are pasteurized. Experienced cheesemakers carefully, meticulously, and passionately control every step of the process.

An internal expert jury and Kaltbach master cheesemakers then select the best wheels from trusted family-run dairies that often produce just a dozen or so wheels a day; a cheese must score 19 out of 20 to be accepted for maturation in the caves. "The decisive factors are flavour, texture, hole formation, appearance – and the ability to mature for up to 12 months under the special climatic conditions of the cave," says Roland. "Only when all parameters are ideally aligned does a cheese emerge with the potential for maturation in the Kaltbach cave."

Kaltbach: where tradition and innovation meet

Today, Kaltbach cheese is one of Emmi's most popular brands – a combination of traditional craftsmanship, innovation, and passion – and the future of cave-aged Kaltbach cheese lies in the combination of tradition and innovation. *Cheese Buyer* readers can play a valuable role in the future of the business by sharing the delicious taste and inspiring story of Kaltbach's cheeses with their audiences. "We have outstanding cheese – now it's about telling more people about the unique origin of our cheese specialties and their fascinating production history, as well as bringing them closer to the enjoyment of cave-aged cheese," says Roland.

"Our goal is to continue to delight even more cheese connoisseurs with the best Kaltbach premium cheese in the future – driven by genuine Swiss craftsmanship, high quality, passion, and decades of expertise."

A SUSTAINABLE RANGE

Sustainability plays an important role in Kaltbach's range of fine quality cheeses. "As natural products – each cheese is made with milk, cultures, salt and rennet without additives – each cheese in the range is matured in the natural cave in an especially energy-efficient manner and under natural conditions," explains Roland. "In this way, we combine tradition, craftsmanship, and responsibility for the future.

DID YOU KNOW?

With its selected cheese specialties, Emmi delights millions of people worldwide and was honored with 25 awards at the prestigious World Cheese Awards in 2024



> "Our goal is to continue to delight even more cheese connoisseurs with the best Kaltbach premium cheese in the future – driven by genuine Swiss craftsmanship, high quality, passion, and decades of expertise"









RIPE FOR ENJOYMENT

Harvey & Brockless offer a comprehensive range of deliciously different products ideal for the discerning cheesemonger, says Nicky Philp, purchasing director

Based in Worcestershire, the Cheese Cellar Dairy is our very own cheesemaking operation, headed up by the clever and charming George Bramham. Cheese Cellar Dairy was first established in 2011 as we wanted to expand and grow our fresh and ripened goat's cheeses which were in high demand by our top customers, such as restaurants and hotels, airlines, and sporting stadiums. To help us achieve a top artisan cheese, we sent George to spend a week in Valencay region of France to learn directly the techniques used in making these types of cheese. We wanted to create a range of cheeses similar to the traditional Loire Valley-style ripened goat's cheeses.

After months of research, trials, and hard work, including a stint making goats' cheese in the Loire Valley, plus some epic arguments about cheese names, we finally came up with the five soft goat's cheeses named Ashlynn, Clara, Luna, Blanche and Trufflyn. Over the past couple of years we added two more cheeses to the family, made with cow's milk: Delilah is a triple cream cow's milk cheese in the shape of a pyramid; and Greta is a creamy cow's curd cheese infused with garlic and basil. All of our cheeses are made with milk from local farms and each has its own distinct personality.

Award-winning goat's cheeses

Our Ashlynn goat's cheese flavour develops beneath the rind and becomes increasingly runny and intense as it matures. A cheese of contrasts in more ways than one. Ashlynn has a striking monochrome appearance thanks to a pure white interior set against a dark ash-coated rind and a thin line of charcoal running through the cheese.

Our goat's cheeses can be perfectly paired with our Harvey & Brockless Kitchen Smoked Chilli Jelly and Comfy Onion Marmalade.

Introducing Harvey & Brockless Kitchen

Our Harvey & Brockless Kitchen range offers a broad selection of bespoke sauces, marinades, and dips. Each sauce is carefully tailored to support busy kitchens, providing chefs with an efficient and easy way to deliver great flavour to their customers, without compromising on quality. We also offer a diverse range of chutneys to pair with cheese, from classic Comfy Onion Marmalade to Smoked Chilli Jelly. This range consists of eight chutneys and jellies and these are made at our production site in Evesham.

Exciting launches on the horizon...

This spring, we are launching five new sauces, which will be featured at our Meet the Makers event this May. These new sauces have been carefully created by our Product Development Kitchen and have been launched to follow trends and meet the demand from our customers.

> "All of our cheeses are made with milk from local farms and each has its own distinct personality"



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A SLICE OF EUROPE

British cheese may be continually rising in popularity, but there will always be a place in the heart of counters for Continental varieties, say cheesemongers

If you ask any cheesemonger today what their favourites are yes, of course, there will be a classic Cheddar, perhaps a sprinkle of new wave British artisans … and always, always something from Europe.

A Brie that's just started to become oozy and gooey under the rind. A scoop of Gorgonzola Dolce with sun-ripened figs. Chunks of aged Manchego and olives alongside a glass of chilled white wine.

Unless your ethos is to stock British only, there is huge merit in dedicating a section of your counter to Continental varieties. "I cannot imagine having a cheese shop without these cheeses," says The Cheese Lady, Svetlana Kukharchuk. "They are staples. They are must-haves."

They (and we're referring to the likes of Brie, Mozzarella and Parmesan) are also recognisable to shoppers, forming an essential 'stepping stone' in fine food retail. Stocking 'the classics' gives new customers somewhere to start from, something they can understand. It's the retailer's job to take them on the next part of their journey, making suggestions that lean into their existing preferences.

Heritage is another reason to keep these cheeses in your wheelhouse, adds Svetlana, pointing to the fact that although we try to mimic certain types here, it's the terroir and historical processes that give many cheeses of France, Italy, Spain, Switzerland and beyond their authentic, delicious taste. "These cheeses have to come from the land where they were born to give their best expression. It is also so important for us to help the people who create these cheeses so they can carry on with their traditions," she says.

Ned Palmer of The Cheese Tasting Co thinks British consumers are still attracted to what's often coined as 'fancy cheese' (referring to those from Europe). It would be unimaginable, he says, to not stock a Brie, Feta or Parmesan.

"The main thing for me, is it's not untrue that France is the centre of excellence for cheese. Why should you stock it? Because it's really really good."

Vive la France

Food writer Ned spent months across the pond for his most recent, award-winning book *A Cheesemonger's Tour de France*, and it cemented, for him, that the country really is at the epicentre of fine cheesemaking.

If there's one cheese he cannot live without, and one he suggests cheesemongers should always have in stock, no matter what, it's Brie. And for him, it's Dongé Brie de Meaux that tops the cheesy charts. "It's got this incredible golden paste. They get really good milk and they really treat the curd well, so you're not losing any of that butterfat," he explains. "The process of maturing is so attentive and so skilful." Ned explains that on a tour of the factory, the maker had multiple 'tells' from years of experience that helped him intrinsically know the cheese was being made correctly, from a patch of light reflected on the floor that indicated the moisture of the curd was the correct level, to the scent of green apple as the cheese ripens (a yeasty smell means it's going too fast).





It's a masterclass in cheesemaking Ned says.

Roquefort should also be in the mix when looking to France. "It has to be matured in caves in the village of Roquefort. In those caves they still use wood for shelving, and it's all black and shiny because it's so old – it could be 100 years old. All the time these lovely, fatty cheeses have been soaking into the wood.

"They don't need fridges, and they don't need fans because the cracks and lines in the caves don't reach the outside. Air seeps in and it's naturally cool because they're underground." The innate flora of the caves is what informs the striking flavour of these cheeses, which can't be mimicked in the UK. "In England the EHO would shut these kinds of places down straight away," Ned laughs. "There's nothing like Roquefort. It's completely of its own character."

All eyes on Italy

Svetlana thinks the cheeses of Italy deserve more of a spotlight, and she's always adding new varieties to her stocklist.

La Tur and Taleggio are enduring favourites, as is Pecorino Sardo. "There are actually so many different varieties of Pecorino," she explains. "Sometimes people forget it's a type of cheese, rather than one specific cheese. There are many hundreds of them in Italy. We stock Pecorino Sardo because it's very complex and can be used in cooking or for general enjoyment with a glass of wine."

Fiore Sardo strikes a chord with customers too. "It's a more ancient variety of Pecorino from Sardinia that's lightly smoked. It's very nice."

Gorgonzola, of course, is a must-have, and if you have space (Svetlana doesn't, she laments) get yourself a big whole scooping variety to bring added theatre and excitement to the experience for shoppers.

As a wild card, Svetlana says Italy's 'drunken cheeses' (those bathed in wine) are incredibly delicious and sell well throughout the year.

Ubriaco Rosso is a fruity little number, soaked in red wine. "And another super special one is a blue cheese, Basajo. Think of a nice





strong blue sheep's milk cheese and imagine it bathed in sweet white wine from Sicily. You have the saltiness from the cheese and the sweetness from the wine. It's hideously expensive, but worth it!"

Don't forget to order regular deliveries of good quality Mozzarella (pizza-making at home is on the up in Britain) or Burrata, which consumers are loving right now.

Then, of course, there's the 'big one' – Parmigiano Reggiano. Svetlana has trialled both 12 and 24-month varieties in her shop, but it's the 30-month aged Parmesan that makes her palate sing.

"The flavour is a lot more interesting and developed, and the texture is a lot harder. For a connoisseur, somebody who likes to appreciate all the complexity and different flavours, I think that age is just spot on," she says.

When buying, make sure your wheel is marked with the oval stamp from the Parmigiano Reggiano Consortium, Svetlana advises. It's only given where cheeses pass grading at 12 months. "Those that don't make the cut don't get stamped."

If you want to take your offering to the next level, Svetlana says, look for the 'red cow' or Vacche Rossa variety of Parmesan. "That is the créme de la créme but it also adds to the price." Choosing to stock it, "depends on whether your customers will appreciate that kind of quality".

Spanish specialities

"Spanish cheese is just as important as charcuterie when it comes to creating outstanding grazing boards," says Jesus Llamazares, owner of specialist Spanish deli, Los OrigenES.

With only 200 or so cheeses in its national larder, the country can't claim to be one of the largest producers in the world, but what it lacks in quantity it more than makes up for in quality he says.

This is especially true of sheep and goats' milk varieties. While the UK struggles with supply of these milks, at a time when demand is high, the proliferation of sheep and goats' milk cheeses from Spain year-round could prove a real solution for cheesemongers.

Everybody knows Manchego, so it should definitely be a consideration in the counter, and is a cheese that perfectly lends itself to the charcuterie board trend. "A well-aged Manchego – matured for 12 to 24 months – paired with 100% acorn-fed Iberico ham makes for the perfect tapas combination," Jesus says.

Speciality retailers should, he says, be more considered of their purchasing of this cheese, which is not just one variety, but comes in a range of curations, from 15 days (soft) up to 24 months. "It's very interesting seeing people's faces when they try a Manchego with 15 days curation," Jesus adds. "It's the only one that's pasteurised – the other ones are made with raw milk."

Another little-known fact about Manchego, he continues, is that it should only be made with sheep's milk. "Some are sold here with cow's milk or goats' milk, but that is not Manchego. In Spain there are strong regulations, and there is a PDO regulating how to make the product, and what you can put i it. The regulations say Manchego can only be made with sheep's milk, and only the sheep of the Manchega breed."

This is important because, "even in Spain, some cheeses have come out similar to Manchego with a blend of different sheep's milk, made in a similar manufacturing process. But it's not Manchego".

A more exclusive Spanish cheese, and one Jesus personally loves, is Torta del Casar from Extremadura – a strong sheep's milk variety that has become a customer favourite at Los Origenes.

"Normally the curation is two months, and the taste is light and a little bitter," Jesus explains. "Because of the climate of the area they don't have a lot of plants. The sun is powerful, but thistles grow quite strong, and so they use this for the rennet. To be honest, this is very interesting to see, because people are starting to use other types of vegetables as rennet now – pineapple, figs and papaya."

Jesus describes Torta del Casar as "melt-in-the-mouth" and fully spreadable once out of the fridge. "Leave it for 30 to 40 minutes at room temperature and put a breadstick inside. It becomes almost like a cream or a fondue," he says.

The age of Alpine

Buttery, supple and open-textured, speckled with holes or flaky, savoury and almost spicy – to discover Alpine cheeses is to open the door to an entire world of flavours.

As British cheese lovers expand their knowledge of artisan varieties, seeking out better quality from specialists, so the demand for 'newness' grows, and cheesemongers (and wholesalers) say they're seeing Alpine styles gaining a lot of attention at the counter.

These are cheeses that pack a punch, both visually and taste-wise, are often lactose-free, and cater to shoppers' environmental concerns, with the majority made in a sustainable, natural way, according to time-honoured traditions.

The 'transhumance' (moving of animals to summer pastures also known as alpages) happens in mountain ranges across the world, says Swiss cheese expert Rachael Sills, who adds, "The European Alps have an environment, culture and history which is unique and special."

Making Alpine cheeses is "a time-consuming craft, performed by families who often trace back generations of summers working on the same Alps area. Alpine varieties are some of the ultimate expressions of the Slow Food movement, and the Alpine environment creates a diversity of plants, and the milk, that cannot be replicated elsewhere".

Rachael puts increased British interest in these cheeses down to awareness. "More people know it exists." And they're won over by the fact these products are not intensively farmed. "In Switzerland, for example, no herbicides or fungicides are allowed to be used on Alpine pastures."

They're also attracted by the fact, she says, that Alpine milk is from grass-fed herds, actively encouraged to root, graze and forage.

Popular varieties to include in the counter include Le Gruyère AOP, Comté AOP, Beaufort AOC, Tomme and Cantal. Alp Blossom has gained a very strong following in the last few years too. But how about beefing up your selection by trialling lesser-known (to UK consumers) types such as Tessiner Alpkase AOP, Bitto Storico or Sprinz AOP?

With a longer shelf life (most Alpine cheeses are of the harder variety) they'll stay in peak condition for quite some time, giving breathing space for you to sample over a number of weeks.

> "Stocking 'the classics' gives customers somewhere to start from, something they can understand"



A PASSION FOR EXCELLENCE

Treur Kaas has been a family name in the cheese world for 70 years, delighting food lovers around the world

In 1955, grandfather (Evert) Treur started with nothing more than a bicycle and a dream: to bring the most delicious cheeses to the people. What began as a modest business has grown into an internationally renowned cheese business. Today, 70 years later, Treur Kaas is an established name in the cheese world, exporting the finest cheese specialties to no fewer than 17 countries.



Craftsmanship at its heart

The secret behind this success? An unwavering dedication to quality and craftsmanship. Treur Kaas is known for its artisanal cheeses, carefully matured and lovingly selected. Whether it's traditional farmstead cheese, organic specialities or innovative new flavours, the company always meets the desires of cheese lovers worldwide. In addition to focusing on quality, Treur Kaas places great value on sustainability. Collaborating with farmers and cheesemakers who produce responsibly underscores the company's commitment to a better future for both people and the environment.



Personal, expert support

Their vision? Developing and maturing superior cheeses for cheese specialists with passion and expertise. As an honest and reliable partner, Treur Kaas builds sustainable relationships with suppliers and customers – and their customers rely on personal guidance and customized sales support. Together responsible for success, that is everyone's strength!

A business that started with a bicycle in 1955 has now become a global success story. Yet, the essence of Treur Kaas remains the same: passion, craftsmanship, and an endless love for cheese.

PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT

Treur Kaas offers special cheeses made according to its own unique recipes: TKSR (Treur Kaas Special Recipe). These exquisite crumbly cheeses come in three different aging stages: Flinck, Rijck and Brockel.



> "What started with a bicycle in 1955 has now become a global success story. Yet, the essence of Treur Kaas remains the same: passion, craftsmanship, and an endless love for cheese"

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THE ANCIENT TASTE OF THE ALPS

A unique combination of nature, time-honoured skills and passionate craft are behind the worldwide success of Le Gruyère AOP

Since its creation in 1115AD, the cheesemakers behind Le Gruyère AOP have worked tirelessly and passionately to create one of Switzerland's best-loved exports. Made for centuries in the Western cantons of the country (namely Fribourg, Vaud, Jura, Bern and Neuchâtel) the cheese has become an icon for cheese lovers across the world – no doubt aided by its makers' dedication to upholding the strict standards required to uphold its AOP accreditation.

In 1762 the cheese gained its now-famous name, yet without the quality standards which were set to be established across Europe in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the cheese was often imitated which led to lesser-quality wheels. Once its AOP (Protected Designation of Origin) credentials were established across Europe, the quality of Le Gruyère AOP never wavered.

The 160 dairies which produce Le Gruyère AOP play a vital role in maintaining the quality of the cheese. The accreditation requires that they uphold the rigid specifications set at every stage of the process – from the production of the milk used to make the cheese to its ageing – in order to maintain the internationally-renowned flavour and quality of Le Gruyère AOP. Distance and speed are also key; milk must be produced within 12.4 miles of the cheesemaking site, and must have been transported from the farm to the vat within 18 hours.

Due to the simplicity of Le Gruyère AOP – its only ingredients are milk, salt and animal rennet, not to mention time and expertise – the environment from which the milk comes is of paramount importance. Thankfully, the Swiss pastures on which the cows graze are full of natural herbs and flora, imbuing the cheese with a unique taste of the Alps. This attention to quality doesn't pause during the colder seasons; instead of silage, the cows are fed hay when temperatures are too low for grazing.

AN AWARD-WINNING CHEESE

Le Gruyère AOP is the winner of numerous awards, and no wonder – its consistently unique and perfectly balanced flavour, as well as its production by skilled cheesemaking experts who utilise knowledge and techniques passed down the generations, means that this ancient cheese has become a modern-day icon of the cheese counter. Indeed, it is the only cheese that has won the title of Best Cheese in the World at the World Cheese Awards five times.

Tasting notes

Whether your customers are seeking a perfectly balanced milder cheese or a punch-packing burst of savoury flavour, Le Gruyère AOP has it covered

- Le Gruyère AOP Classic - aged six-nine months: nutty, floral and sweet, this option is ideal for those who prefer milder cheese
- Le Gruyère AOP Réserve - aged 10 months and above: aromatic and flavourful, this variation boasts a unique complexity and slight crystalline crunch
- Le Gruyère AOP Alpage - a seasonal cheese made in the High Alps

> The Swiss pastures on which the cows graze are full of natural herbs and flora, imbuing the cheese with a unique taste of the Alps

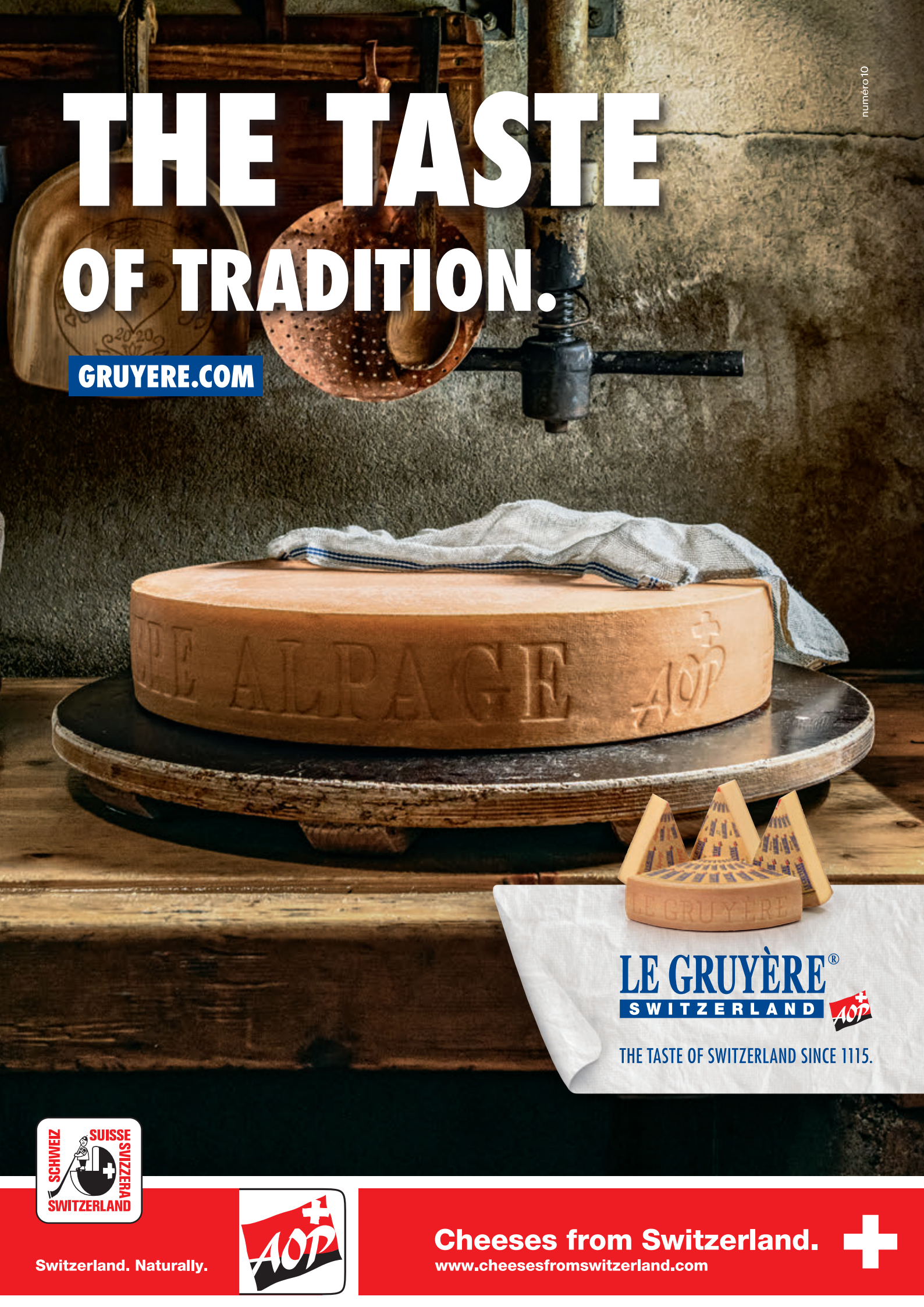
A CHEESE FOR EVERYONE

Award-winning Le Gruyere AOP is suitable for all cheese lovers to enjoy, thanks to being naturally gluten and lactose-free – so nobody, including lactose-intolerant or coeliac customers – need miss out on this one-of-a-kind cheese.



Le Gruyère AOP is a deliciously versatile ingredient; visit gruyere.com/en/recipes for a host of serving suggestions




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A PIONEER FOR BETTER

From a farmhouse operation to internationally-renowned producer, Shepherds Purse is a leading light in the artisan cheese mission. Caroline Bell shares its story

Shepherds Purse Cheeses began as a passion project in the 1980s, founded by our mum, Judy Bell MBE, a pharmacist by training before taking on the farm with dad and raising us four children. When we launched in 1989, the British cheese industry, and indeed food culture in the UK, was a very different landscape. Cheese production was still dominated by Cheddars and territorials made at scale thanks to rationing after the Second World War and the impact of milk quotas after that. However, influenced by broader movements in food, farming, and gastronomy, there was a quiet revolution beginning: one that Judy became a part of. Making cheese from ewe's milk was rare in the UK at that time, but thankfully our venture proved to be part of a larger movement towards quality local food and more adventurous food tastes.

It seemed that whilst there were seeds being planted in the 70s, the industry began to flourish in the 1980s and 1990s as consumer tastes started to shift and government policy changes unlocked more diverse growth. The emergence of the Slow Food movement, a growing interest in provenance, and an appreciation for traditional methods all helped catalyse change. Farmers' markets then led to farm shops, more independent delis, and better cheese counters which opened up new routes to market. The growth of food culture and chef-led restaurants also helped shine a light on British artisan cheeses. Suddenly, being small-batch and artisan was not



a disadvantage – it was a story of quality and care.

Driven by a combination of passion, determination, purpose, and place, a new generation of makers helped reclaim Britain's place on the world cheese map – and we've been proud to be part of that movement. In 2025, the cheese industry is more connected, complex, and collaborative than ever. There's a growing emphasis on sustainability, and local food systems from regenerative farming practices and new technology. Technology and tradition now co-exist, with smart systems helping to track quality, provenance, and compliance, while the heart of the craft, the milk, microbes, and time remains the same. The ecosystem also includes increasingly savvy consumers who seek transparency and taste, and retailers who understand how to champion artisan products.

Our hopes for the future are rooted in a deep respect for where we've come from and a clear vision for where we're going. We want to continue growing in a way that honours our history, crafting exceptional cheese with integrity, care, and a true sense of place, supporting excellent British agriculture and the community, while embracing innovation, creativity and sustainability.

We hope to lead not just through the quality and uniqueness of our cheeses, but through the values behind them: we operate and are successful thanks to the success of the whole ecosystem in which we exist, and the foundation of that is nature and sustainable agriculture. We want to work together and demonstrate that a food business can grow commercially and grow its positive impact at the same time. Human and environment health comes from taking a holistic approach rooted in regeneration and nourishment.

For the speciality cheese industry more broadly, my hope is that we continue to become even more connected and collaborative. That small producers have a stronger collective voice, with the support they need to thrive in the face of shifting costs and market pressures. That we continue to protect and promote the uniqueness of what we do, not only in terms of product, but in the passion, stories and traditions that sit behind each producer.

Ultimately, I hope we as an industry can continue to educate and inspire. The greater understanding people have of how cheese is made, where it comes from, and the care and skill that goes into it, the more they will value it, as a food, as part of local culture, and as a connection to nature on their plate.






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CREATING MOMENTS

The cheeses of Entremont Sélection are not only delicious, they also represent decades of quality and care

Since 1948, Entremont has carried on the excellence of French cheesemaking expertise. Born in the heart of the Alps and founded by the three Entremont brothers, the brand draws on decades of tradition and know-how to offer authentic and flavourful cheeses.

With nearly 80 years of experience, Entremont carefully selects exceptional cheeses to preserve their true, authentic taste. This commitment to quality has established the brand as a benchmark in cheeses and speciality cheese products.

A diverse variety of delicious cheeses

The Entremont Sélection range includes Comté PDO, French Gruyère PGI, Bleu PDO, Fourme d'Ambert PDO, Roquefort PDO, and soft cheeses, matured by our master cheesemakers, who make the most of our terroirs, to offer a complete and diverse range of flavours, sure to suit every palate.

Discerning fine food retailers looking for a stand-out products to feature in their cheese counters will not be disappointed by the range – and shoppers and buyers alike can be confident that the cheese they're purchasing is of the utmost quality.

Attention to detail at every step

At Entremont, each cheese is the result of mastered expertise, combining a rigorous selection of ingredients with precise production techniques. We oversee every step, from milk transformation to cellar maturing and cutting, to ensure a perfect texture and a rich palette of flavours.

Entremont Sélection highlights its commitment to the cooperative through cheeses made from 100% French milk, produced in close collaboration with small-scale farms operating under conditions similar to those of family-run farms.

With high quality milk at the heart of Entremont's range, the team is passionate about looking after the farmers who supply just that. Indeed, founded with solidarity at its core, the cooperative guarantees its farmers fair compensation, ensuring the sustainability of their expertise and a production that respects the local terroir.

Once the milk has been shared with the cheesemaking team, the skills demonstrated within the range extend. This expertise is fully expressed in the maturing process, a key stage where the cheeses within Entremont Sélection develop their full aromatic richness. Carefully matured in expertly managed cellars, they reveal unique and genuine flavours.

The Entremont cheese Sélection brings people together, creating moments to share around exceptional products – whether it's the variety of aromas in Comté, the fruity notes of Gruyère, the bold character of blue cheeses, or the creamy softness of Brie.

“The Entremont cheese Sélection brings people together, creating moments to share around exceptional products – whether it's the variety of aromas in Comté, the fruity notes of Gruyère, the bold character of blue cheeses, or the creamy softness of Brie”

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25 YEARS STRONG

By staying true to its roots and delivering consistently excellent cheese, Snowdonia has become one of the fine food world's best-loved brands

Mention the name 'Snowdonia' to any cheese fan, and no doubt they will respond with a smile as well as a rundown of their favourite cheeses in the range (and recommendations of how they are best enjoyed). The business is loved across its home county and far beyond and has won numerous awards – testament to the craft that goes into the creation of its range.

"As we approach our 25th anniversary next year, we're proud to reflect on a journey defined by our award-winning product range, and a deep connection to our North Wales roots," begins Richard Newton-Jones, commercial director. "From humble beginnings, Snowdonia Cheese Co has grown into a globally recognised brand, available in over 30 countries and stocked by premium retailers and fine food specialists across the UK."

Black Bomber is a renowned strong seller across the UK, adored by cheese lovers young and old, and the rest of Snowdonia's varied range – complete with upsell opportunities – is sure to delight *Cheese Buyer* readers' customers. "Our Black Bomber Extra Mature Cheddar has become a multi-award-winning icon, and we've continued to innovate with unique offerings such as Truffle Trove and Rock Star," continues Richard. "Over the years, we've expanded our range beyond cheese to include cheese bakes, artisanal chutneys and accompaniments – all carefully crafted to elevate the cheese experience."

Primed for success

Snowdonia go above and beyond in their efforts to support retailers, supplying much more than its superb product range to boost sales. "We're committed to supporting fine food retailers with everything they need to showcase our range in the most impactful way," says Richard. "Our support goes far beyond supplying award-winning cheese – we offer fully integrated marketing resources to help drive sales and inspire shoppers.

"This includes our themed campaign kits, centred around popular cheese occasions such as the ultimate cheese toastie, gourmet cheeseburger, or perfect cheese board. Each kit contains recipe leaflets, tasting stock for sampling, and eye-catching shelf wobblers."

This support is also available in-person and digitally for optimum success, explains Richard. "We also provide social media toolkits and staff training. Our goal is to create an engaging customer journey – helping retailers bring the Snowdonia experience to life."

Snowdonia's wide-reaching range underwent a redesign in 2024 to highlight its quality and provenance, and the new look has proven popular with customers of all persuasions. "The rebrand has been incredibly well received," says Richard. "Stockists and consumers alike have embraced the refined look and feel, which reflects the exceptional quality of our products and our commitment to craftsmanship. The new packaging proudly celebrates our Welsh heritage."

The new look hasn't just proven to be attractive, it's achieved tangible positive results too. "We've seen increased engagement across digital platforms and positive feedback from both new and long-standing Snowdonia consumers. Retailers have also reported that the updated design helps the product stand out on shelves, boosting awareness and sales," explains Richard.

A deliciously hot future

With Snowdonia leading the charge when it comes to tasty new iterations of classic cheeses, you can be sure that the team is constantly creating new products to delight its fanbase. "Innovation continues to drive us forward," says Richard. "We previewed our new Hot Honey at the Farm Shop & Deli Show, launching this June. It's a bold blend of single-origin blossom honey and fiery South American Scotch Bonnet chilli, crafted in traditional copper pans for the perfect balance of citrusy sweetness and savoury heat." This trending condiment is more versatile than you might think: "It's the ideal pairing for cheese, charcuterie, and more," says Richard.

Retailer support and an innovative – and constantly evolving – product range to boot; Snowdonia is the smart choice for discerning cheese retailers.





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NEW for 2025: introducing Hot Honey, our single-origin blossom honey infused with the bold and fruity heat of South American Scotch Bonnet chilli.

SCAN FOR MARKETING SUPPORT & SALES ENQUIRIES

FLOWER MEADOW IS A TASTE

The future is bright for flower meadow cheeses, says Affineur Walo

Have you noticed it too? Cheeses are getting more and more boring. All the character is gone. I always notice it when I sit on the jury at international competitions. One time I had fifty industrial Cheddar blocks to taste and rate. Each one tasted like the others; it was really impossible to say which was better.

But why is that? It's quite simple: because you can no longer taste the flower meadow. With pasteurising and processing, the whole story, the whole taste – the whole flower meadow – is removed.

Every time I come to the raw milk cheeses, I am overwhelmed by the variety of the flavours. Of course, not every cheese tastes good to me, but if they have character, they will never be boring.

That's why I decided to create a new quality label for cheeses with full flavour, cheeses with character. I thought for a long time about how to define this label and, while trying out more cheese, I suddenly knew: what makes these raw milk cheeses special is the flower meadow that you can taste.

What is a flower meadow cheese?

The short definition is simple: it is a cheese made with untreated raw milk. But not all cheeses made with raw milk are flower meadow cheeses.

Why does flower meadow cheese taste so amazing?

The traditional production from untreated raw milk guarantees that the full flavour is preserved along with the vitamins and trace elements in the milk. Many industrial cheeses rely on highly standardised milk, safe and predictable, yes, but often lacking the nuance that makes traditional cheese so exciting. It's not only the flavours that disappear, but also some of the vitamins and trace elements.

Apart from that: if you had the choice between cheese from a cow that was kept in a barn and fed on fermented silage, or a cow that spends the summer romping around on flower meadows in the Alps, munching herbs, and eats dried hay in winter, which would you choose?

Flower meadow cheeses aren't just delicious – they are a commitment to biodiversity, artisan craftsmanship, and animal welfare. For shop owners and cheese lovers alike they offer something truly special: flavour with a story.

FLOWER MEADOW CHEESE: AFFINEUR WALO VARIETIES

- Red Nose Gold Label
- Red Wine Farmer Cheese
- Jura Mountain Cheese
- Comté Antoine
- Creamy Thurgau Lion Cheese
- Gallus
- Stärnächäs
- Le Gruyère AOP
- Emmentaler AOP





A FAMLY AFFAIR

Introducing The Fox Family: a modern British cheesemaking legacy from Belton Farm



At Belton Farm, nestled in the rolling hills of Shropshire, cheesemaking is more than a craft, it's a family tradition. For four generations, the Beckett family has poured their passion and expertise into producing exceptional cheese. Today, that legacy lives on through a bold, contemporary range that champions the very best of Modern British cheesemaking The Fox Family.

A heritage built on craft

Since 1922, the family has been making handcrafted cheese, guided by a deep respect for provenance and the land. The milk is sourced exclusively from local, family-run farms, all within 25 miles of the dairy. The cows are free-range and grass-fed, ensuring not only the highest quality milk but also supporting sustainable farming practices that protect our countryside for future generations.

Every cheese made is a celebration of craftsmanship. Our expert cheesemakers and graders work with skill and precision, using recipes developed and refined over many years to produce cheese of exceptional flavour and character. Led by managing director Justin Beckett, the third generation of the Beckett family, and with Poppy Beckett representing the fourth generation in marketing, Belton Farm is a proud family business with its eyes on the future.

Meet the Fox family

Red Fox: Matured for over 16 months, Red Fox is the result of a unique recipe and carefully selected cultures, producing a cheese with a cunningly complex flavour sweet, savoury, and deeply satisfying.

Smoked Red Fox: This carefully matured cheese, typically 16–18 months, is gently smoked over oak chips, creating a rich, aromatic layer that complements its sweet-savoury complexity and signature crunch.

Silver Fox: Handcrafted and matured for up to 20 months, Silver Fox offers a rugged mouthfeel and a richness of flavour, first savoury and robust, then hints of caramel sweetness, ending with a creamy finish and satisfying crunch.

> “Red Fox has seen +17% value growth and +16% volume growth”

SOURCE: KANTAR WORLD PANEL, 52 W/E FEBRUARY 2025





IMAGES: LEEW.IMAGES@GMAIL.COM

FLAVOUR FIRST

With a range of flavours that will keep your customers coming back for more, Croome Cheese is a smart stocking choice

Taste plays a vital part in the creation of any cheese, and with years of experience of creating moreish flavour combinations under their collective belt, the team at Croome Cheese is perfectly placed to satisfy your customers' cravings for delicious cheese – whatever their preferences.

Croome Cheese's story begins just over 100 years ago, when Nick Hodgetts' family started farming on the Croome Estate – a "beautifully manicured estate of 15,000 acres designed by Capability Brown". Nick was born on the estate, and this provenance inspired the name of the company that he would go on to build with his wife Anita 15 years ago. The pair's daughter and son-in-law have now joined the business, aiding its evolution into a cheese business that not only satisfies the demands of 2025's cheese lover but tells its story with pride.

Locally-sourced ingredients played a starring role in the newly-minted cheeses, "ideally sourced from the Croome Estate" for optimum provenance. This dedication to supporting fellow local producers where possible still rings true today.

For example, "the honey that goes into our Fig & Honey cheese is made by bees that forage on the farm", says Nick, "and while Lea & Perrins Worcester Sauce isn't exactly a small-scale business, they're located around a mile away from us so we're proud to use them as a supplier."

A generous offering

The Croome Cheese range now consists of 15 varieties in three formats, offering Cheese Buyer readers a wide range of options to choose from to best suit their clientele. The cutting cheese format is perfect for providing a showstopping centrepiece for cheese counters, while the waxed truckles are ideal for gifting and cheeseboards for special occasions. The innovative pre-packed wedge is a prime option for sustainably-minded shoppers looking for a convenient option, as all elements of its packaging are recyclable. What's more, it is resealable and its semi-rigid pack protects the cheese in the fridge.

With such an array of cheeses up their sleeve, it's no wonder that Nick and the rest of the Croome Cheese team like to keep pairings simple: "Personally, I love our cheese with the red, white and sparkling wine made using the grapes from the vineyard on the farm, but there's not enough to go round!"

Thankfully, the flavour bomb nature of these cheeses mean that – save for a cracker or hunk of bread – no additional accompaniments are required. "We've done what a chef would do in terms of providing the ultimate pairings," says Nick. "We know that figs and honey pair beautifully with a vintage Cheddar, so we're offering all three in one convenient – and delicious – package! Equally, mustard is a delicious addition to cauliflower cheese, so I always make mine with The Colonel Mustard."

As well as having a deliciously versatile range, Croome Cheese are very committed to supporting their retail customers wherever possible. For example, they have taster day 'survival kits 'available, which includes everything one would need to run their own tasting event, to either launch the product or get shoppers' tastebuds tickling. Where possible they also support their local stores with in-person tastings.







AN AWARD-WINNING RANGE

Croome Cheese have won numerous awards over the years, including Gold in their class at the International Cheese and Dairy Awards with four of their fantastic creations, including the innovative Runaway Relish in 2023. The Whittington Oak Smoked, a three times gold winner, which is smoked traditionally over oak logs in our smokehouse for 12 hours; Tintern, a delicious pickled onion flavoured Cheddar and Worcester Sauce & Shallot, a true nod to their hometown. Furthermore, they have won 'Supreme Champion' awards, 'Peoples Choice' and best 'Territorial cheese' for various products at the Royal Three Counties Show due their exceptional flavour combinations.

> "The Croome Cheese range now consists of 15 varieties in three formats, offering *Cheese Buyer* readers a wide range of options to choose from to best suit their clientele"



TASTE REIGNS SUPREME

Croome Cheese is lovingly made on our family farm in Worcestershire. A varied range of flavour-packed cheeses that do the hard work so you don't have to!

croomecuisine.com 01905 350 788 info@croomecuisine.com

TRADITION AT ITS HEART

Cheese Buyer tells the story of the growth of Joseph Heler and the Cheshire Cheese Company



Nestled in the heart of the Cheshire countryside, near the market town of Nantwich, the Joseph Heler family dairy on Laurels Farm has been a cornerstone of British cheesemaking for over a century. It was here, in the farmhouse kitchen, that Joseph Heler's grandmother began the family tradition of making a single Cheshire cheese every day, a practice that would become the foundation of a renowned legacy.

In 1957, Joseph Heler established his own company, Joseph Heler Cheese, carrying forward the rich cheesemaking traditions passed down through the generations. Today, the company remains based at Laurels Farm in Hatherton, Nantwich, continuing to produce traditional cheeses including Cheshire cheese to time-honoured recipes.

As the business grew, Joseph Heler Cheese adapted to the evolving landscape, expanding its reach and refining its offerings. In 2022, a significant milestone was achieved with the acquisition of Lymn Bank Farm, one of the UK's premier waxing specialists, to strengthen the groups in-house waxing capabilities. The group has full control over the 'farm-to-fork' journey of its cheese, from sourcing milk from their network of local farmers to crafting, waxing, and distributing its products both domestically and internationally, solidifying its position in the premium cheese market.

The expansion of the group has had a profound impact on the growth and success of The Cheshire Cheese Company brand, enhancing the product range and reinforcing the company's ability to deliver exceptional cheeses to an expanding global customer base.

Building on a rich cheesemaking heritage and responding to the growing demand for premium, handcrafted cheeses, The Cheshire Cheese Company is committed to innovation, consistently introducing new products and flavours that captivate and delight the contemporary consumer.

This strategy has enabled the brand to become one of the UK's leading online cheese retailers, achieving significant success across its website, Amazon, and various online marketplaces, offering a diverse range of cheeses, accompaniments, and gifts. Furthermore, The Cheshire Cheese Company has expanded its presence in farm shops, independent stores, and seasonal markets nationwide, further solidifying its position in the UK's competitive cheese market.





PASSIONATE ABOUT DAIRY

Eurilait's two associated managing directors, Ed Leahy and Craig Brayshaw, sat down to share the story behind their company and its role in the UK dairy landscape

"Eurilait is a subsidiary of two leading and highly experienced French dairy cooperatives: Laïta and Eurial, located in the heart of Somerset, in the village of Evercreech. We're incredibly proud of our cooperative roots – we exist to ensure the long-term future of more than 10,000 farmer members. In that sense, sustainability isn't just a goal; it's a defining part of our DNA! Even if our farmers are in France, we aim to share these values on a local scale here in Somerset.

We take great satisfaction in being one of the UK's leading suppliers of high-quality and innovative speciality cheeses and dairy products, providing the UK retail, industrial and foodservice markets. We expect to continue our growth, relying on our main assets.

The first one is the extensive range we provide. Of course it includes traditional French cheeses, but also a huge selection of cheeses from all over Europe such as feta, halloumi, gouda, as well as goat's cheese – and yoghurts. Each product is selected for its exceptional quality and heritage.

The second is undeniably our unique structure, allowing us to have the flexibility, passion and agility of a small manufacturer whilst having the scale, reliability and integrity of a global producer. Ensuring our business partners get first class products and services. Whether you require assistance in sourcing a new product, precise cut and packing services, co-packing solutions, or full-scale development of a new product from concept to completion, we have the answer."

EURILAIT'S CO-PACKING SOLUTIONS

- **Comprehensive Cheese Solutions:** We provide a full-service offering in cheese cutting, packing, and national distribution, tailored for UK retailers, wholesalers, and food service providers.
- **Specialist Packing Capabilities:** Our expertise includes contract packing solutions for both chilled and ambient products.
- **Reliable & Scalable Service:** Our adaptable approach supports businesses of all sizes with high-quality, efficient supply chain solutions.



EURILAIT
YOUR SOLUTION FOR SPECIALITY DAIRY



eurilait.co.uk | +44 1749 838 100 | Eurilait Ltd, Leighton Lane Industrial Estate, Evercreech, Somerset, BA4 6LQ



MAKING AN IMPACT

How you display your cheese can make a huge difference to sales. So, what are the best ways to catch your customers' attention? We asked cheesemongers to share their tips

There are myriad ways to display cheese – and how you choose to do it will be dictated by the size and style of your shop. If you're a tiny deli, a grab and go fridge with pre-portioned pieces might suit you well. Meanwhile, grandiose food halls or larger specialist market stalls can go to town, stacking their finest fromages in impressive towers – which certainly do catch the eye.

However big or small your cheese collection, here are a few pointers to help set you in the right direction.

'Grab and go' and multidecks

Love them or loathe them (and most customers do love them) truckles are a big part of the conversation when it comes to 'grab and go' fridges, says Dylan Fourie, deli manager at Macknade. "There's a bit of a truckle war at the moment," he laughs, saying their portability, long shelf life, and the fact they're already wrapped and simple for customers to understand, makes them an easy win in retail.

Beyond these, he thinks you should limit what's on offer here, and stick mostly to varieties your customers already know. "It's 'grab and go' for a reason – it's not a considered purchase. So we include things like Halloumi and Camembert, and we have four to five different types of Mozzarella."

The only time the team 'go to town' is around Christmas, when the variety increases, aligning with the trend towards bigger basket spends., so customers might find a mini Mont D'or nestled by the Cheddars.

Speaking of Cheddar, they're an important part of the multideck experience. "We normally have a few block Cheddars in ours – a mild, mature and creamy so there's a bit of variation," says Dylan, who recommends cutting most of your selection into 180-200g pieces, though with Cheddar and Parmesan you might offer smaller pieces too. "They're ideal if people are making a cheese sauce," he explains. "We have a beautiful deli counter with around 80 cheeses, but here we offer cheese customers can just pop in their regular basket with their milk, eggs and bread."

Alongside everyday wins, the food hall has a collection of what Dylan calls 'wild cards' – five regularly changing cheeses chosen by the team to add a point of difference for those shoppers who don't have the time (or confidence) to approach the counter. It's a valuable device for helping them to discover new flavours.

Keep on top of costings, Dylan adds. "Don't try to retail cheeses upwards of £10. 'Grab and go' cheeses have almost no labour costs involved. Behind the counter, with the more expensive varieties, you're working hard to make that margin, but in 'grab and go', you've got a set margin. It's easy, people are making their own choices."

Labelling is a final consideration in the multideck. "Some of our cheeses come in, and there's no English on the label. It's down to us to ensure each piece gives customers the right amount of information." Don't complicate things though, he concludes. "You shouldn't be too elaborate by calling things by their brand or given name. If it's a Camembert, label it as a Camembert!"

Open horizontal displays

One of the most visually impactful ways to showcase your cheeses is as whole wheels layered in open displays on a counter top – as at Neal's Yard Dairy or The Courtyard Dairy.

Cheese expert and author Ned Palmer, who spent his formative years in cheese working for Neal's Yard Dairy, says he finds this method of display evokes the best reaction from customers, who are wowed (especially if it's their first time in-store) by the effect of abundance and bountifulness.

"You want to make it all look beautiful and enticing, and this is one of the best ways to do that," he explains. But a striking display of this kind starts with the very finest condition of cheese – when it's front and centre in the shop, there really is nowhere to hide.

Inspect whole cheeses for blemishes and imperfections (perfectly fine with a natural product, but you might want to turn these sides away from the front). Cheeses that have already been cut will need 'facing'. "The face might be starting to fade, even if cheese has been stored under clingfilm. Scrape off the front and neaten it up. Then taste everything before you put it out. Some things might have over ripened or lost their peak."

Having the right number of cheeses in this set up is important, Ned advises. "If you're in a smallish deli where sales are slower, have fewer cheeses – too many and they could degrade in quality. Pick three Cheddars and then I would get, say, five other cheeses and look after them really well."

As for constructing your display? "Twos and threes stacked work well. Think of the architecture of it. Neal's Yard liked to have a tall stack either side, swooping to a valley in the middle, like an amphitheatre."

If you have space, you can layer your displays in this way so they look like "lovely still lifes". Giving some 'hero' cheeses their own area, set alone, perhaps on a stand, is a good device for shining a light on varieties that are eating well at that time too.

And "put similar things together". "Bloomy rinds, washed rinds, blues. Place the cheeses so when customers walk up and down the counters they can find what they're looking for, but also, visually this looks nice – having big bursts of blue or white together."

Another way to make these displays more striking is considering what you place the cheeses on, Ned says. "White cheeses look great on black slate. And get some worn old wooden boards of different thicknesses for a variation on height and depth."

Something many fail to consider, in this type of cheese layout, is the practicality of actually reaching the products, Ned adds. "You can have a big, beautiful display, but what if you can't get past that big tower to the working piece? Always have a working piece you'll cut from and use for tastings closest to you and unwrapped!"

Closed upright fridges

There's a trend, being seen in lots of modern delis and food halls, towards long banks of tall fridge units with doors for displaying cheese.

To the traditionalist, this might seem counterintuitive. Surely having cheeses displayed under glass, with a member of staff ready and waiting to serve is the best way to sell them? This isn't always the case, as Mark Kacary at The Norfolk Deli has found out.

The deli recently invested in display fridges as a way to balance attractive presentation with energy efficiency. "Our old open-fronted cabinets were costing us around £5 per day each to run," he explains. "The new ones – with doors – cost just £1 per day. A significant saving!"

Mark says they're quieter, and designed with deeper shelves, so they can store more stock. Each shelf is individually lit too, allowing customers to see the cheeses more clearly, without having to peer into a counter.

Overall, he says it's been a great improvement for the shop and its customers. "There's a degree of a wow factor as they walk along, looking up and down the five levels of cheese we offer. Fundamentally, in times like these, to be able to say we are making a £13 a day energy saving too, compared to what we had previously, suggests a quick return on our investment. It also helps with our green credentials."

Traditional counter

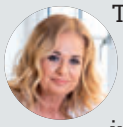
The most common way of displaying cheese is in an open backed cabinet, says Dylan.

"Displaying them in tiers, stacking them on top of one another works well. We also have our cheeses in rows, so four cheeses to a row from front to back, breaking them into segments of goat, sheep, Swiss, French, blues, regionals. We find that works really well."

Dylan advises cracking open whole cheeses where possible, as he's found they won't sell unless customers can see what's inside. They like to halve cheeses (not of the runnier variety though) and stack the two pieces on top of each other with the cut side facing out.

At the end of the day wrap each piece, and inspect them every morning, Dylan adds, saying to only stock the amount of cheese you can reasonably look after. "The more you have, the more there is to sell, and the more there is to care for. Pick a few good cheeses and pay close attention to what you're doing."

HOW TO DISPLAY TASTING CHEESES



Tastings are a crucial part of the cheese buying process in speciality retail and what differentiates the deli or food hall counter from the multiples. Laura Billington, of Graze Cheshire, has these tips to share when presenting bites from your counter to the public ...

- The golden rule when serving cheese is to always bring it to room temperature. Cold cheese hides its aroma and softens its character. A ripe Brie eaten straight from the fridge will taste bland and feel too firm. But give it time to breathe and it becomes silky, aromatic and utterly irresistible
- Think about contrast. Add something crunchy (crackers or toasted nuts) something sweet (figs, honey or grapes) and something acidic (cornichons or chutney)
- Never overcrowd your tasting board with lots of options. Let each cheese have its moment and remember to include something a bit unexpected – a blue, or lesser-known regional cheese to spark curiosity and conversation
- Make your tasting tray feel like a mini cheeseboard, not an afterthought. Use small wooden or slate boards to keep things clean and elevated. Top up the cheese regularly so it never looks tired or overcrowded
- A small garnish – like a sprig of herbs or a few grapes – adds colour and visual appeal, especially when swapped out through the year. In autumn and winter try dried fruits or a ramekin of chutney. In spring and summer go fresh with strawberries, mint, or edible flowers. Some crackers or breadsticks helps complete the picture and invites the customer in
- Placement is everything. Always have tasting trays at the front of the cheese counter, never hidden behind. Add a small sign suggesting pairings or flavour notes. And encourage staff to interact: "Have you tried this one before?" Or "Would you pair this with something sweet or savoury?" These gentle prompts often lead to great conversations – and more often than not a sale

QUICKE'S



At every stage of Quicke's award-winning cheeses' creation they strive for greatness; from the Devonshire grass their cows graze to the optimum conditions in their aging rooms. Today the dairy farm and cheese business are run by Jane (pictured above with her mother Mary), who is 15th generation of the Quicke family to farm the land. Quicke's don't just craft a stunning selection of Cheddars and cheeses, they also make beautiful butters using whey cream – a by-product from the cheese making process.

01392 851 222 quickes.co.uk jane.quicke@quickes.co.uk

MRS BELL'S BLUE



A favourite of Rick Stein and Raymond Blanc, Mrs Bell's Blue is considered to be one of the best ewes' milk blue cheeses in Europe. The meadowy sweetness coming from the sheep milk contrasts beautifully with the umami notes of salty blue cheese to deliver a rich, complex flavour. Milder than a Roquefort but punchy enough for any blue cheese fan, Mrs Bell's Blue is distinct in appearance with a bright white body, contrasting beautifully with the blue/green veins. Mrs Bell's Blue is Shepherds Purse's most-awarded cheese on the international stage, having won more than 80 top accolades.

01845 587 220 info@shepherdspurse.co.uk shepherdspurse.co.uk

ASIAGO DOP



To sample a bite of Asiago DOP, is to taste a slice of Northern Italy's lush, Alpine terroir. The beloved cheese relies on the quality of raw milk from herds who spend their days grazing and foraging in the beautiful, biodiverse landscape of the Asiago Plateau. Produced since the year 1,000, the cheese can only be made within the provinces of Vicenza, Trento and part of Treviso and Padova. Whether enjoyed fresh, when it's young and delicate, or aged - when the cheese develops a more complex, savoury personality - there's an Asiago DOP for every taste and every table.

0444 321758 info@formaggioasiago.it asiagocheese.it/en



"A HUGE STEP FORWARD"

A new era dawns for South Caernarfon Creameries, says new operations director James Knowlson

We've just wrapped up a transformative 18-month period at South Caernarfon Creameries with major site developments totalling £25 million. The expansion includes two key projects: Project Dragon, which focused on our core production capacity—adding new cheese lines, a whey processing facility, upgraded utilities and a new cleaning facility—and Project Evolve, a £2 million investment in a cutting-edge high-speed portioning line. Thanks to these upgrades, we've increased our prepack volumes by 50% and made significant gains in efficiency and product quality.

It's a huge step forward for us as a co-operative. These investments futureproof our operations and give us the tools to grow our branded and own-label offerings, as well as improve how we serve our existing retail and foodservice partners. We're not just expanding—we're innovating and doing so in a way that supports our farmer members by generating more value from the milk they produce.

This marks the beginning of our next chapter as we're building a more agile, data-driven, and people-focused operational culture. Our new facilities allow us to develop more advanced products, scale up capacity, and compete at a much higher level in UK and export markets—all while staying rooted in our mission as a Welsh farmer-owned co-op. From a commercial perspective, we're now able to offer greater flexibility, faster turnaround times, and even better consistency across our range. For buyers, that means a more reliable supply of premium Welsh cheese products, whether in branded, own-label, or foodservice formats. Innovation like the dairy-first flow wrap stacking system also means we're able to reduce RSI risks for staff, improve presentation on shelf, and deliver smarter packaging solutions that meet the changing needs of retail.

We're really proud that all of this is happening right here in rural North Wales. These investments aren't just about business growth – they support jobs, skills and community resilience in our region. As we look ahead, we're excited to keep driving quality, sustainability, and innovation for our members, our customers, and the wider industry.

> "We're excited to keep driving quality, sustainability, and innovation for our members, our customers, and the wider industry"





> For centuries, farmers, fruitières and affineurs of the Jura Mountains of Eastern France have been lovingly producing the internationally popular Comté cheese every single day of the year

A CHEESE FOR ALL SEASONS

With an ancient history and unique and universally loved flavour, Comté is a smart stocking choice for your cheese counter

Comté is a truly unique cheese with over a thousand years of history and is guaranteed to have your customers talking about it for days and weeks to come. For centuries, farmers, fruitières and affineurs of the Jura Mountains of Eastern France have been lovingly producing the internationally popular Comté cheese every single day of the year.

As such, this is a cheese for all seasons, to be enjoyed both on the cheeseboard, whether that's out and about for picnics and lunchboxes, at home for a dinner party, or in cooking. Comté is a firm favourite of chefs and home cooks all over the world. With its array of delicious flavours, it is a perfect addition to many mouth-watering dishes, from gratins and risottos to seasonal salads and soups. Its ability to melt easily means it can be added to all kinds of recipes, giving each one of them a different flavour.

A flavour steeped in provenance

Its delicious flavour originates from the raw milk of the Montbéliarde and French Simmental cows of the Jura Mountains, each of which has its own hectare of land to graze on. The cows eat grass and a wide range of plants and flowers out on the pasture in the summer, and locally harvested hay in the winter, producing high-quality milk and giving Comté its very special taste, scent, colour and texture.

Every single day, the milk is brought in from a collection of the nearest local farms and transformed into large 40kg wheels of Comté cheese by small village dairies, known as fruitières. These dairies use the refined skills and expertise passed down from generation to generation, to make sure each batch of the cheese is at its most perfect for consumption.

Aged by experts

The wheels are moved to local ageing caves and cellars, where affineurs take care of the wheels of Comté during the ageing process, regularly turning, salting and rubbing each one with brine solution for up to 24+ months. It is down to their experience and expertise to decide when the cheese is ready for consumption.

As a result, one piece of Comté might have a firmer texture with a nuttier taste and another might be smoother with a more floral flavour, dependent on several factors such as the altitude the cows were grazing at, the time of year and the skills of the affineur during ageing. Each wheel and bite of Comté is therefore completely unique. No fewer than 83 different flavour profiles in six flavour 'families' have been identified in Comté. These flavour profiles are as diverse as walnut, buttered toast, artichoke, leather and vanilla.

By stocking different ages of Comté, your customers can experience this first-hand for themselves, encouraging them to decide which age of the cheese they prefer, including whether their palate preference leans more towards a winter or a summer flavour.

Certified quality

It has been awarded AOC status, which means that it must be made following the traditional rules that generations have been using to create the cheese exclusively in this region that has integrated Comté into every aspect of the community life.

Comté was recently featured in the César and Cannes award-winning 'Holy Cow' film, shot in the Jura region by a local director and with many local actors. This has generated an even bigger interest in the cheese from the consumer audience who have been given a unique glimpse into the world of Comté-making: the perfect time to introduce this special cheese to your customers.





If you would like to stock Comté and enjoy a slice of the potential profits of this wonderfully unique cheese, head to **comtecheese.co.uk/are-you-a-cheese-reseller/** to contact us, as well as downloading promotional materials to support your sales.



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UNIQUELY DELICIOUS

In the midst of a challenging market, Dorset Blue Vinny continues to delight cheese lovers

While Dorset Blue Vinny is a fan favourite cheese in 2025, its 300-year old recipe offers cheesemongers a unique opportunity to offer customers a delicious taste of the past. Resurrected in 1980 by Michael Davies on Woodbridge Farm, Dorset, it has been loved by consumers ever since it was brought back to life.

It's no wonder that Dorset Blue Vinny is a favourite with cheese lovers across the UK. A semi-hard blue cheese with a delicate veining pattern, this is a softer tasting blue and not as hard hitting as many other semi hard blues. Perfect with a sweeter biscuit and Dorset Blue's very own Woodbridge Chutney – a handmade pear chutney – this cheese is ripe for upselling.

Challenges are rife in the cheese sector, but the team behind Dorset Blue have worked hard to maintain the supply of the cheese to its fans. "It's tough out there," explains Emily Davies, daughter of founder Michael. "We have seen our expenses soar over the last four years – most of which we have continually tried to absorb – as this has always been our policy, but unfortunately last year it was sadly an absolute necessity to start passing some of these costs on." The rising costs will be familiar to all: hard hitting expenses of electricity, ingredients and rapidly increasing labour costs. "We are fortunate to have the most supportive team behind us now, but it isn't easy finding the right people to make the best small team, and we are still very much a handmade cheese so it's physical too," says Emily.

Working in such strong headwinds is a hard task, and the Dorset Blue team is finding that it is much harder to plan ahead than it has previously been. "Customers don't really want to hold stock anymore, so we turn orders round much quicker as they tend to call when they really need it," Emily explains. Thankfully, Dorset Blue have the infrastructure to make this a smooth operation for all: "having found a more reliable delivery partner we are handling a growing number of direct sales."

In a challenging market, the business has powered through to be stronger than ever – and to continue to delight fine food retailers with Dorset Blue Vinny, a deliciously unique cheese.



> "Perfect with a sweeter biscuit and Dorset Blue's very own Woodbridge Chutney – a handmade pear chutney – this cheese is ripe for upselling"



Dorset Blue Vinny

The Davies family have been making Dorset Blue Vinny at Woodbridge Farm for almost 40 years. Although we can't give away all our secrets, here's a little sneak peak into how we make our delicious cheese...

Dorset Blue Vinny takes over 24 hours to make. Each morning, we use fresh milk from our herd of 270 Friesian dairy cows. Once it's been pasteurised, handskimmed and the starter culture, rennet and penicillin mould added, it's ready to be made into cheese…!

Dorset Blue Chutneys

We make a small range of handmade chutneys which make the perfect accompaniment for any cheese board. Whether you like something sweeter, spicier or something completely unique, we've got a chutney for you.

Farm Vending Machine

Our farm vending machine is stocked with Fresh Milk, Dorset Blue Vinny, Butter, Soup & Rice Pudding. Together with a variety of delicious local products. Open early to late.



Dorset Blue Vinny

WOODBRIDGE FARM

Stock Gaylard | Sturminster Newton | Dorset DT10 2BD
www.dorsetblue.co.uk | 01963 23133

@DorsetBlueVinny



NEVER STOP LEARNING (OR TEACHING)

As a living, breathing product, cheese is always evolving, and so cheesemongers must adapt and continually learn about their stock along the way

STAFF TRAINING CHECKLIST

MAKE SURE YOU TEACH NEW TEAM MEMBERS:

- Food safety and hygiene
- How to properly handle and store all cheeses
- How to identify if a cheese is at its best, or needs replacing
- How to cut all varieties of cheese safely, including opening large, hard-rinded cheeses, and using a cheese wire
- How to glass wrap cheese
- The best way to arrange cheese in the counter
- Cleaning of the cheese fridges and storage areas
- Wrapping different types of cheese at the point of sale
- The difference between styles of cheese, how they're made, and tasting notes
- How to interact with customers during sales and tastings
- Products they can upsell with a variety of cheeses

As a cheese seller, you are the key, final gatekeeper of each piece before it continues its journey home with a consumer, into their kitchen.

For many, this feels like a great responsibility – especially when it comes to artisan varieties. The level of care found throughout the magical process – from the welfare of animals, to collecting the finest milk, churning and separating curds from whey, pressing, making and conjuring in the art of affinage – is astounding.

It's your job to make every cheese shine, to understand its USP and nuances, and to deliver it to shoppers in tip-top condition.

Part of that 'contract' of sale, particularly in a speciality setting such as a deli or cheesemonger, is also sharing your knowledge.

Knowledgeable staff are everything

One of the prime reasons consumers visit fine food specialists (other than for greater choice) is to learn more about what's going on their cheeseboard. The skill of a good cheesemonger is to continually educate themselves (and their staff), so they can give shoppers the bigger picture about what's displayed in front of them. To be able to converse about the maker, to tell the unique stories behind each variety, and to offer pairing suggestions adds value to the experience.

Jessica Summer, owner of Mouse & Grape, spends a lot of time training her staff to ensure they can help convey the beauty of artisan cheese to customers in store. It's so important, she says, for that passion to come across.

Take baby steps, she recommends, when it comes to initiating new team members. "It can feel overwhelming to be faced with a big cheese counter if you haven't worked in cheese before. As a starting point, everyone here learns the fundamentals, to understand how cheese is made, what milk is used, where it's made and if it's pasteurised or unpasteurised. We also make sure they have some adjectives to describe the flavour of the cheese."

Enabling staff to come up with their own descriptions is just as important, though. Jessica encourages the team to taste things regularly when they're on a shift so they can "see how things evolve and change".

"It's nice to be able to say to customers 'this cheese tastes like xxx this week, or this one is a bit more mushroomy or caramelly today'."

Jessica makes sure each cheese label has notes for staff on the back, including wine suggestions. And a brilliant device she's introduced is giving everyone three particular cheeses to focus on in terms of knowledge and sales each week. "You can tell who's been on shift because certain cheeses are gone," she smiles. "We've got a bingo card for each member with different products around the shop, so not just cheese, but deli items and wine. Whoever gets 'bingo' for selling all the different items wins a £50 voucher. It's fun!" That competitive edge also encourages staff to want to learn more about what they're selling, which can only be a good thing.

Something else the cheesemonger heartily recommends when training is... Youtube! "There are so many amazing videos about making cheese – so they can see how Brie is made, or how Parmesan is made. It's all on there."

What is in a name?

Should in-store labels simply give the name of the cheese, leaving it up to shoppers to ask questions? Or is it best practice to deliver as much information as possible?

Dylan Fourie, deli manager at Macknade, has quite a few thoughts on the issue. It's traditional, he says, to have a big-fonted label denoting the price of the cheese per kilogram. But that can be confusing – after all, not everyone has time to stand at the counter doing the sums. Leading with a price per 100g is more inviting, he thinks.

Beyond this, he likes to regionalise cheese. If it's made in the UK, rather than marking it as British, he'll pop on 'Somerset', 'Suffolk' or 'Dorset'. Though this method doesn't extend to Continental varieties, where specific place a cheese is from could change depending on supply. Here saying 'France' or 'Italy', for example, will suffice.

"Having a brief description on the front is fine, but what's most important is whether it's pasteurised or unpasteurised, and what rennet is used. That will help you a lot because those are two of the biggest questions customers will ask."

The rear of the counter's labels will have tasting notes, usually a few suggestions staff can elaborate on. "I wouldn't write a description of the history of the cheese, or how it's made. In busy periods staff won't have time to read through those. If

you teach them to read descriptions off the back of a label it becomes a bit monotonous – like a script. More important is to leave space on the back for the best before date – that's useful!"

As for the types of labelling you should use? "I see a lot of people use stick labels you pin into the cheese," Dylan continues. "For me, they're a big no-no. I wouldn't touch them. If you don't train you staff effectively, they could stab a blue cheese, then another cheese, and that will create problems. It's better to arrange labels across the shelf edging."

A matter of taste

Educating shoppers about cheese is one of the most wonderful jobs in the world, says cheese expert Ned Palmer, who runs The Cheese Tasting Co.

Beyond what you can convey in words, it's ultimately the taste of the product that does the talking. A brilliant way to create engagement, and a method used by his former employer Neal's Yard Dairy, is for staff members to ask shoppers as they enter the shop if they'd like to try some cheese with them, rather than the usual 'hello', 'can I help you?' or 'what would you like?'.

"I still really believe in that, because as soon as you introduce amazing cheese, that conversation flows. They might say, 'I quite like that', and you might reply 'it's really buttery today, do you agree?'." This draws them in, making them feel more part of the experience of tasting. It also fosters a sense of comfort, which is very important, thinks Ned. "The whole point is to make people feel comfortable. Most people haven't been into a cheese shop before. They look at us in our little uniforms and feel intimidated. Also, we are in the business of selling stuff – the more comfortable they are, the more likely they are to buy something."

Listen to your customers, but guide them using your knowledge, he adds. "By the time you get to the third tasting, you'll start to get an idea of what they'll like." He gives an anecdote of this process being like taking a blind shot. You might miss to the left a bit, miss to the right, but the next time you'll have moved into the right position. "Then you can say, 'I think you'll love this'. It's a really attentive and lovely communication style."

Controversially, Ned doesn't think the customer is always right – and this is where the education and expertise of a seasoned cheesemaker comes in. "Someone might come in and say they'd like a particular type of Cheddar. They probably like it because it's strong. But the 'can I try these with you?' approach allows you to figure out what they really want."

As a pro at hosting tastings, Ned also has plenty to say on in-store events, which many are investing in.

His first, and he says most "brutal" opinion, is that ticketed tastings are "a rubbish way to make money". "The amount you have to charge to make a profit out of doing it is about £100 a head, and that's hard to do outside of London. The point for most delis is to showcase products, to get people into the shop, and maybe sell a few bits and bobs at the end of the evening. But in the end, I'd be really brave about it and think, these events are more about getting people to see your range and to create enthusiasm for the cheese. See them as a loss leader."

Use tasting events as a way to share more detailed knowledge of cheese, he says. "You can talk about seasonality, so things like the fact you won't get a lot of fresh goats' cheese in winter, but will in summer. They like that. And in the lead up to Christmas, tell them more about Stilton and the big Cheddars."

Ned advises allowing 15g to 30g maximum pieces per cheese per person, adding that your displays at events should look generous. "How many depends on your budget. You need around six to eight to cover a good range of styles."

Don't forget to educate event-goers on cheeseboards while they're your captive audience, Ned concludes. "The textures and varieties they could include. What you could upsell." Then, when they return to your shop, they're armed with knowledge and ideas, ready to buy.

WHAT'S ON THE LABEL?

Prepackaged cheese should be well labelled, to include: the cheese name, net quantity, list of ingredients, allergen information, use-by-date, how to store, name and address of the producer, country of origin, nutritional declaration (unless a retailer is packaging pieces to sell to the end consumer in-store).



18 EXPERT CHEESE PAIRING IDEAS

Find inspiration in the way your cheese-loving peers serve their favourite varieties



Cheese is a delight all on its own – especially artisanal, handcrafted, farmhouse varieties. But who can resist the joy of pairing a savoury slice of Cheddar, or delicate soft-rinded Brie with something that elevates and enhances it – taking the eating experience to the next level? Not us. We asked the experts about their favourite cheese pairings. There are, of course, a few classics you'll know, but we also think you'll be pleasantly surprised by some of their more unusual suggestions. If you're seeking some new combinations to pass out to customers at the counter, look no further...



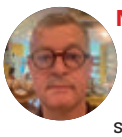
LAURA BRADLEY, INDIE FUDE

Laura's all-time favourite cheese pairing is Northern Ireland's Ballylisk Triple Rose with Dunville's PX 10-year-old Single Malt, which she says she tried alongside cheesemaker Mark after a visit to the dairy. "We rounded the day off by experimenting with some pairings. These two stunning local delicacies worked to highlight each other wonderfully. And I won't deny having enjoyed it a number of times since!"



STEPHEN BARNEY, THE CHEESERY

Stephen's most unique combination is Manchego with anchovy and honey, introduced to him by a Spanish friend. "Yep, we thought it would be horrible too but it's actually amazing! We also recently made a sauce with Gjetost and double cream – it's phenomenal with all manner of desserts."



MARK KACARY, THE NORFOLK DELI

Mark is keen to stress he thinks cheese should be enjoyed in its own right or with water, to cleanse the palate, but, equally, he does like to point customers to his favourite local pairings.

He's a fan of Black Shuck's Damson Port, and Archangel Distillery's Cardinalis – a type of fortified sloe wine. "They are Norfolk's answer to a glass of Port, and if you're indulging in a rich deep flavoured cheese who wouldn't like a glass of Port to go with it?"



SIMON WARREN, THE EAST STREET DELI

Hot honey has been flying off the deli's shelves, and Simon recommends trying this with any cheese. "We can't get enough of it drizzled over some melted Kaltbach on a muffin for a little snack," he says.



ELEONORE DENEUVE, CHEEZELO

Eleonore enjoys coffee with cheese. "Particularly an espresso with a semi-soft cheese like Tomme de Savoie, Morbier or a Saint Nectaire... just delicious in the morning. It brings floral notes to my brew. Funny enough, I hate drinking coffee or tea with milk, but love to have a piece or two of cheese on the side!"



CHRIS HALLAM, CHORLTON CHEESEMONGERS

"One of my real pleasures is working with local breweries for tasting events and discovering and experimenting with new combos," Chris says. Chocolate stout from Seven Bro7hers has proved a hit alongside Blackmount goats' cheese from Errington Cheese, with Chris declaring the pairing "sensational". "Together they became a rich, cheesy, chocolatey 'dessert', changing both distinct flavours into something completely new."



VAIK LUCAS, THE FINE CHEESE CO

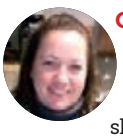
A "mind-blowing' pairing for Vaik is Munster with Liqueurious Ryokucha green tea liqueur.

"The kick from the liqueur is partially absorbed by the richness and sweetness of the Munster and allows the cheese to develop some fantastic fresh, grassy undertones that are not normally part of its profile," he says.



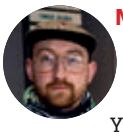
RORY MELLIS, I J MELLIS

Tunworth, the English take on Camembert, is excellent with chilli oil, Rory says. "We like to use Halfway Chilli Oil, a mild, Sichuan-inspired chilli oil made by the team at Halfway Kitchen. The warmth from the oil adds a satisfying kick to the delicate and nutty cheese."



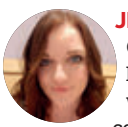
GEMMA ACKROYD, THE CHEESEBOARD

"I do a lot of work with the local wine shop in Harrogate and we put on cheese and wine events. We always try to pair the cheese and wine beforehand, and the best combination with all our customers in agreement is Munster and Gewurztraminer. They're both from Alsace, both full flavoured, the Munster sticky and stinky and the wine sweet which, when put together, is a taste sensation!"



MICHAEL THOMPSON, MIKE'S FANCY CHEESE

Young Buck with a mince pie from Manmade Bakery is one of Mike's dream cheese pairings. "Christmas is a crazy time for cheese shops so after a hectic week, settling down with this washed down with some Mescan (a great Irish Belgian-style brewery) special reserve is such a treat."



JESSICA HONEY, CURD & CURE

Pink pickled onions with Cheddar complement one another well, says Jessica, who also like to serve up frozen red grapes with the cheese. "When frozen, they turn into mini sorbets, which pair beautifully with cheese as well as providing the perfect palate cleanser."





MORGAN MCGLYNN, MORGAN CHEESES

Morgan's favourite fresh cheese pairing is Brie de Meaux with fresh British strawberries, with a Pinot Blanc or young Chardonnay alongside. "For soft and bloomy cheeses I would go for dry, traditional-method sparkling wines such as a Brut Champagne. Also a light-bodied Chardonnay, Sancerre and a young dry Riesling," she explains.



JULIE OXLEY-HOYLE, LEWIS & COOPER

Being a Yorkshire resident, fruit cake and Wensleydale cheese is a cracking pairing Julie will always recommend – not limiting the match to the traditional Christmas period.

Any fruit cake works, "the richer the better", but her Wensleydale of choice is Old Roan (Yoredale), made by Ben and Sam Spence.





DANIEL WILLIAMS, GODFREY C WILLIAMS & SON

Daniel is partial to Artelium Blanc de Blancs with Sharpham's Elmhirst. "This Supreme Champion from Sussex has a vibrant mousse and lemon posset palate that combines beautifully with the triple-cream freshness of the Devon cheese."



ANDY SWINSCOE, THE COURTYARD DAIRY

Poached rhubarb with Yorkshire Pecorino is worth a try, says Andy. "I first tried it at Skosh restaurant in York and was converted."



STEPHEN FLEMING, GEORGE & JOSEPH

"I love Single Variety Co's Fireflame Chilli Jam with Baron Bigod," says Stephen. "The sweetness of the jam counterbalances so well with the bitter notes of the cheese, and there's just enough heat to not overwhelm everything."



SVETLANA KUKHARCHUK, THE CHEESE LADY

Svetlana has a sophisticated pairing to suggest. Her top pick is a luscious Delice des Cremiers ... with Champagne, of course. Otherwise she's very happy to tuck into burrata drizzled with chestnut honey on date and walnut bread.

MY FAVOURITE PAIRINGS



Cheese expert and food writer Juliet Harbutt shares her take on the topic of pairings...

- Soft, wrinkled cheeses like Crottin and St Maure prefer dry, white wines with acidity, like Sauvignon Blanc. "The older they are the more intense the flavour, so they'll need a more spicy, forthright wine like the young, fruity reds of the Loire or the soft-natured Merlot."
- Young, slightly sharp, salty cheeses prefer sweet, late harvest wines, while "double cream cheeses need a fruitier wine with a good acidity to cut through the extra fat like rosé, fruity whites or Champagne," says Juliet. "The more meaty, savoury classic Brie-style cheeses prefer a full-bodied, oaked white or soft tannin red like Pinot Noir, and the French love a dry cider."
- Pungent washed rind cheeses demand the complex but mellow character of a Pinot Noir, a Cabernet-Merlot blend, something from the Alsace, fruity, assertive ciders, or a big, hoppy IPA. Their character can be balanced, Julie says, with dried figs, Muscatel raisins or caper berries.
- Almost any wine will match with harder cheeses such as Cheddar or Pecorino, but Juliet's general rule is the stronger and darker the cheese, the bigger and darker the wine. "White wine loses itself to a strong, mature cheese; the cheese's butterfat coats the palate, blocking the wine's flavour. Fortified wines like Fino Sherry, vintage Port, Marsala or an old Madeira can be truly magnificent with the very old, very hard brittle cheeses."
- "The salty tang of European blues holds strong attraction for the sweet and luscious dessert wines like Muscat, Late Harvest Gewurztraminer, Montbazilliac and some of the less sweet pudding wines of the New World," says Juliet.





STORE CUPBOARD STOCKERS

Crackers, pickles, chutneys and relishes are essential upsells to deliver alongside an abundant deli counter. Their role is to act as edible ambassadors for the cheeses draped on top of, or nestled beside them, bringing added texture, flavour and interest to the table. The crunch of a cracker or juicy gherkin. The tart, thick, sliceable, jelly-like joy of a quince or damson paste. The piquant warmth of a chilli jam. The soft, yielding sweetness of an onion relish. All of these can be transformative, and with a good selection on offer, your independent shop will be like a 'candy store' for lovers of fine, artisan cheeses.

CLASSIC CRACKERS

Cheese purists, who prefer to let the dairy do the talking, allowing all the nuances of farmhouse and artisan varieties to shine through, are after a 'cleaner-tasting' biscuit. Crackers and crispbreads designed to act as a delicious vehicle, rather than jostling for prime position in every bite. This type of shopper favours sweet digestives for their blues, snappy sourdough crackers for soft cheeses, and nutty numbers for Cheddars and strong hard cheeses.



SNOWDONIA CHEESE CO SPELT & SEA SALT CRACKERS

Buttery, delicate biscuits that melt in the mouth, made with spelt flour, sea salt and natural yoghurt. Ideal with rich, savoury Cheddars.

snowdoniacheese.co.uk

PETER'S YARD PUMPKIN & SUNFLOWER SEED SOURDOUGH CRACKERS

New to the market this year, these sourdough crackers are made with the finest ingredients and will work perfectly alongside all cheeses and dips.

petersyard.com





MILLER'S HARVEST THREE-NUT

Excellent with creamy blues and Bries, goats' and soft cheeses, these are crafted traditionally by hand, using stoneground wholemeal flour, hazelnuts, walnuts and almonds.

artisanbiscuits.co.uk



TRENDING FLAVOURS

- **Spicy**
- **Alcohol-added**
- **Fruity**

"My personal preference and what we use for cheese tasting events are sourdough crackers. They have a good crunch but a neutral flavour, so all the flavour hitting your taste buds is the cheese"

SIMON JONES, OWNER, FOREST DELI





60%
OF CONSUMERS EAT SAVOURY BISCUITS WITH CHEESE
MINTEL

SPICE AND ALL THINGS NICE

The world of relishes, chutneys and pickles is heating up, with brands across the UK firing up their NPD to include jars offering a tantalising tingle. Consumers are favouring, they say, products laden with chilli (including single origin varieties) and warm spices. Rather than being overpowering, they want these accompaniments to bring flavour to the cheeseboard, so it's important to try before you stock to make sure whatever you choose is well balanced.



HAWKSHEAD RELISH
The succulent taste of apricots, tart cranberries and orange make this warming relish, made with garlic, ginger and spice, sing on the cheeseboard.
hawksheadrelish.com

TRACKLEMENTS MANGO & CHILLI CHUTNEY
An award-winner, pairing juicy, sweet mangoes with roasted cumin, coriander seeds and fresh chillies. Glorious with farmhouse and vintage Cheddars.
tracklements.co.uk





CROOKED PICKLE CO SPRING VEG CHILLILILLI
The brand's signature piccalilli is woken up with turmeric, habanero chilli mash, cayenne and aromatic coriander and cumin.
crookedpickle.co

THE UK **CONDIMENT** AND **SAUCES** MARKET IS **EXPECTED** TO **GROW** ANNUAL BY **5.51%** BETWEEN **2025-2030**
STATISTA

DELICIOUSLY DIFFERENT

Grazing boards and charcuterie platters are still all the rage, and the kind of shopper putting these together is setting out to impress. They're paying attention to detail, and want to buy something a bit different from the norm. While they'll probably offer a few safe bets in their cracker selection, they'll also be looking out for biscuits that make their guests go 'ooh'. The addition of dried fruit is a winner, bringing sweetness and a toothsome chew to the eating experience, and spices like chilli, turmeric and ginger are frequently being sought out. Be sure to have a few wild cards in stock alongside your regular varieties to keep your offering fresh.



DRIVERS CARAMELISED RED ONION CHUTNEY
Sweet and sticky, this chutney is a fabulous all-rounder that's as at home on a cheese platter as it is tucked into a cheese toastie or sandwich.
pickle-lovers.co.uk

COTTAGE DELIGHT CHEESE MAKER'S PICKLE
One of the brand's top sellers, loved by customers. This brings together berries, rhubarb, plums, carrots and onions for a fruity, fragrant finish.
cottagedelight.co.uk





GODMINSTER STICKY FIG CHUTNEY
Deep, rich and filled with fresh figs. This crunchy, sticky chutney is a game-changer when paired with truffle cheese or alongside game dishes.
godminster.com

A TASTE OF TRADITION

There's a wave of nostalgia sweeping across Britain at the moment, and it's making a strong impact on the food scene, as the flavours of yesteryear continue to resonate with consumers. Make sure, in the pursuit of 'newness', you don't forget to include all the shelf stars your customers love, from red onion, tomato and fruit chutneys to chilli jam, piccalilli and pickles.



OLINA'S BAKEHOUSE SEEDED TOASTS – FIG & ALMOND
Premium double-baked toasts filled with the goodness of flaxseeds, dried figs, almonds, honey and Greek yoghurt.
gourmetpartners.co.uk

ISLAND BAKERY CHEESE BISCUITS – HARISSA & CUMIN
Sustainably made, all-butter biscuits combining Isle of Mull cheese with the gentle, warm spice of organic harissa and earthy cumin.
islandbakery.scot





STAG BAKERIES STORNOWAY SEAWEED SHORTBREAD
The briny, seaside notes of seaweed, melting into buttery sweetness, make this biscuit an absolute joy to eat with blues and minerally, creamy goats' cheeses.
stagbakeries.co.uk

A TASTE OF ADVENTURE

Add a sense of occasion to your cheese counter with Clawson Farms' characterful range of flavour-packed truckles

One of the most-loved joys of the speciality cheese world is the storytelling innate in our favourite cheeses, and this is something that Clawson Farms' truckles range has in droves. Here, the worlds of time-honoured cheesemaking expertise and artistic innovation collide to create a selection of mouthwatering, familiar-yet-exciting and utterly moreish cheeses for all consumers to relish.

An engaging range

Key to the truckles' success is their innate ability to add a sense of occasion to the everyday dishes that underpin customers' home lives up and down the UK. Macaroni cheese transforms from a humdrum dish into a decadent delight with the addition of Truffle Seeker – an extra mature Cheddar with truffle and honey, helmed by Fred 'Piggy' Flaherty – while cheesecake gets the tropical treatment when boosted with Castaway, a flavour-packed take on traditional fruited Wensleydale with apricot and ginger, inspired by the travels of Castaway Jane.

Elsewhere, Dorothea Dormouse reclines after treating herself to Dormouse's Delight, an elegant combination of Wensleydale, elderflower and marmalade; and Big 'Gunpowder' Tom enjoys the punch of Oak Smoked Mature Cheddar, full-flavoured thanks to natural smoking from seasoned oak fires. Meanwhile, Captain Bulldog enjoys best-of-British Vintage Cheddar, full-flavoured with a subtle crunch; while the tastebuds of Randolph the Wizard are set alight with Red Leicester with Scotch Bonnet and Harissa, a perfectly balanced sweet-spicy experience.

Familiarity meets adventure

The range comfortably satisfies UK consumers' appetite for familiar yet adventurous options for cheeseboards and beyond, says Heather Lewis, senior brand manager at Clawson Farms. "Our market research showed that there was a gap in the market for classic cheeses such as Cheddar, Red Leicester and Wensleydale with delicious new flavour combinations and eye-catching branding."

While the breadth of flavours in Clawson Farms' truckles range is certainly tastebud-tempting, this innovation hasn't come at the cost of quality. "We all know that household economics are a bit wobbly at the moment, but customers are still investing in great quality products," says Heather. "They're more likely to buy a fantastic cheese for a dinner party than to go all-out on a meal at a restaurant," which provides a valuable opportunity for retailers to cash in... and not just when it comes to the traditional 'occasions' such as Christmas, Easter and Mother's Day.

"Every day can be a chance to indulge – a special truckle can make a standard weekday meal into an occasion in itself, and our research has shown that people are looking for affordable luxuries to tell themselves, 'I'm worth it'." People also like to give truckles as gifts, says Heather, which retailers can capitalise on by upselling companion products such as chutney, cheese biscuits and wine.

A very British opportunity

Quality underpins all aspects of Clawson Farms' truckles with ingredients meticulously selected for their premium flavour and character. For example, the truffle oil in Truffle Seeker was made in Italy, and the marmalade in Dormouse's Delight from Seville oranges.

This range brings a very thorough Britishness to cheese counters which appeals to both domestic and international audiences. With its whimsical characters, including a Vintage Cheddar-loving bulldog and a snoozing dormouse, created by a talented UK artist and each with their own distinct personalities corresponding with the tasting notes of their cheeses, the truckles offer an experience both familiar and exciting to cheesemongers and the customers they serve.

Once a shopper has upgraded their favourite dish with a Clawson Farms truckle they're sure to return time and again, and there's plenty of support on offer to help Cheese Buyer readers optimise this opportunity. Marketing packs, including POS and the stories behind the cheeses and their characters, are available upon request to enquiries@clawsonfarms.co.uk and recipe suggestions are set to launch on the website this year.

A perfectly curated range of moreish cheeses, made even more tempting with engaging stories and characters... no wonder Clawson Farms' truckle range is flying off the shelves.



> "Every day can be a chance to indulge – a special truckle can make a standard weekday meal into an occasion in itself, and our research has shown people are looking for affordable luxuries to tell themselves, 'I'm worth it'"



CHEESES OF CHARACTER
(WITH CHARACTERS)

Introducing Clawson Farms deliciously characterful cheeses. A flavour packed range of six truckles each made from premium ingredients and represented by a unique personality.

For more information please call 01664 822332 or email enquiries@clawson.co.uk

www.clawsonfarms.co.uk



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