BRITISH & INTERNATIONAL EXPERTISE

CHEESE BUYER

MAGAZINE

From the publishers of SPECIALITY FOOD

2017



THE MODERN CHEESESELLER

How To Sell Cheese Now

The Courtyard Dairy
La Cave á Fromage
La Fromagerie
Androuet
Brindisa

THE VALUE OF AFFINAGE

Experts talk how and why

PERFECT PAIRINGS

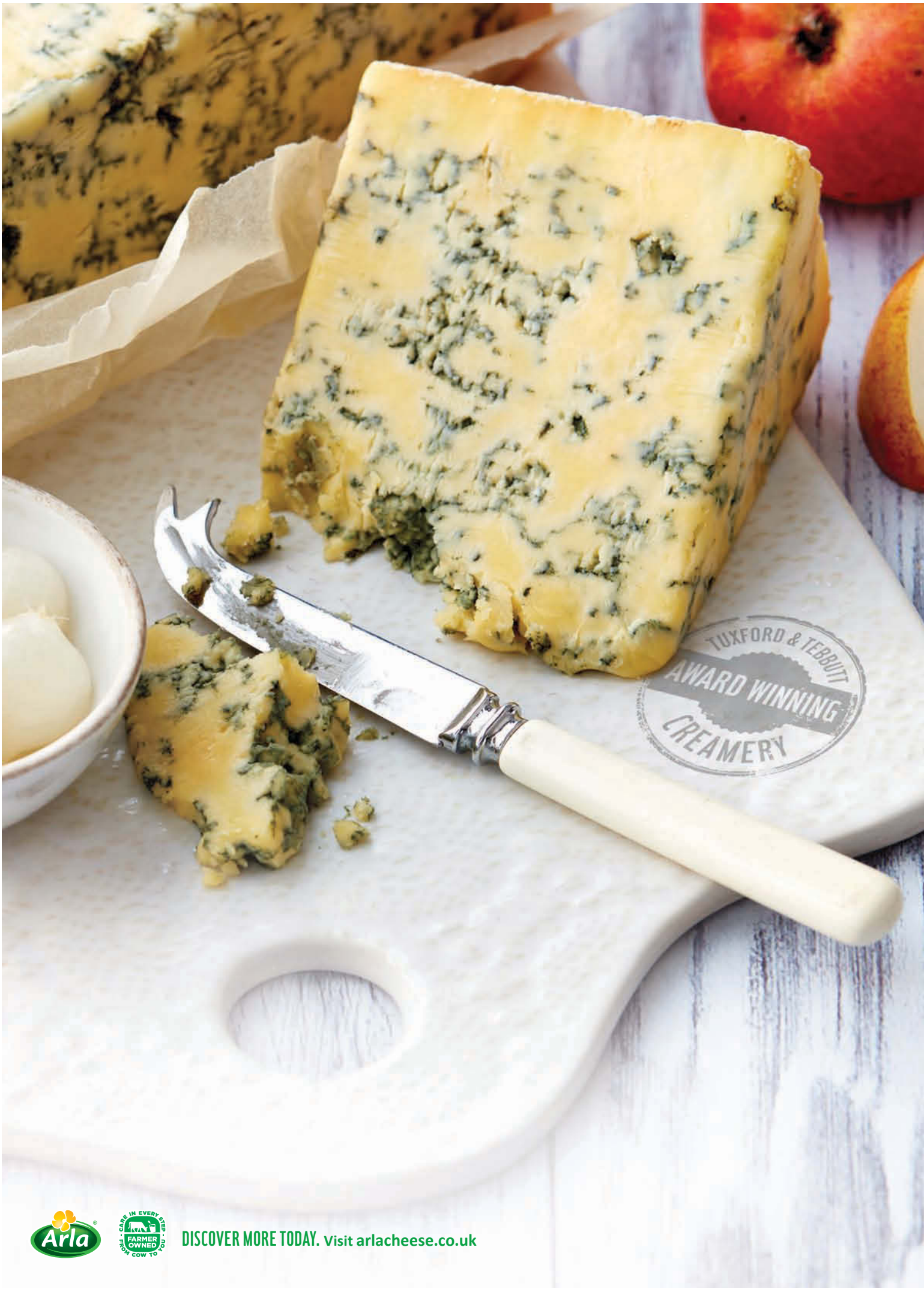
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WELCOME TO CHEESE BUYER

Essential reading for anyone who is serious about cheese, Cheese Buyer brings you advice and opinion from those in the know





Welcome to the latest edition of *Cheese Buyer*, the annual cheese industry special from the publishers of *Speciality Food*. The world of food and drink is constantly changing, not least due to Brexit and the resultant negotiations, and we're here to shine a spotlight on a sector which not only fills those in the food industry with pride, but also leads the pack when it comes to the fine reputation of British produce abroad.

For generations, inimitable cheeses like Stilton, Cheddar and a number of territorials have been earning themselves a secure position in the counters of discerning cheesemongers across the Continent and beyond, and *Cheese Buyer* is honoured to be reporting on the industry at a time when a new wave of innovators is coming to the fore to help move this strong reputation forward.

In the following pages, we speak to a number of revered cheese sellers to uncover their picks of the contemporary clan as well as the classic British cheeses they wouldn't be without (p. 10), plus from p. 18 onwards we highlight the producers you need to know.

> "*Cheese Buyer* is honoured to report on the industry at a time when a new wave of innovators is coming to the fore to help move the cheese industry's strong reputation forward, both at home and abroad"

From centuries-old cheesemakers bringing ancient techniques and recipes to the market to modern brands carving their own niche, we've got it covered.

We also take a look at the world of international cheese, and gather the recommendations of cheese sellers and distributors throughout Europe. Some of their choices will already be cornerstones of your counter, but you're sure to discover one or two which will be new to you and your customers, too.

Of course, stocking your counter is only part of running a cheese shop, and once these cheeses are on your premises they must be properly cared for to reach your customer in optimum condition. Introducing affinage to your business can seem a tall mountain to climb when you're new to the skill, so we've spoken to a renowned French cheesemonger and affineur, a cheese grader and a dairy technology consultant to share their expertise (p. 14). The consensus? Affinage would prove a valuable string to your bow.

Another profitable way to set your business apart from the crowd is to offer a number of exceptional, perhaps lesser-known accompaniments, and we highlight our top cheese partners as well as make a few pairing suggestions of our own (p. 16). Whether you simply place these items on your shelves or are inspired to run pairing events, now's the time to offer your customers the full cheese experience.

I hope this publication proves valuable in your quest to produce the perfect cheese counter.

Holly

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"LET'S GROW AND PROSPER"

Words of wisdom, in these changing times, from La Fromagerie's Patricia Michelson

How perplexing it is for my business – do I need to change the name from La Fromagerie to The Olde Worlde English Cheese Shoppe for a touch of irony? Of course we're not going to do this, but I believed the name was very apt when I started the business 26 years ago as I strived to be a refiner and maturer of artisan raw milk cheeses and follow the style of French affinage cellars.

An homage to traditional ways of working in France has now rather left a bitter taste since Brexit has resonated a desire to become an island again, but I am hopeful that having had the time as Europeans we will move forward to create new ways of showing regionality in our food and drink, and especially our cheeses, with enterprising producers willing to make not copies of Continental varieties but British versions suited to their part of the country, with flavour profiles to match. We have seen artisan cheesemaking suffering in Europe of late, with even the great Camembert now only made in larger dairies and no single herd dairy cheeses available for export.

There may be a feeling of an uncertain future for artisan farmhouse cheesemaking on the continent, but it has never been so buoyant in Britain – especially with a core of young new cheesemakers. I look in my Cheese Room and see such a fine array of cheeses, including Almnas Tegel from the island of Hjo, Southern Sweden, a selection of US farmstead cheeses that would make you wonder in disbelief they actually came from the land of canned spray cheese, and British cheeses proudly presented in their fine coats of many different rinds. As a cheesemonger I imagine that I will continue to fly innumerable flags, and enjoy the cheeses of many countries, because it is simply so exciting to be able to have them on the shelves; but what will the challenges be to business?

Prices, of course, are a big question mark, and whether we can maintain the status quo or fight with our margins. Rents and rates have given us more than enough headaches, and minimum wages must be acknowledged or even surpassed – especially if your business is in a city like London where living standards are costly. How will the government help small independent businesses like cheesemongers? Or more pertinently, British cheesemakers? Machinery and dry feed are bought in Europe and many dairies buy rennet and starters from there, too. Prices will obviously go up if duties and taxes are imposed on imports, thereby making the end product more expensive. It all filters down, and if we are to export, the same rules apply. If we are to buy more British cheese to compensate for less from the Continent, how are we going to be supported by the government with decent transport facilities?

If there is one thing I've learned working with Continental businesses, it's their efficient transport services to the UK. It is often easier to get cheese from the mountains in Savoie than from East Anglia; it's very frustrating but I would need to see a concerted effort to get reliable transport links available all over the country running efficiently and regularly through the week, that are also cost effective, in order for us to be able to enjoy all the regional cheeses and hopefully new cheeses from single producers. If that is the one thing that happens, it will be worth leaving the Union for!

Of course, cheesemongers can just concentrate on local cheeses if they wish, if they decide that they have enough variety to showcase to their customers. However, I want to see more enterprise in some businesses being able to continue bringing in great farmhouse cheeses from the Continent, and maybe now wholesale them in smaller units to other shops and businesses wanting to still keep a few foreign items. If the transport improves and is more affordable, I want La Fromagerie to be able to send these cheeses to other parts of the UK; after all, my business has had many years to hone our way of working with cheese, and as an independent company we would be delighted to be able to let other businesses sell alpine and other mountain cheeses, as they are not only delicious but also reflect the place and land with memories of holidays and travels. I sincerely hope that there will be entente-cordiale between us, allowing a generosity of spirit with trade links and genial working relationships. It may be a big ask, but can we live and work in harmony, grow and prosper, and find equal opportunities for all? It would certainly be in all our best interests.

"It may be a big ask, but can we live and work in harmony, grow and prosper, and find equal opportunities for all? It would certainly be in all our best interests"



THE MODERN CHEESE SELLER

Meet Morgan McGlynn of Cheeses of Muswell Hill – a thoroughly modern independent

"AS A YOUNG WOMAN, THERE ARE A LOT OF PEOPLE IN THE SECTOR WHO THINK I SHOULDN'T BE HERE"

Being a younger woman helps my business to stand out from the crowd. This is quite a male dominated industry, and I've found that when I took over at 21 I was laughed at quite a lot. I was patronised, told I didn't know what I was doing. It was a real uphill struggle, both to set myself apart from other people in the industry and make a name in my own right. As a young woman, there were a lot of people in the sector who were fantastic towards me, but also a great number who thought I shouldn't be there. A lot of people would ask, "Who does she think she is?" The physical side of the job can be a challenge. We often have to move a 50 kilo cheese from the store room to the shop – around 100 metres – and it's an absolute killer every time! Sometimes I wonder if I'm cut out for that side of things, but then I feel proud of myself for carving my own path. I definitely depend on my partner to an extent – he helps with things like hanging signs – but I love the fact that these days women can have our own trade; we don't need someone to back us and we can be quite independent. In my case, I've had no choice but to be that way.

"IN A NUMBER OF WAYS WE'RE QUITE OLD FASHIONED – THE SHOP IS 39 YEARS OLD NOW, SO THE SHOP ITSELF HAS A LOT OF HISTORY"

Some of the people walking into the shop today would have walked in nearly four decades ago, too, and we make sure we're offering them the same service which has kept them coming back time and time again. I've always been excited to put my stamp on the shop, though. One of the biggest changes I made was to focus on buying from tiny suppliers. It takes a huge amount of effort, and I'm not in the shop as much as I'd sometimes like to be, but ultimately I need to spend time with the producers in order to support their work fully.

"SMALL-SCALE CHEESES ARE THE FUTURE OF OUR INDUSTRY"

The more people that try proper, high quality cheese from a cheesemonger the better, as they'll recognise the difference between that and cheese from a supermarket and always buy from indies. I can't imagine that the popularity of independents will lessen – we, as an example, are going from strength to strength and I hope that continues. We've recently set up a wholesale arm focusing on British cheese, which has gone down brilliantly. It's offering a platform for small-scale, almost village cheeses which few people have heard about – so they can start to be appreciated further afield. They're not being exhibited enough, but they represent the future of our industry.

"CUSTOMERS DESERVE TO KNOW EVERYTHING ABOUT THE PRODUCT THEY'RE BUYING, FROM THE NAME OF THE FARMER TO THE COLOUR OF HIS TRACTOR"

When someone enters a cheese shop, they want to be greeted by someone who knows everything about the cheese they're after – rather than a Waitrose or Sainsbury's counter, where what's written on the label is everything you get. It's become a lot more popular to find out where one's food is coming from, so people are coming to us for expertise. They deserve to know everything about the product they're buying, from the name of the farmer to the colour of his tractor – these silly little stories you'd only know if you'd visited and spent time on the farm. I take my team on farm visits once a month, which makes a great difference. Also, knowing the people you're buying from. It's nice to know that person made that cheese, or that the milk from those cows you saw last week have produced this one. It's massively important to me, and I hope that comes across to our customers. As a result of the horse meat scare, people have realised that they need to take more care in what they're buying – it's all well and good a product saying something on a label, but can you really trust a label? Buying locally and British has definitely become more popular in the past couple of years, and will continue to do so with everything that's going on – Brexit, climate change – so we definitely plan to continue to support our British suppliers.



> "Customers deserve to know everything about the product they're buying, from the farmer's name to the colour of his tractor"

> I think our social media presence goes some way in explaining how we came to be named Most Loved Shop in London

"I'M ALL ABOUT TRYING SOMETHING COMPLETELY NEW"

About six months ago, we got a cheese in from Italy and were the first people to have it in London, let alone the UK. It was a chocolate blue cheese, and it's so good! It's a complete 'Marmite' cheese – I loved it as soon as I tried it, whereas some people have spat it out in the shop! I first came across it as a tiny sample a lady handed to me in a carrier bag, and is now a really big seller. It has chocolate alcohol injected into it and is coated with cocoa powder. This is no novelty cheese; it's very highly respected in Italy – the British palate is just not used to it yet, but they go crazy for it when they try it! We sell a lot of accompaniments in the shop, and, as with our cheese selection, are keen to sell things which are completely different. A few weeks ago we had Dixie from Aphrodites Pomegranate Ketchup in the shop; her product goes amazingly with cheese, has beautiful packaging and has gone down really well with our customers. We try to look for things which our customers haven't seen before, which perhaps aren't out in the market yet and are a little bit different, or are from a tiny producer who maybe doesn't even have packaging yet.

"PEOPLE DON'T WANT TO GO ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND SEE A DESCRIPTION OF A CHEESE, THEY WANT TO SEE WHY YOU LIKE IT AND HOW TO EAT IT"

Social media plays a huge part in running a modern day business. Whether I'm posting about cheese or my day to day life, people can relate to me and the business which really helps them connect with the shop. I know lots of my social media followers by name, and their faces when they come into the shop. It's important to be on every format – SnapChat, Instagram, Twitter, Facebook – they're all used continually across the board, and you have to be on all of them to hit



all the markets. I find it's best to publish what you find interesting, rather than what you think people will want to see. You can post a photo of a great Cheddar, but by the third time you've posted a Cheddar image people will start to get a bit bored. I tend to post things I cook with cheese, to inspire my followers, and always take photos of cheese boards when I'm out for dinner – the good, the bad and the ugly! So long as you have a face and are using your own voice, and not just saying things you think your customers will want to hear, you'll do well. People don't want to go on social media and see a description of a cheese, they want to see why you like it and how to eat it. At first I found being on social media really nervewracking – I considered it a very open platform and that I was really putting myself out there – but it's done wonders for us and we've now got about 20,000 followers across social media... amazing for such a teeny shop! Everyone's becoming a lot more foodie, which is great – not least for us in the industry, as people are more perceptive to what we're doing than ever before. I like to think Britain is catching up with places like New York, where people queue up for two days to get a cupcake which everyone's been talking about. It's just so exciting! I think our social media presence goes some way in explaining why we got a massive support for last year's TimeOut awards; it was truly overwhelming to win. To win Most Loved Shop in Muswell Hill, let alone Most Loved Shop in London, is incredible, and still blows my mind.







THE FINE CHEESE CO.

STILTON: AN ENDURING BRITISH FAVOURITE

BRING ON THE BRITISH NEW WAVE

Some of Britain's most renowned cheesemongers tell us why a fresh crop of new cheesemakers are infusing the industry with excitement



SINODUN HILL

THE FINE CHEESE CO.'S ESSENTIAL BRITISH CHEESEBOARD

Ann-Marie Dyas shares her five must-stocks – a showcase of modern British cheeses alongside long-time favourites

CHEDDAR

As we are from the West Country I really have to start with a raw milk Cheddar. Please don't ask me to choose between Montgomery, Keen's or Westcombe – they are all special in different ways

STILTON

Another must-have is this second pillar of British cheese. I am a huge fan of Colston Bassett for its remarkable consistency of quality and super creamy finish

RACHEL

This cheese from Whitelake Cheese is a supple-textured washed-rind goat that is original and delicious

TUNWORTH

This is Stacey Hedges' brilliant take on a hand-ladled Camembert. It has a 'cabbage-like' aroma and flavour

LORD OF THE HUNDREDS

A very fruity and rich ewe's milk cheese made by The Traditional Cheese Dairy, it is Pecorino-like in style

Fans of contemporary British cheese would be surprised to discover that the industry wasn't in particularly fine fettle back in the 1980s, when compared to how it appears today. The limited dedicated cheese shops that could be found would sell a minimal range, mainly relying on Cheddar, the seasonal demand for Stilton and the occasional Brie purchase. However, out of the monotony sprang a movement of fresh-faced enthusiasm, with farmhouse and small-scale producers reviving old styles and reinterpreting Continental favourites with a British twist. This roused the British cheese renaissance that's prevalent today.

These days, cheese constitutes a major part of the UK food and drink export strategy, with exports 7% up in 2016 compared to 2015, according to ADHB Dairy statistics. Total Cheddar exports were also up 3.5% on the previous year, with exports to outside of the EU increasing by 20%. It appears that Britain is giving the major players a run for their money, too, with 750 different cheeses made on these shores, around 350 more varieties than produced in France.

Bath's The Fine Cheese Co. has been a maturer, wholesaler, retailer and exporter of artisan British cheeses for 20 years, and since its inception has focused on nurturing and supporting British cheesemakers. Ann-Marie Dyas, owner, believes that this is a fruitful time for British producers. "We are exporting across the world and finding markets not just for Cheddar and Stilton, but cheeses like Old Smales and Wyfe of Bath," she says. "The creativity in our UK cheese industry is way ahead of Europe; we may have some ground to make up but we are getting there."

Stocking over 100 British cheeses, The Fine Cheese Co. is well-versed in the diverse offerings available from these shores. "Raw milk cheeses like Baron Bigod, hand-ladled in the traditional way and made with loving care, has its own unique taste," Ann-Marie explains. "Then there is Tom Calver of Westcombe Cheddar fame making English Ricotta. We definitely have the French and the Italians on the run."



COURTYARD DAIRY

It's satisfying to live in a time of talented artisans dedicated to the art of cheesemaking, who are willing to expand the quality of the UK's cheese portfolio. When it comes to new cheesemakers we should be keep an eye out for, Ann-Marie mentions, "Fraser Norton and Rachel Yarrow who are novice cheesemakers with the right attitude and ambition – they're a great new talent. They make Sinodun Hill, an exceptional goat's milk pyramid."

Andy Swinscoe opened North Yorkshire-based The Courtyard Dairy's doors in 2012, perfectly timed to coincide with the ascension of Britain's

> "The creativity in our UK cheese industry is way ahead of Europe; we may have some ground to make up but we are getting there"

cheesemaking profile. Andy echoes Ann-Marie's enthusiastic outlook on the UK cheese industry, especially the young crop of artisanal producers. "It is moving so fast," he says. "There are more and more cheesemongers and makers who care about producing and selling a really quality product made by small-scale farms. It is exciting to see this dedication towards quality and farming sustainability. Every year there are new cheeses – they are so different and many are fabulous!"

When it comes to the trends that are propelling the demand for British artisan cheese, Andy highlights an array of producers. "Mario Olianas from just outside Leeds is doing some really interesting things with Italian recipes and cheeses he knows – they're very tasty and a bit different," he explains. "Tom and Clare up at Whin Yeats Dairy are making a really interesting Wensleydale-type cheese, too, which is a brilliant example of that profile."

Andy believes that these aren't just halcyon days destined for the history books, and there's still plenty more to come. "I think we will continue to see more small farmhouse cheesemakers spring up, as the trend continues to gather momentum," predicts Andy. "Soft and lactic cheeses are in as they see returns faster and the flavours are really approachable, but it would be really nice to see even more territorial cheeses rejuvenated by small farms, too."



BARON BIGOD: A MODERN-DAY CLASSIC

The mainstay of The Courtyard Dairy's selling output are territorial and traditional-leaning, explains Andy. "Especially Lancashire, Harord Cheddar and Stichelton, however people come to see us for something a bit different, and it really does depend on what is in season," he says. "Right now St James sells amazingly well; it is local, tastes amazing and has a great story. It has also just come back into season, so that gives it a nice bounce."

THE COURTYARD DAIRY'S MUST-STOCK CHEESES

Andy Swinscoe offers a lesson in curating a well-rounded British cheeseboard

HAFORD CHEDDAR
It's really good at the moment – we have a batch from February which is just amazing!

ST JAMES
This is really different – so rich and full of flavour

HEBDEN GOAT
A herby goat's cheese which is relatively unknown but the closest thing for me to a proper French goat's cheese

YOUNG BUCK BLUE
A smooth, rich and buttery blue cheese

KIRKHAM'S LANCASHIRE
The crowd-pleaser that everyone loves – I enjoy its profile, which is soft, buttery and rich

> "It's satisfying to live in a time of talented artisans dedicated to the art of cheesemaking, who are willing to expand the quality of the UK's cheese portfolio"







INTERNATIONAL APPEAL

We go continental? Cheese Buyer speaks to connoisseurs of Italian, French and Spanish cheeses about why they're integral options for your cheese-selling arsenal

La Cave à Fromage has four cheese shops dotted around London and Brighton and a sister wholesale company that stocks Michelin-starred restaurants like Belmond Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons. David Deaves, retail divisional manager of La Cave à Fromage, talks to us about the UK's appetite for French cheese

"There are so many great French cheeses available, but people can be habitual when buying both cheese and wine. My theory is they know it, like it and trust it so they know they will enjoy it. The demand for French cheese can vary in our shops depending on their location. Our South Kensington store has a high demand for French cheese, whereas our Hove location has a bigger demand for British cheese. We saw an increase for French cheese during the Christmas period across all of our shops. I think there will always be a demand for French cheese in the UK; people automatically associate France with cheese.

"French washed-rind cheese can be overlooked quite often, however I put this down to the fact that British palates may not be accustomed to strong smelly cheeses like Epoisses and Munster. When it comes to selling French cheese it's important to get to know what your customers like, and present them with options to taste. If they ask for Brie De Meaux, offer them a taste of Brie de Melun – this gives the customer a choice and expands their repertoire.

"My favourite French cheeses have got to be: Selles-sur-Cher, a charcoal-coated goat's cheese from Central France; Fougerus, which is made in Ill-de-France and similar to a Brie but packs a lot more flavour; La Napolean 24 months, an ewe's milk cheese from the Midi-Pyrénées that has a firm and creamy texture but a spicy sharp finish; Bleu des Causses, a cow's milk cheese from the Midi-Pyrénées; and Langres La Cave, a cheese we mature from the Champagne region that's washed in Marc de Bourgogne by our affineur, which gives it a rich and fruity taste.

It's vital that our whole team has a good understanding of cheese and wine – it enables them to suggest and upsell. Quince sits very well next to ewe's milk cheese, dessert wines work well with salty blues, and we always to ask the customer if they need crackers or bread.

LA CAVE À FROMAGE'S 5 TOP SELLING FRENCH CHEESES

- Brie de Meaux
- Comté Grande Reserve
- Raclette
- Brillat-Truffe
- Mont d'or

Alison Trozzi, director of Just So Italian, an Italian-centric wholesaler with two delis, certainly knows her Gorgonzola from her Burrata. She explains what Italian cheeses will make your counter sing

TOP SELLERS

Our top selling cheeses are Parmigiano Reggiano, Gorgonzola Dolce, Taleggio, Buffalo Mozzarella and Provolone Piccante. I think their popularity lies in the fact that they are the best-known Italian cheeses and the general public are aware of how to serve them.

DEMAND

There is a constant demand for Italian cheese in the UK. It's the second biggest selling category across our entire range of products, and it has been that way for years. I think that holidays to Italy and food programmes on television both have helped to promote sales.

MY ULTIMATE ITALIAN CHEESEBOARD

This is obviously a very personal choice but I would always go for a variety of textures and milks, including a blue, Pecorino and something creamy. Gorgonzola Dolce as it's luscious, creamy and blue; Pecorino Sardo for a spicy and nutty sheep's milk cheese; Taleggio Vero DOP which is richer and smoother than a regular Taleggio; Ubriaco al Vino Rosso as this 'drunken' cow's milk cheese has been steeped in red wine and always creates a talking point; and Capra al Pepe, a semi-hard goat's cheese covered in a black peppercorn crust.

PAIRING

In our shops we always have a display of accompaniments for cheese on top of the counter. Serving them with Italian Ciappe flatbreads or Puglian taralli are the best way of tasting the cheeses. Depending on the kind of cheese we would then recommend an Italian chutney, such as fig or green tomato, or suggest for customers to try them in the traditional Italian way with some honey, such as chestnut or dandelion.

Spanish cheese is not limited to Manchego, explains James Robinson, meat specialist and product trainer at Spanish food specialist Brindisa

WHAT ARE BRINDISA'S MOST POPULAR CHEESES?

Monte Enebro has been our best-selling cheese for more than 20 years. It is a superb goats' milk cheese made with pasteurised milk that is rich, creamy and dense. It is coated with penicilium roqueforti (normally found inside blue cheeses), which produces a thin grey speckled rind. This provides a spicy contrast to the smooth depth of the interior. It is so popular



THE INIMITABLE PARMIGIANO REGGIANO

because its quality is undoubted; once tasted, it's never forgotten. The cheese was created by Rafael Baez some 30 years ago and the dairy is now run by his daughters. Our second best-selling cheese is a three to four month-matured Manchego, made with unpasteurised ewes' milk. This is an excellent example of an affordable Manchego, with well-judged balance between flavour and texture. It is competitively priced for the quality of cheese produced by the Villarejo dairy.

WHAT'S THE DEMAND LIKE FOR SPANISH CHEESE IN THE UK?

We have seen a considerable increase in sales volumes of our cheeses over the last five years; what was initially a pragmatic response to the domestic financial crisis in Spain has now been grasped as a business opportunity by many, particularly younger, Spanish cheesemakers. We have been fortunate to be able to introduce some exceptional cheeses to the UK market. British audiences are more open than ever to tasting new products and we're much more receptive to foods from overseas.


BRINDISA

WHAT SPANISH CHEESES DO YOU THINK ARE UNDERAPPRECIATED IN THE UK?

Pretty much every one, apart from Manchego! Brindisa lists over 60 Spanish cheeses, the largest collection available in the UK, so that's indication of how many more varieties there are to explore.

COULD YOU SHARE SOME SPANISH CHEESE PAIRING ADVICE?

When it comes to pairing Spanish cheeses it makes sense to stick to Spanish wines in particular. The country has a wide variety of styles, grape varieties and terroirs, meaning that there is almost always a suitable wine for any cheese. I like to experiment with sherries, which run the gamut from bone-dry Finos to ultra-sweet Pedro Ximenez wines. It is better to match by locale, rather than using traditional, one-size-fits-all pairings.

Membrillo, quince paste, has long been a favourite with Manchego, but it's also excellent with blue and other hard sheep's milk cheeses. There are some fine dry biscuits, excellent with cheese (or ham). Little Picos de pan breadsticks, or more traditional Galician ships' biscuits are a great, neutral accompaniment to cheeses.

BRINDISA'S TOP CHEESE PICKS

LUNA NEGRA
A soft, creamy, ash-covered goat's cheese from the province of Avila

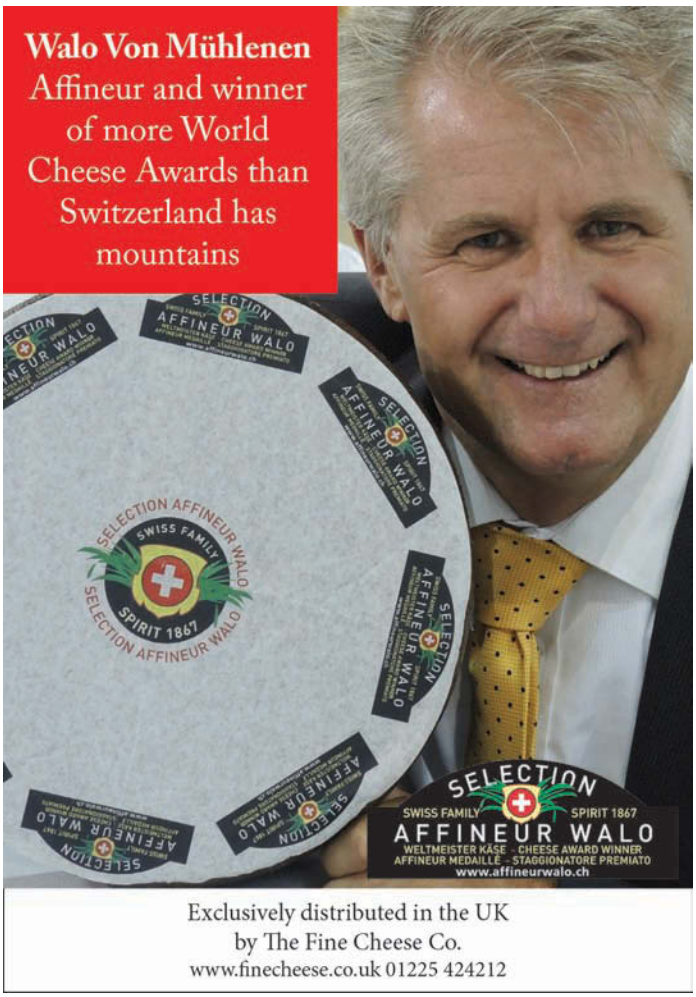
CABRA DEL TIETAR
From the same dairy as Monte Enebro, this is a hard goat's milk cheese with distinct notes of fudge and a clean aftertaste

GRAZALEMA DE OVEJA
A remarkable sheep's milk cheese from the mountains of Cadiz in Andalusia. This cheese is dense but crumbly, moist but sweet and intensely flavoured

TORTA DE BARROS
This raw milk cheese, in a style typical of Extramedura, is made with cardoon thistle rennet, with an almost liquid centre, a rich, silky texture and with a distinct touch of bitterness on the finish

VALEDEON PICOS BLUE
Another blue from the mountains of northern Spain, with a distinctive coating of maple leaves, and made using 90% cow's milk and 10% goat's milk







THE ART OF AFFINAGE

Ever considered adding affinage to your cheesemongering repertoire? Three experts explain why and how you should



ALEX AND LEO GUARNERI: OWNERS, DIRECTORS AND CHEESEMONGERS AT ANDROUET, LONDON

"LET THE CHEESE SPEAK"
Nicolas Aznarez, Matthieu Saupin and Alex Guarneri, Androuet

HOW IMPORTANT IS AFFINAGE IN CHEESEMONGERING?

Affinage is one of the key points of a good final product regarding taste, texture and smell. It's a succession of considerations applied to the cheese from the first day in the cellar until it goes out for sale. Without affinage you will never bring a cheese to is ultimate quality.

WHAT MAKES IT SUCH AN ART FORM?

It's an art because you begin with a vision of how you would like your cheese to be (for example, if you want your cheese to become creamier or firmer). Afterwards, the cheese will tell you during its maturing process how you should look after it (for example, if the cheese is wet at the bottom you know you'll have to turn it).

It's also an art because the cheese is changing every day. Every cheese is different due to the quality of milk, which will vary along the seasons and the temperature and humidity present on the day the cheese was made. Every cheese begins with milk, but you have a huge number of potential possible cheeses to create.

DOES A CHEESEMONGER NEED TO BE VERY SKILLED IN ORDER TO BECOME AN AFFINEUR?

It's take time to understand and listen to the cheeses. In the same was as a chef, an affineur needs to understand the chemistry of its product, but also not to be too strict with those rules. One needs to let the heart of the cheese speak.

"TASTE PERCEPTION IS KEY"
Bruce Macdonald, cheese grading consultant and founder of the Guild of Cheese Graders



The affinage part of the process of delivering quality products to our consumers is as important as any of the previous stages.

Each style of cheese has its own requirements. These include temperature control, air distribution, humidity, packaging, rind/surface, turning, timescales, seasonality, frequency of sampling, the material it sits on, and care of or washing the rind.

Observing and controlling small changes can make the difference between "good" and "perfect". When cheese starts to go "wrong" it invariably continues this path.

Retailers who mature their own cheeses are demonstrating an

THE ANDROUET GUIDE TO AFFINAGE

DOS

- First, every day you should look at your cheeses as they evolve really quickly
- You must store them in the right conditions and understand your cellar, because humidity and temperature will be different according to height and location (for example, its always colder and drier next to the vent)
- You should accept that the cheese may go wrong and there is nothing you can do about it

DON'TS

- You should never over-wrap your cheese as doing so will not allow them to breathe. One consequence of this is that ammonia will be trapped in the cheese instead of evaporating. which is something you definitely do not want to happen
- You should never stop at your first idea because that's the cheese that will show you the path to take

"Without affinage you will never bring a cheese to is ultimate quality"

> Observing and controlling small changes can make the difference between 'good' and 'perfect'. When cheese starts to go 'wrong' it invariably continues this path

intimate level of knowledge of their products. This surely will bring benefits in terms of customer recognition of their skills.

For retailers starting out on this route, there is a lot of expertise available, whether this is about the maturing environment, the process or the cheeses themselves, although working closely with the cheese suppliers is best.

However, there is one part of the process which is common to all affineurs and graders, and that is taste perception. Some members of the industry either overlook, aren't fully aware of, or don't understand taste perception.

To properly select and describe cheeses, understanding taste perception is vital. Everyone's is different. Some people are bitter-blind, some confuse bitterness and acidity, and yet they may not be aware of these problems. Additionally, there are many factors which can affect taste including ageing, health, diet, colds and flu.

I use a kit with "Indicative levels for taste recognition as recommended by BS 5929 Part 7:1992, ISO 3972: 1991." This helps my clients to better understand their own taste perception, thereby helping them to improve their ability to discern flavours.

After all, our customers buy cheese mainly because of its flavours, and the more we know about flavour perception the better we will be able to meet their quality aspirations.

"SEEK EXPERT ADVICE"

Paul Thomas, dairy technology and hygiene consultant and author



Affinage can be interpreted in different ways. In France, the affineur is someone who collects, usually partially ripe, cheese from the cheesemaker and takes responsibility for its maturation and distribution. In the UK, with few exceptions, it is more common for the cheesemaker to take responsibility for the affinage of a cheese.

That said, for cheesemongers seeking to add value to the cheeses they sell, there is certainly value in understanding the preferred growth conditions of the bacteria, yeasts or moulds involved in the ripening of cheeses they stock.

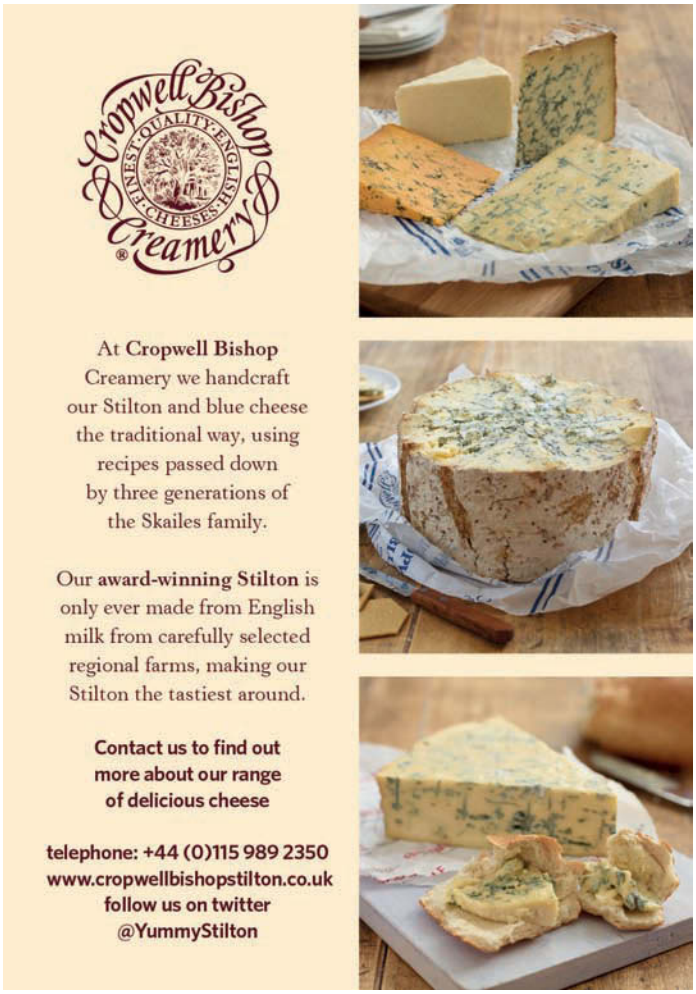
If the cheesemonger wants to ripen a cheese to perfection, they need to optimise the conditions for the growth of the desired ripening microflora and minimise spoilage.

There are plenty of courses available in practical cheesemaking and even some which look at the microbiology and biochemistry of cheese ripening and flavour development.

There is a great body of knowledge out there, and cheesemongers can benefit from it just as much as cheesemakers do.

While food safety at retail level can usually be managed through pre-requisites alone, where affinage changes the intended use of a cheese or involves an additional process, such as rind-washing, the cheesemonger will need to notify their EHO. They will need include it in their HACCP and establish suitable verification methods. A single 'positive release' sample sent for microbiological analysis does not do this and is a very poor way to manage food safety.

Seek expert advice!





MIX AND MATCH

Mastering the art of perfect cheese pairing not only puts you in good standing as an expert, but also provides a valuable opportunity to cross-sell

CHUTNEYS, PICKLES & JAMS

Sweet, spicy, piquant, rich and tangy – chutneys, pickles and jams are where creativity can really run wild when it comes to pairing options. However, you will need to beware of opting for overly extreme flavour pairings. Customer flavour preferences can differ considerably; while some consumers will want to top a soft, mild cheese with lashings of fruit and sweetness, others would much rather a dollop of heat to perk up its creaminess. A well-stocked section of chutneys, pickles and jams will provide your customers with ample opportunity to select their preferred style, and as the products tend to boast a long shelf-life, you won't run the risk of being lumbered with an abundance of out of date stock if they take a while to sell.



COTTAGE DELIGHT OLD ENGLISH CHUTNEY WITH CIDER

One of Cottage Delight's best sellers, this is crammed with lots of fruit and vegetables and a dash of cider.

cottagedelight.co.uk



TRACKLEMENTS HOT HABANERO JAM

Perfect for those who like to frequent the upper end of the Scoville scale, this features potent chillies that pair nicely with an extra mature Cheddar.

tracklements.co.uk



THE BAY TREE FARMHOUSE PICKLE

A go-to jar for creating a truly satisfying ploughman's sandwich.

thebaytree.co.uk



HAWKSHEAD WESTMORLAND CHUTNEY

This is the perfect ploughman's pickle, dark, rich and packed with succulent fruit. This is the popular first chutney the company produced.

hawksheadrelish.com



STAG BAKERIES STORNAWAY SEAWEED WATER BISCUITS

A favourite amongst cheese lovers. Top with soft, lemony cheese and fig jelly.

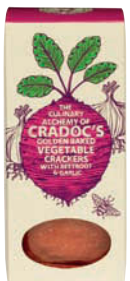
stagbakeries.co.uk



THE FINE CHEESE CO. TOAST FOR CHEESE

A thin, light and crisp toast. The apricots, pistachios and sunflower seeds variety works well with delicate goat's cheese.

finecheese.co.uk



CRADOC'S VEGETABLES CRACKERS WITH BEETROOT & GARLIC

These pink square-shaped biscuits are speckled with garlic and pepper, and really complement the nutty, grassy notes of a stronger goat's cheese.

cradocssavourybiscuits.co.uk



PETER'S YARD ORIGINAL CRISPBREAD

Peter's Yard hand-bakes its award-winning crispbread using authentic Swedish recipes, all-natural ingredients and a sourdough starter that develops for over 16 hours before every batch is made.

petersyard.com

CRACKERS AND BISCUITS

The percussionists of the cheese pairing world, crackers and savoury biscuits provide a steady backdrop for cheese and chutney to do their thing. However, this doesn't necessary mean that the flavour characteristics of these vehicles should be overlooked, as they can come in a plethora of exciting guises. From lightly seeded oatcakes to floury rye crispbreads, they should act as a foundation that doesn't overpower the cheese and other accompaniments stacked on top, but subtly complement them.





CHARCUTERIE

There's nothing quite like a well-curated cheese and charcuterie board to pique a devout foodie's interest. Both foods have a similar make-up consisting of protein, fat and salt, which means they match well. Texture is a pivotal factor that needs to be taken into consideration. While silky thin Prosciutto di Parma might match pleasantly with a gooey cheese in the flavour department, their mutual suppleness might make for a fiddly texture clash. Try Prosciutto di Parma combined with Parmigiano Reggiano, robust and peppery cured meats like salami with a cooling ricotta, and spicy sausage with a striking blue cheese.



GREAT GLEN CHARCUTERIE WHOLE GREEN PEPPER SALAMI

This salami is made with pure venison and gently spiced with added green peppercorns. It's delicious with roasted peppers and cream cheese.

greatglencharcuterie.com



WOODALL'S CUMBRIAN HAM

This cut is traditionally hand-cured using an old family recipe, lending the hams a prosciutto-style flavour after six months spent maturing.

woodallscharcuterie.co.uk



THREE LITTLE PIGS RARE BREED CHORIZO - MILD

Perfect for pairing with cheese as it contains all of the typical chorizo flavour without the whopping heat.

threelittlepigschorizo.co.uk



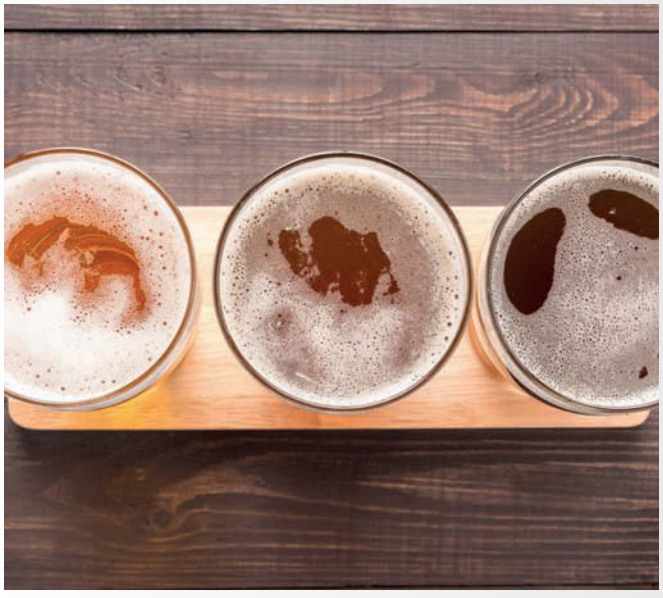
CORNISH CHARCUTERIE COPPA

A delicious cured meat prepared from the shoulder of farm-reared Lop pigs. It's beautifully seasoned and is cured and matured for four months.

cornishcharcuterie.co.uk

BEER

While the world of cheese and beer pairing could still be perceived as being in its infancy when compared to the more documented area of cheese and wine, there are a fair few guiding principles that will put you in good stead. One of the most important things is to find a balance. A funky and tart sour beer will most likely complement a striking and pungent washed rind, whereas the peppery, floral nature of a witbier (wheat beer) will pair gorgeously with a fresh and buttery cheese. Beer and cheese pairing nights can work well as an after-hours event at your deli, and will illustrate your knowledge of not only artisanal cheeses, but the flourishing craft beer movement as well.





ADNAMS SPINDRIFT

A golden beer that's full of flavour with a crisp refreshing citrus taste, wonderful orange peel aromas and a full white head from the wheat added to the brew.

Pair with nutty cheeses.

adnams.co.uk



MAGIC ROCK CANNONBALL IPA

High in alcohol and hugely hopped, its fruity, resinous hops compete against a sweet and malty backbone, while a bitterness builds to a mouth-puckering crescendo.

Pair with a washed rind.

magicrockbrewing.com



BEAVERTOWN SMOG ROCKET

This smoked porter from Tottenham-based Beavertown uses nine different malts for a big flavour of molasses, raisins and caramel cut with the resinous US hop Chinook.

Pair with Stilton.

beavertownbrewery.co.uk



SAMUEL SMITH ORGANIC STRAWBERRY FRUIT BEER

The smooth distinctive character of the matured beer works well with pure organic strawberry juice.

Pair with burrata.

samuelsmithsbrewery.co.uk





CLASS OF THEIR OWN

"Crafting award-winning cheeses demands enormous skill, dedication and a whole lot of passion. Thankfully, it's what we do best," says Phillip Holford of Arla

"Who doesn't adore a chunk of fine cheese? From powerful Cheddars and distinctive reds to tangy blues and buttery whites, traditionally-made varieties are as popular today as they've always been. That's why, here at Arla, we're proud of our six hand-selected award-winning British creameries which are passionate about keeping traditional cheesemaking alive.

We admit it: we're simply mad about cheese. But not just any old cheese, mind you. The kind we love is crafted by master cheesemakers using recipes handed down from generation to generation. And it's still made in local creameries, too, where the subtle variations in climate and pasture creates distinctive cheeses with a character all of their own.

By supporting our creameries and helping them craft fine cheeses, we're extremely proud to bring heritage varieties to more and more cheese-lovers nationwide. A fine example is our Trevarrian creamery. Here, the experts craft Camembert, Brie and goat's cheese to rival those made anywhere in the world. Exquisitely rich and buttery, these are true classics. And they delight international judging panels just as much as shoppers, if the regular haul of major awards is anything to go by.

Nature and nurture

Of course, the master cheesemakers enjoy a few natural advantages, such as the sweetest Cornish milk which they enrich with just the right splash of cream. But it also calls for time-honoured recipes and that most important of all ingredients – passion.

Constantly striving for perfection, Trevarrian always ensure their whites display a distinctively silky texture and creamy mouth feel. It's this love of cheese making that makes all the difference, something Cheryl Donald, process co-ordinator at Trevarrian, is passionately aware of. Cheryl says, "My granddad made cheese for 20 years, and my proudest moment was when I phoned him up and said, 'Granddad, I'm making cheese just like you did!'"

Trevarrian's Cornish Camembert is a real speciality. Mould-ripening the cheese gives a wonderful blend of complex flavours which complement the subtle earthy aroma and clean mushroom notes. Ageing the cheese allows these flavours to mature and become more powerful.

Their Cornish Brie boasts a beautifully mild, buttery flavour with a hint of sharpness. For those who love strong whites, this classic cheese can again be aged at home to intensify the flavours.

The creamery's unique Gevrik (Cornish for 'little goat') is a legendary goat's cheese. Mould-ripened for extra flavour, aficionados adore the oozing snow-white centre with its delicately mild taste and nutty edge.

Blue cheese heaven

Another of our creameries is the iconic Tuxford & Tebbutt which has been handcrafting Stilton since 1780. The world's oldest maker of the 'King of English Cheeses', the creamery still occupies the same spot in Melton Mowbray, and is one of just six creameries in the world permitted to make Blue Stilton.

Time is a great teacher, and 237 years of experience has allowed Tuxford & Tebbutt to perfect their recipe to create a revered cheese that sweeps the board each year at international competitions.

The magic of crafting cheeses has never waned for quality controller Peter Hughes, who says, "I'm still passionate after working at Tuxford & Tebbutt for 27 years to make the highest quality cheese we can."

Vats, salt, hoops

It all starts with open vats and freshly pasteurised milk. The cheese is then simply salted and milled into hoops, where it's lovingly turned for up to five days before being carefully trundled to the maturing sheds. Each cheese is individually matured and graded by hand at regular intervals. Timing is everything, and the master cheesemakers apply all of their skill to bring their Stilton to fruition. The result is worth the wait; a delectably rich cheese with rounded, complex flavours, finished with a touch of piquancy and a creamy mouthfeel.

Shropshire Blue, too

The creamery also crafts the equally delicious Shropshire Blue. Perfected by hand, the master cheesemakers watch over this cheese like hawks to ensure absolute precision at every step of the process.

This Shropshire Blue boasts a robust nutty flavour and delightfully smooth and creamy texture, plus, of course, that highly distinctive colour. Natural Annatto is carefully added at the crucial moment to give the cheese a rich orange hue – which contrasts beautifully with the delicate veins of blue.

Discover more about Arla Cheese

Finding out more about the fascinating world of Arla Cheese is easy. Simply go to arlacheese.co.uk and read all about our award-winning creameries, the passionate cheesemakers who work there, and how we craft the finest champion cheeses. After all, it's what we do best."

"By supporting our creameries and helping them craft fine cheeses, we're extremely proud to bring heritage varieties to more and more cheese-lovers"



KALTBACH CREAMY FACT FILE

APPEARANCE:
A 4.2kg wheel of uniform semi-hard cheese. There is a smooth, natural black rind and a label on top

TEXTURE:
Semi-soft mountain cheese. A few pea-sized holes are sometimes on show

COLOUR:
Pale yellow/ivory

AROMA:
Fresh and sweet

FLAVOUR:
A strong, mature and well-rounded aromatic flavour

PAIR WITH:
Crusty bread and a good Spanish red wine

FROM THE CAVE TO YOUR COUNTER

Kaltbach Creamy's reputation is catching up with its Swiss cave-aged cousins, Emmi tells Cheese Buyer

Lying deep within the Santenberg sandstone mountain in Switzerland are the Kaltbach caves, the home and maturation chambers for world-renowned cheeses such as Kaltbach Le Gruyère AOP, Kaltbach Emmentaler and the increasingly popular Kaltbach Creamy. The caves have been used to age cheese since as far back as the 1950s. Located in the municipality of Mauensee, it has been owned by speciality Swiss cheese importer Emmi since 1993. In 2005, Emmi launched its Kaltbach brand to market speciality cheeses from the sandstone cave.

The cave boasts 94% air moisture and temperatures range from between 10 and 12.5°C all year round – these conditions are created due to the cave's mineral-created climate. Originally, when the cheeses were first left in the cave to mature, the cheesemakers became alarmed due to the cheese changing colour, but they discovered that when the rind colour changes, the cheese is actually ripening into a perfect consistency and mellow taste.

Cave-aged Kaltbach Le Gruyère AOC will spend 12 months stored in these carefully controlled conditions, enabling it to develop to gourmet perfection. The full-flavoured but smooth raw milk classic has a distinctive rustic rind and tangy taste which results from this intense maturing process. The same goes for the much-loved Kaltbach Emmentaler AOC, which is also aged for a minimum of 12 months. This hard cheese boasts a black-brown patina, which sets it apart from the Gruyère.

Cave-aged character

"The Kaltbach caves are vital in the cheese maturation process," explains Stephen Kimber, Emmi's head of cheese sales in the UK. "They provide a natural and consistent temperature and humidity, which is vital for maturation and enabling the Kaltbach cheeses to develop their distinctive flavour. Not all cheeses are selected or able to survive in caves, so only certain cheeses are specially selected."

One of those specially selected cheeses is Kaltbach Creamy, a semi-hard variety with a natural black rind. It is matured in the caves for five months to develop a creamy and buttery texture with a strong, mature taste. Its distinctively creamy texture is achieved thanks to a high proportion of cream, which sets it apart from other semi-hard varieties of cheese.





Since developing the cheese, Emmi has witnessed it garner a reputation to rival its Gruyère and Emmentaler cave-mates. "We launched Kaltbach Creamy in the UK in 2014 and have seen sales grow 150% in two years," says Stephen. "The sales growth is all down to the taste performance of the cheese. It is extremely moreish and is a very 'universal cheese product'; it appeals to all ages and all palates. It also represents good value."

Coveted and creamy

To meet the growing demand for its cave-aged cheeses, Emmi extended its underground maze-like cave system between 2008 and 2010 from 970 to 2,130 metres, thus creating room for around 150,000 cheese wheels. This forward-thinking contributed to more varieties of its portfolio of Kaltbach cave-aged cheeses being made available, with a landmark 100,000 wheels of Kaltbach Creamy leaving the cave in 2016.

The development process of Emmi's cave-aged cheeses doesn't end there, with the company keen to create other options for the public to enjoy. "The future of the Kaltbach caves is extremely exciting," he says. "Along with our award-winning Kaltbach Le Gruyère, Emmentaler and Creamy, we are constantly striving to find the next cheese that will benefit from the unique Kaltbach cave-ageing process. We are looking at hard goat's cheese at the moment, as well as other hard and soft cheeses."



"HE WHO DARES WINS"

A thriving shop is only part of Baron Robert Pouget's fine food empire

WHAT'S THE STORY BEHIND YOUR SHOP, HOW DID IT COME ABOUT?

Back in the early 80s, I was a director and shareholder of a property company that was developing shopping malls in southern England. One of these malls had a cheese specialist, Peter Glanville, which, as I observed, was doing brisk business. One day, a friend Gerry Stevens and myself were in Oxford and quite by accident, wandered into the Covered Market. We both loved it, and when we noticed that one of the units was available to rent, we decided to take it and go into the cheese business.

HOW DID YOU FEEL YOU WERE ABLE TO START A CHEESE SHOP WHEN PRESUMABLY YOU WERE INEXPERIENCED IN CHEESE RETAIL?

"He who dares wins," as Delboy was fond of saying. Gerry was the manager and producer of a couple of well-known pop groups at the time and I, apart from my involvement in the property company, had varied interests which included film production and furniture design. So starting a cheese shop with very little expertise apart from being fond of the stuff seemed like the right thing to do. But I was fortunate to know Pete Glanville, who had now started the Cheltenham Cheese Company, and who very kindly agreed to give us the basic information and contacts to set us on the right path.

DID YOU THINK OF OPENING OTHER SHOPS?

We did – by mid-1985 we had opened a branch in Kingston upon Thames, one in Epsom and one in High Wycombe. We soon realised that managing cheese needs far more care and attention than the general run of retailing. The logistics of managing four specialist cheese shops turned into a nightmare and we decided it was not worth pursuing.

SO NOW YOU ONLY HAVE THE ONE SHOP?

Yes, we sold or disposed of the other shops and kept the original shop in the covered market. Instead of expanding our retail operation, we branched out into wholesale and production.

WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF BEING BASED IN A MARKET, RATHER THAN ON THE HIGH STREET?

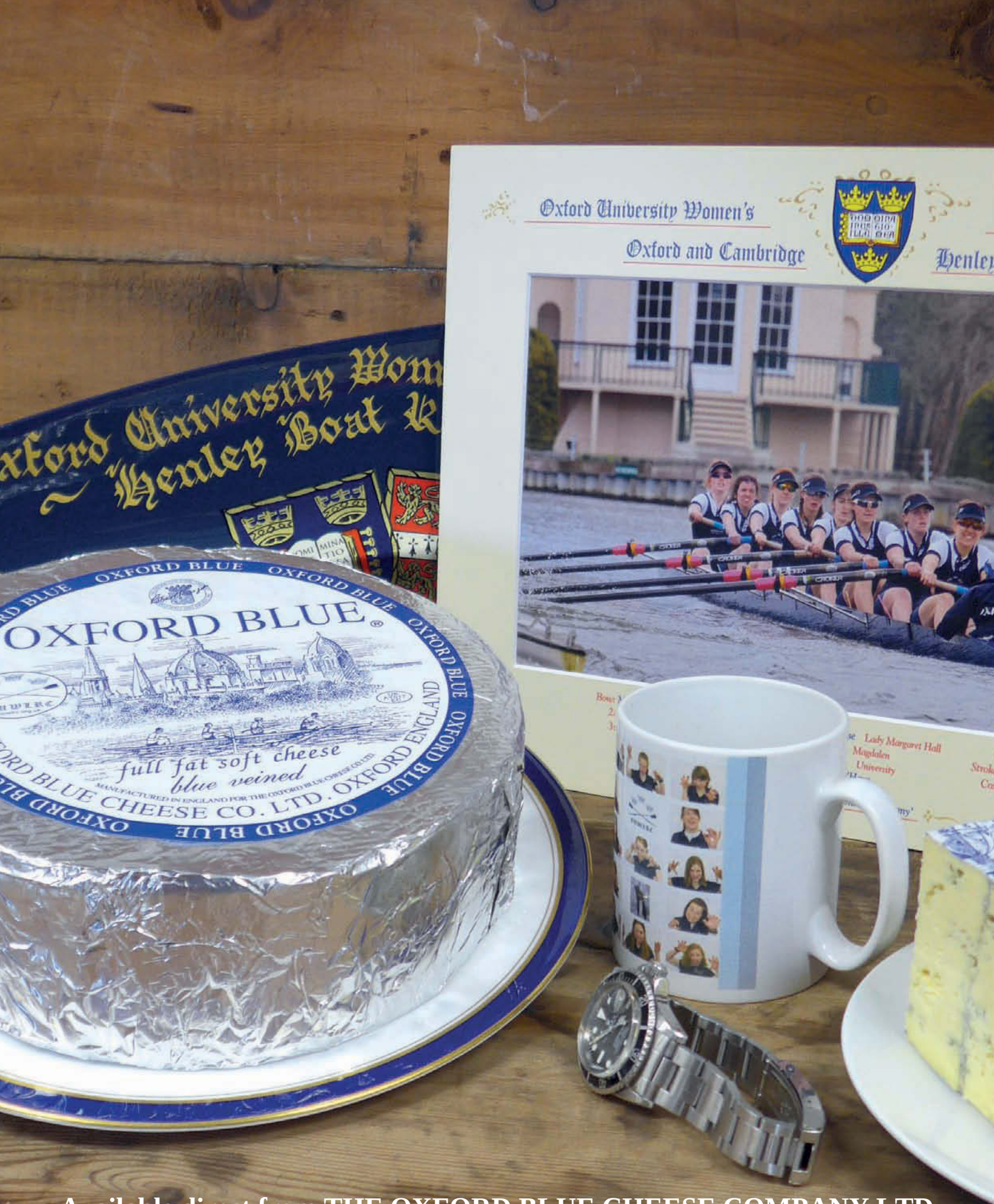
The high street retail shop will be seen as more substantial and possibly create a more upmarket image, but the main advantage of being in a market environment is that once the roller blinds are up there is no barrier between your counter and the prospective customer. No shop front and front door to intimidate and lead the customer to hesitate from coming in and browsing. The second advantage is that you do not pay rent or business rates on the space in front of the shop on which the customer stands, so you are effectively getting a lot of extra space rent and rate-free.

HOW DOES A RETAIL SHOP FIT IN WITH YOUR OVERALL OPERATION?

The shop operates separately from the wholesale and production company, which is based at our warehouse a few miles outside Oxford. But it is important not just for the obvious reasons of profitability but for the variety of cheese we can stock and move, especially now that we are investing so much in internet sales. Last year we launched our retail website – oxfordcheese.co.uk – where we offer a large proportion of the cheese available for sale in our retail shop. Our emphasis is on artisanal cheeses, especially from the Alpine region, and ewe's milk and goat's milk from the French regions. We have been very surprised, agreeably so, by the way sales have taken off; we were run off our feet at Christmas and sales are continuing to hold up. We also offer a same day delivery service on the website, by bike, to the whole of Oxford within the ring road.. Although the cheese shop is a very important part of our total business, the main thrust of our company is the production and sale of our brands: Oxford Blue, Oxford Isis, College White and Oxford Sauce.



"Although the cheese shop is a very important part of our total business, the main thrust of our company is the production and sale of our brands: Oxford Blue, Oxford Isis, College White and Oxford Sauce"



Available direct from THE OXFORD BLUE CHEESE COMPANY LTD
01844 338055 www.oxfordfinefood.com

OFFICIAL SPONSORS
ouwlrc.org.uk
OUWLRC

Or From: Harvey & Brockless Limited 020 7819 6000, Anthony Rowcliffe 01892 838999, Carron Lodge 01995 640352, Turners Fine Foods 01580 212818, Hamish Johnston 01394 388127, Paxton & Whitfield 01451 823460, Fromage to Age 02476515628, Cheltenham Cheese 01242 529921, Leopard Dairy 01747 811188, New Wave Seafoods 01285 715160, Barry Gibbon 01235 812974, Abbey Cheese 01525 853040, Longman Cheese Sales 01963 441146, Wellocks 0844 499 3444, West Horsley Dairy 01483 725000



AWARDS, EDUCATION & EXPANSION

As Cornish Blue continues to collect awards, we look at what's next

Philip and Carol Stansfield started making Cornish Blue on their farm on the edge of Bodmin Moor in Cornwall in 2001.

Awards have played a key part in the growth of Cornish Blue, starting in 2004 when they won the Tesco Cheese Challenge, a competition for cheeses that weren't stocked by Tesco.

In 2006 Cornish Blue was Supreme Champion at the Bath and West Show, and then in 2010 Cornish Blue was honoured to be named World Champion cheese. To this day, only one other British cheese has been World Champion.

The awards continue to flow for Cornish Blue, the latest one being the People's Choice at the 2016 Great British cheese awards.

While awards continue to play a key part in the company's marketing strategy, Philip Stansfield thinks that the next big step is education.

"As the number of cheese producers grows it's going to be increasingly important that the buying public understand the reasons why they should buy artisan products as opposed to mass-produced and often lower-priced alternatives," he says.

As sales continue to grow, one of the challenges for Phil and his team is keeping up with demand.

In 2015 the company completed a production facility expansion, but already Phil is planning the next expansion, both of production facilities and the cows that produce all the milk for Cornish Blue.

"We have to keep moving forward," he continues. "Cornish Blue sales continue to rise as more and more delis, farm shops, restaurants and cafés want to stock it, and we are seeing a growing demand from the wholesalers who supply Cornish Blue to supermarkets across the UK. We are also keen to find ways of growing our export sales."

Sales are also now coming from innovative sources, as Phil explains: "We receive a regular stream of enquiries from people looking to use our cheese as a wedding or birthday cake base. A number of local businesses use our presentation boxed cheese as a unique, and, of course, extremely tasty, business gift".

So how does Phil see the future? "I'm very excited by the future. I can see more and more artisan producers emerging and as such creating a bigger sector. The challenge is that between us we need to persuade more and more people to be choosy when it comes to their food and to educate them of the benefits of consuming the wonderful cheeses and foods we produce."





"WE WANT INDEPENDENTS TO THRIVE"

Experience, innovation and support: Rowcliffe is here to help you stand out from the crowd

Rowcliffe always have and always will champion, support and nurture small producers that have a genuine provenance story, a proven tradition of quality and, of course a stunningly good product. They are passionate about and protective of their artisanal award-winning fare, and distribution channels are paramount to ensure this ethos does not get lost in translation. The team at Rowcliffe feels a great responsibility to ensure that the product sold has a unique story and that the consumer will appreciate the time, care and attention that has gone into its make. Without doubt, Rowcliffe's distribution point is the wonderful range of independent speciality food stores and delicatessens across the UK and Ireland. These are the people who know exactly how the Rowcliffe range should be sold.

Being mindful of the lay of the land, Rowcliffe feels a responsibility to support the business goals of its customers. Over the last 50 years, Rowcliffe has built its business to be independent-centric and relishes doing things 'a little bit differently' to other distributors. For them, they focus on a key list for successful selling.

Product exclusivity and range

The last thing Rowcliffe customers want is to stock a product readily available in a larger high street retailer at a lower price point, or a brand saturated by its exposure. The Rowcliffe buying team prides itself on securing exclusive supply agreements on quality products across Europe, ensuring our independent customers have a unique selling story, can differentiate from the larger stores and, importantly, stay ahead in their local area in terms of their offer. Its Dutch Beemster Gouda, Swiss Le Cret Gruyère and Italian Parmigiano Reggiano



are just some of its exclusive cheeses, and the business is proud to be partnering with a forward-thinking Bourgogne-based producer to produce an exquisite new PGI-accredited range. Paired with its Italian range of Castellino Olives and Italpestos Pesto, along with its wonderful Mossy's Original Bio Yogurt Rowcliffe, it offers a 'one stop shop' approach. Rowcliffe also offers its own Clemency Hall range of cheeses, selected specifically for the perfect product mix. It continually works with producers on new product development to drive innovation and keep ahead of the curve. This all supports independents to widen the gap between them and the competition.

In-store customer service

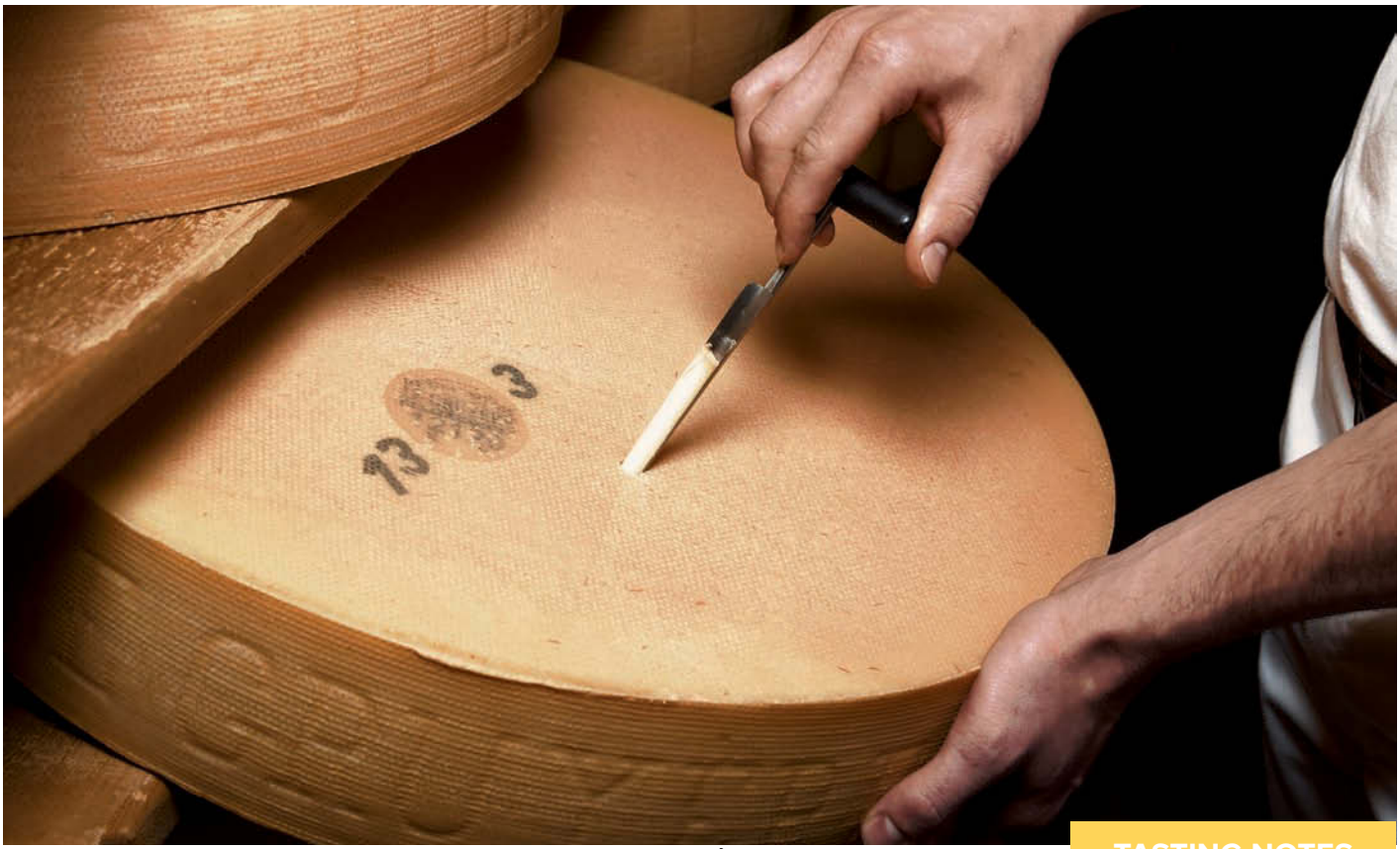
Approachable, helpful store staff are, without doubt, a key driver in a consumer experience, however there's nothing more reassuring than stores that know their range like the back of their hand and can answer any questions as well as suggest both food and beverage pairings. Product training is key; before a consumer is going to part with their hard earned cash, they need to know they are investing in something special, believe that the price point reflects the product's quality, and are confident in the tasting experience they expect. When staff share expertise on and enthusiasm for a product they will trade consumers up from a generic off the shelf purchase to a full food experience. Rowcliffe invests in dedicated area sales managers who are relentlessly on-hand to support with product range consultation, training and presentation. They will nurture new stores and their staff and can help to layout a cheese counter, propose a charcuterie display or look at the overall aim of a store utilising products in the correct places for maximum exposure and cross selling. A bit of help from a company who has been doing this for 50 years is worth asking for!

Peace of mind

With an industry-admired food technical team, Rowcliffe ensures optimum product condition by working closely with producers in the development stages, using decades of experience to help with consultation and even operational advice to ensure the final product is a commercial success for both producer and retailer.

"We live and breathe our independent customers and offer support on so many levels. Indeed, we are proud to have created and sponsored the Young Cheesemonger Award, an innovative and exciting award which gives entrants the recognition they deserve. We influence policy and system-makers for the benefit of independents, and actively head up a number of key food organisations to promote the interests of small producers and retailers. Our business is geared to support in whichever way we can; let's work together to feed the interest in and demand for quality food"

JASON FISHER, MD OF ROWCLIFFE



LE GRUYÈRE AOP: THE CHEESE COUNTER CORNERSTONE

A unique flavour and trusted provenance make this ancient cheese a must-stock

When it comes to creating a successful cheese counter, one of the first considerations is what will form the foundations of your offering. What will position you as an expert in the field of fine cheese, a cheesemonger with taste? One cheese whose reputation precedes it is Le Gruyère AOP, a Continental cheese from Switzerland which has been wowing discerning lovers of cheese for generations.

In Gruyères, 900 years of tradition and provenance come together to produce one of Europe's best-loved cheeses. Created since 1115 in family-run village dairies located in the western cantons of Switzerland, the cheese was awarded national Controlled Designation of Origin (AOC) status in 2001, followed by European Protected Designation of Origin (AOP) status in 2011, which ensures that the cheese maintains the tradition, taste and provenance which make it so revered across the Continent and beyond. The rigid specifications the 164 Le Gruyère AOP-producing dairies use to create each wheel (averaging just 14 per day) are strictly adhered to, and ensure that every stage of production – from the cows producing the milk to the affineur aging the cheese – is traceable. Not only that, but strictly only 100% natural raw cows milk is used. Together, these standards mean that the taste and quality of Le Gruyère AOP is consistently high.

What makes it so popular? For one thing, its subtle yet distinctive flavours which are not to be found in any other cheese. Truly a cheese of distinction, its quality is consistently high thanks to the exacting methods used in its production – which go some way in explaining its numerous awards.

Who buys Le Gruyère AOP? Not only is the cheese welcomely versatile and suitable for use in a number of dishes as well as cheeseboards, it is naturally both lactose and gluten-free so suitable for coeliac and lactose-intolerant consumers.

By stocking Le Gruyère AOP, you can be sure of not only a consistently high quality cheese which will sell well, but a consumer base ready and willing to enjoy its unique taste and learn more about this long-revered Alpine cheese.

TASTING NOTES

- Between six and nine months, Le Gruyère AOP Classic has a sweet, nutty and refined taste. This cheese is wonderful for everyday and is particularly loved by children and those adults who love a mild, sweet cheese. It is also fabulous for cooking as it melts superbly to produce a wonderful creamy consistency
- Starting at 10 months, Le Gruyère AOP Réserve has a full-flavoured and aromatic taste, which will please lovers of aromatic subtlety. This is a mature and complex cheese, ideal for a cheeseboard
- Some wheels will be matured up to 18 or even 24 months for lovers of strong sensations. Perfect for cheese connoisseurs!

LE GRUYÈRE D'ALPAGE AOP

Every summer, cattlemen in the valleys throughout the Western cantons of Switzerland prepare their herds for the voyage up the mountainside. The tradition of moving the animals up the lush lands is known as Inalpe, and has been practiced for centuries. During the summer months the cows yield rich and luscious milk as they graze freely throughout the day. Only one wheel of this exceptional Le Gruyére d'Alpage AOP is made a day; nutty, sweet, complex in flavour, this is a rare cheese not widely available in the UK.

> "In Gruyère, 900 years of tradition and provenance come together to produce one of Europe's best-loved cheeses"

LE GRUYÈRE®
SWITZERLAND AOP

Traditional. Artisanal. Exceptional!

Le Gruyère AOP Switzerland - a 900-year tradition of artisanal cheesemaking.



The makers of Gruyère AOP have been producing artisanal cheese since long before the term was popular. For over 900 years, Gruyère AOP has been made by hand, in small batches, using the same recipe, along with the experience and know-how of skilled cheesemakers. This is followed by aging and ripening of the cheese by equally skilled affineurs, utilizing centuries-old technique and knowledge.

This authentic recipe and the care that goes into every wheel makes Gruyère AOP the finest choice for your family and friends. Enjoy it as it is, or in your favourite dishes.

For recipes and more, visit us at gruyere.com

Gruyère AOP
Born in Switzerland in 1115.
#GruyereAOP



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Naturally Gluten- and Lactose-Free.
www.gruyere.com

AOP = PDO (Protected Designation of Origin)

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GREENER PASTURES

Mary Quicke of Devonshire-based cheesemakers Quicke's tells Cheese Buyer how the completion of a new parlour has contributed to even tastier cheese

We built a second parlour to enable our cows to graze more. The cows were grazing at two cows to the acre, and this brings them back to one cow to the acre. This means that more of the cows' feed will be grazed grass, which has a wonderful effect on the flavour, aroma and virtuous fats in the milk. All of that concentrates 10-to-one in the cheese, so we are expecting even more delicious varieties.

The shortage of grazing has provided a real limit to the number of cows we could have, since we wanted sensible amounts of grazing for them. The new milking parlour and its grazing platform enables us to increase the amount of milk we produce, and so the cheese we produce. We are experiencing good growth in demand both in this country and abroad, and having the extra milk means we can supply that demand.

A grass-based system means that the milk is more seasonal in volume – we have extra milk from the peaks in grass growth in the spring and autumn flush of grass. We've worked to build tracks, fences and water troughs so we can get cows out for much longer without damaging the soil. We grazed until nearly Christmas, and started grazing again on Valentine's Day. That means that our cows' milk has that lovely grass-fed hit for most of the year – that is technically described as 'cow breath'. If you've had the pleasure of smelling a cow's breath, you know that it's a glorious thing; warm, green and animally. A grass-based system means that you will also get a lot more of those precious conjugated linoleic acids in the milk – our milk already had double the amount you find in standard milk and we will be looking for a similar upgrade. You will also get an even better Omega-3 and Omega-6 ratio. Both of those are meant to offer good health benefits; other cheesemakers in this country tend to have a more usual UK dairy farming diet, and therefore their cheese cannot boast these benefits.

What's next for Quicke's? Well, we're currently waiting for the extra-grazed grass cheese to mature. Plus, we've got a neat little infographic to tell the story of the grazed grass in our cheese, which we can supply to retailers. I'm so happy that our Vintage Cheddar is available again from May. We've put some work into shelf-ready packing, so our pre-cut pieces sit better on a shop's shelf. We've also applied some tweaks to the recipe of Double Devonshire and Devonshire Red, so they are gorgeous, buttery and fresh. And a third parlour is a twinkle in my eye...





ITALIAN TRADITION COMES TO BRITAIN

Get to know Italy's popular Nonno Nanni range of award-winning soft, fresh cheeses

Italy has gifted the world with a distinctive array of gastronomic delights. Our ongoing love affair with Italian cuisine means every cheese counter carries a selection of must-stock items. That family of Italian dairy essentials is about to grow a little larger!

For the first time, Nonno Nanni ('nonno' means grandfather), one of Italy's premium, soft cheese specialists, will be available in the UK through a new distribution partnership with AJA Portfolio brands. With almost a quarter of the market share in the quality Stracchino sector, Nonno Nanni's success in its home country can be attributed to its ongoing commitment to creating genuine, delicious cheeses. With all the natural goodness of milk, Nonno Nanni's cheeses – Stracchino, Robiola, Caprino and Squaquerello – deliver the fresh taste of an age-old Italian tradition to Britain.

UK retailers will be able to sample the Nonno Nanni range at this year's Bella Vita exhibition, taking place at London's Business Design Centre in June, and Nonno Nanmi will be showcasing products at Welcome Italia in October.

Rich heritage

The story begins in the heart of the Veneto region, in a rural town 40 kilometres to the northwest of Venice, in 1947. Here Giovanni Lazzarin, known to all as 'Nanni', started his own small cheesemaking business with two simple wood-burning boilers on which to heat the milk he sourced from a local farmer. From this humble start, Nonno Nanni has become one of the most recognisable dairy brands in Italy. Processing in excess of 60,000 tonnes of fresh milk each year, the business still retains close links with the region's dairy farmers. Nurturing good relationships ensures Nonni Nanni receives the highest quality ingredients to make its award-winning cheese.



In true Italian style, Nanni's passion, as a pioneer of fresh cheese production, has been handed down from father to son to grandson. Today, eight members of the third generation of the Lazzarin family are among the business' 200 employees – a genuine family affair. People are key to Nonno Nanni's success and community engagement is an important aspect of the company's CSR policy.

Socially and ecologically responsible, Nonno Nanni is committed to the welfare of the region's dairy herds and dedicated to the wellbeing of their staff. The business is also devoted to environmental sustainability. It uses electricity from renewable sources and has made concerted efforts to offset the CO2 emissions that are generated during day-to-day operations. In fact, it has been said that Nonno Nanni produces Italy's first 'eco-friendly' Stracchino.

Over the years, the company has embraced advances in manufacturing technology to ensure it continues to create a consistent, high-quality range. Combining the cheesemaker's art with modern manufacturing techniques, Nonno Nanni maintains artisan quality, guaranteeing outstanding, authentic fresh products. An innovative, forward-looking business with one foot firmly rooted in traditional values – it's a balance that has kept them in good stead for almost 70 years. This approach has proved to be award-winning, as at the International Cheese Awards 2016 Nonno Nanni's Il Fresco Spalmabile Lactose-free won both a silver and bronze medal, while at the World Cheese Awards the brand's Caprino won a Gold medal, and Caprino, Robiola and Il Fresco Spalmabile Lactose-free all received silver medals.



Stracchino – One of the most consumed soft cheeses in Italy, Stracchino, the best-selling deli counter product in the range, is a cows' milk cheese with a very soft, creamy texture and a mild, delicate flavour which uses no preservatives. Nonno Nanni masterfully make their cheese by combining locally-sourced, pasteurised dairy milk and cream with a unique starter culture containing two billion live milk enzymes per gram. The result is a fresh, natural product with a 24 day shelf life. As the cheese matures it gradually softens whilst retaining its freshness and flavour. It's ideal by itself, spread on bread and great combined with tomatoes and extra virgin oil. Pack size: 125g



Robiola – A classic fresh, soft, airy cheese with a light, creamy consistency and an intense, full flavour. As well as being spreadable on crackers or sandwiches, Robiola is also a versatile ingredient – its pleasing richness works well in everything from starters to desserts such as cheesecake. A 100% authentic Italian product, Robiola has a 45 day shelf life. This cheese was Gold medal winner at the International Cheese Awards 2014 and 2015. Also available in lactose free – winner of 2016 Product of the Year (Cheese) – Food Awards (Italy). Pack size: 100g

Caprino made with cows' milk – This is a beautifully white, looser textured, soft fresh cows' milk cheese. Caprino takes its goat-y name from the traditional cylinder shape that it is formed into. Creamy and intensely flavoursome, this can quickly be adapted into antipasti or summer salad dishes, as well as being great with bread or crackers. Caprino has a 45 day shelf life. Also available in lactose free. Pack size: 80g

Squaquerello – Famously smooth, with a deliciously melting consistency, Squaquerello is fresh and natural tasting, with no preservatives. This soft cheese contains a higher level of starter cultures to deliver extra flavour. Spectacular served with vegetables or simply eaten from the spoon, Squaquerello also adds creaminess to risotto, pasta or can be used in a cheesecake. 24 day shelf life. Pack size: 125g

For Nonno Nanni sales in the UK contact James Mckeown at AJA Portfolio Brands Ltd via info@portfoliobrands.it



BLUE CHEESE OF DISTINCTION

Cheese Buyer speaks to Shepherds Purse about the award-winning Mrs Bell's Blue, a favourite of Raymond Blanc and Rick Stein

North Yorkshire-based producer of traditional, handmade cheese, Shepherds Purse has a long-running history of producing distinctive cheeses. Created in small batches on the Bell family farm using cow and sheep's milk to provide characterful flavours, the portfolio is instantly recognisable. Established in the 1980s by Judy Bell and with ownership passed over to her daughters, Katie and Caroline in 2012, Shepherds Purse has become a bonafide frontrunner of the British artisanal cheese market.

One of Shepherds Purse's most popular varieties is Mrs Bell's Blue, made from ewe's milk and considered to be one of the best ewe's milk blue cheeses in Europe. The milk's grassy sweetness and the saltiness of the cheese deliver a rich, complex flavour that's a tad milder than a Roquefort but punchy enough for any blue cheese aficionado to savour. Judy had always planned to produce a European-inspired cheese. "Mrs Bell's Blue began development in the 1990s alongside the creation of our first cow's milk cheese, Yorkshire Blue," explains Caroline Bell, marketing director of Shepherds Purse. "The aim was to develop a soft, creamy and mellow Continental-style blue cheese, like many of the cheeses that we as a family enjoyed. The development took place over years rather than months and there were many mistakes along the way, but the results made it all worth it."

Flavour forward

The list of Mrs Bell's Blue devotees doesn't just end at famous chefs; the cheese has garnered an impressive array of accolades and positive press since it launched. "It has enjoyed success over the years at international awards, from winning Reserve Supreme Champion at Nantwich in 1997 to winning Champion Sheep Milk Cheese in 2016 and Super Gold at the World Cheese Awards in San Sebastian," says Caroline. "It has a complex flavour profile thanks to the meadowy sweet characteristics of the sheep milk contrasting with the mellow blue flavour and the salt. It's a well-balanced flavour and the texture melts in the mouth.

Its signature flavour qualities and quality ingredients means that Mrs Bell's Blue remains a standout cheese on any blue cheese counter. "It is one of only a handful of British soft and creamy sheep's milk blue cheeses on the market," explains Caroline. "It is unmistakably a 'Shepherds Purse Blue' as it melts in the mouth and can be counted on to deliver flavour-wise every time. As consumers' palates become increasingly more sophisticated, the complexity delivered by Mrs Bell's Blue is appreciated more and more."

Perfect pairing

The piquant and creamy character of Mrs Bell's Blue makes it a delectable pairing option and works wonderfully when incorporated into recipes, too. Crumbling and stirring it into a sweet potato and chilli soup or adding it to a wild mushroom tagliatelle brings a whole new flavour profile to the dishes. Caroline is equally as enthusiastic about its potential to complement other options on a cheeseboard: "Walnuts and honey go so beautifully with Mrs Bell's Blue. My mouth is watering at the thought!"

Cheese-loving independents will be pleased to hear that Mrs Bell's Blue comes in a multitude of different sizes, including a 170g cutting, a 350g quarter, a 700g half moon and a 1.4kg full truckle, allowing plenty of options for curious shoppers to enjoy. There are also lots of recipe suggestions on Shepherds Purse's website, which can provide customers with a source of culinary inspiration.

> "As consumers' palates become increasingly more sophisticated, the complexity delivered by Mrs Bell's Blue is appreciated more and more"



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COMMITTED TO QUALITY

The combination of a rich and varied history and a forward-thinking attitude has contributed to Bradbury's enduring success

"Over the last 10 years the business has changed, and rather than just being a box mover or wholesaler we're now a cutting, packing and distribution business," explains Chris Chisnall, marketing director of Bradburys. This is testament to the progressive nature of the company – it has a proven track record of adapting its approach while always having its sights firmly set on quality.

The business was established over 130 years ago by the Reverend William John Bradbury, and while the Bradbury family are no longer part of the company, Bradburys still remains in its birthplace of Buxton in Derbyshire. Over the years the business has diversified and evolved from being a traditional-style wholesaler of cheese to a specialist packing and distribution business involved in foodservice, wholesale, retail and export markets.

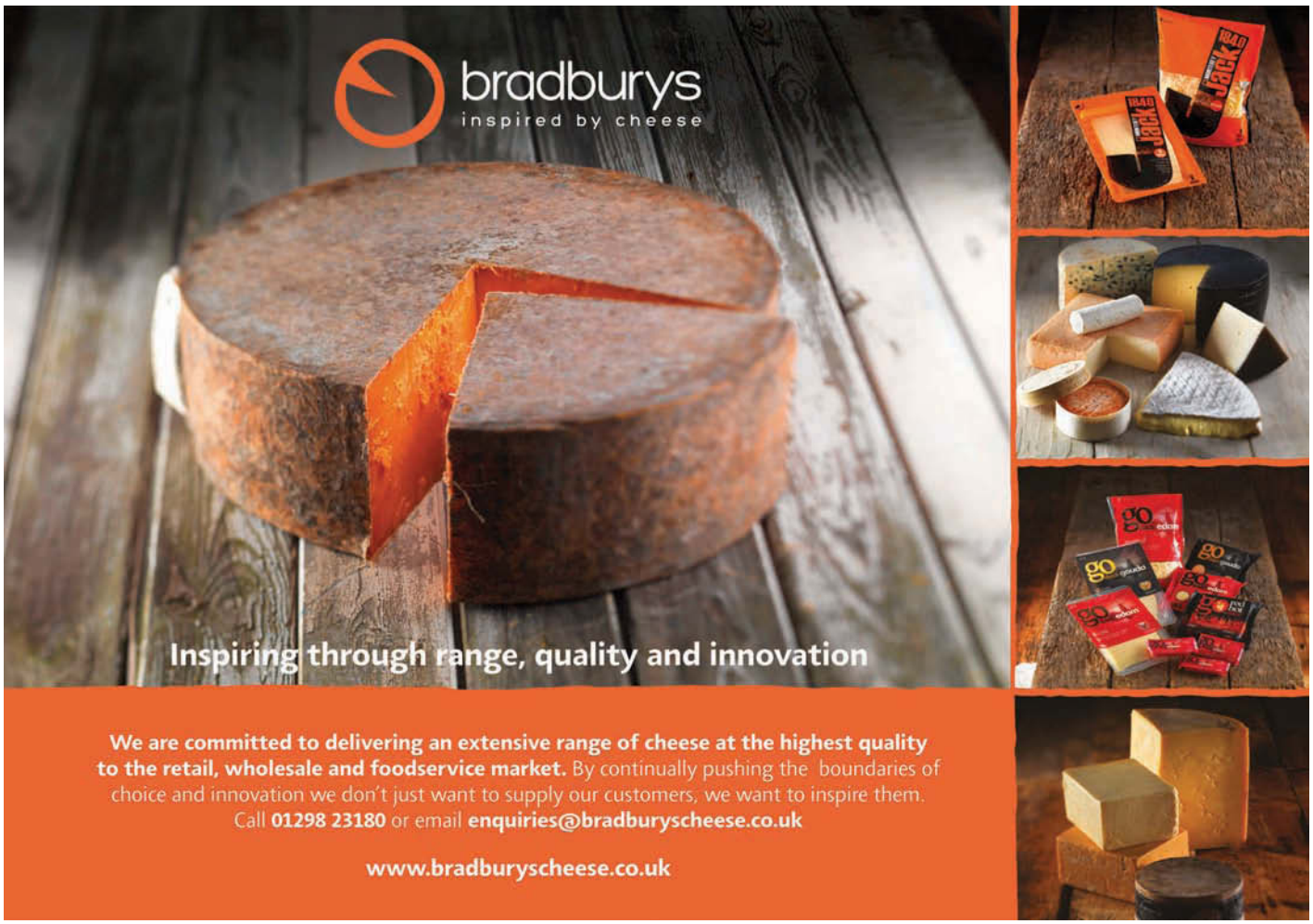
Sourcing specialists

The company's cheese portfolio has shifted over the last decade, with it now handling Continental and cheeses from overseas – Chris is keen to work with producers from around the world – rather than being European-orientated.

A strong focus on consumer trends and a dedicated sourcing team means Bradburys isn't fixed to one particular category, though, which reflects the company's bespoke approach. "Our business is unique, as unlike some other businesses we're not owned by French, Swiss or Italian suppliers," says Chris. "We can effectively source depending on consumer trends in the marketplace, which allows us flexibility. If artisan British is the next big thing, we'll push our sourcing team towards looking for new smaller makers. If Eastern European cheese is suddenly a trend, we can cater to that."

Bradbury's investment in cutting, packing, slicing and portioning cheese has made the company the go-to service for handling a cheesemaker's products, with the team dedicated to visiting and finding out first-hand what direction a producer wants to take with their cheese. "We also encourage them to come and have a look at our facility, because that gives them a lot of confidence in our abilities and technical know-how," explains Chris. "Ultimately, we're going to be handling that cheesemaker's brand, and they need to have confidence that we're going to expertly convey their values to UK customers."

The company is also committed to ensuring that the cheesemaking scene continues to flourish, and has invested in artisan producers like Northumberland Cheese Co. "We have also invested in Shirevale, a White Stilton producer in Cropwell Bishop," explains Chris. "We're giving them access to a market that they may not have had before, helping them to develop a strategy in how to grow their business, and assisting them in developing different varieties of products."





PURVEYOR OF THE BLUES

What's the secret to Colston Bassett's continued success? Billy Kevan, dairy manager, fills us in

WHAT TECHNIQUES ARE APPLIED TO ENSURE THAT THE RANGE IS ALWAYS CONSISTENT?

There are so many influences that affect the cheesemaking process. These have to be taken into account to reliably make a top-quality artisan cheese. The expertise of our cheesemakers ensures our cheese achieves the highest standards during every make.

The driving force behind Colston Bassett's consistency has been an absolute adherence to time-honoured, labour-intensive production techniques. All our processes are undertaken by hand; from mixing the milk in the cheese vats, cutting the curds, hand ladling, salting and mixing, through to filling the hoops.

Gentle handling of our curds is a key aspect in our production process this is why we hand ladle all of our curds and is one of the reasons Colston Bassett Stilton is renowned for its creamy, smooth texture. The end result speaks for itself.

WHAT ACCOLADES HAVE YOU WON OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS?

The past few years have seen Colston Bassett achieve incredible awards success. Personally I see these accolades as living proof of our consistency. It is difficult to quantify the direct impact that awards have on sales throughout the supply chain. However, winning two Supreme Champion titles in one year and repeatedly receiving three Great Taste Stars for our cheese isn't going to do any harm. If it helps to introduce our product to a wider audience then I'm all for that!

TELL US ABOUT YOUR INVESTMENT PROGRAMME

Colston Bassett Dairy was established as a co-operative at the start of the last century and still operates in this way today. The committee remains progressive in its outlook and recognises the need to invest for the future.

As our business has grown, maturation and storage space was becoming an issue; recent investment in modern storage facilities has made our process more efficient.

WHY SHOULD RETAILERS STOCK STILTON AND SHROPSHIRE BLUE ALL YEAR ROUND?

Colston Bassett Stilton and Shropshire Blue are cheese counter essentials. One area that we've been actively promoting is using Colston Bassett as a cooking ingredient through our 'Clash of Cultures' campaign. Six international chefs have created globally-inspired recipes that incorporate our quintessentially British cheese. The resulting recipe booklet has been hugely popular with independent retailers as it can help to uphold blue cheese sales during quieter periods – a bonus for everyone.





TASTE OF NORWAY

With Norway Day on the horizon (May 17th), now's the time to discover Norseland's Norwegian range

Home to some of the UK's most popular cheeses, Norseland UK has a wide range of cheeses in its portfolio – including fiery Mexicana and enduringly popular smokey Applewood – but with the trend for all things Scandi showing no sign of waning, the time is ripe to explore the brand's Norwegian offering.

First and foremost is Jarlsberg, the best-loved Norwegian cheese across the world. Despite the cheese itself being so well-known internationally the recipe remains a closely guarded secret, which only helps to drive the popularity of its unique texture and inimitable flavour.

Why buy Jarlsberg?

UNIQUE FLAVOUR

Matured for three months, the classic Jarlsberg has a sweet, nutty taste, which pairs beautifully with its creamy texture and distinctive round holes. It's an impressively versatile cheese; used in cooking it transforms everyday dishes into something special, it's delicious as a snack, and thanks to its mild flavour it works well on a classic cheeseboard. Jarlsberg Reserve is a full-bodied cheese with sweet and nutty notes. Made with pure Norwegian milk and aged for a minimum of 12 months, this is a cheese to impress.

FINE MILK

The standard of milk used in Jarlsberg is of key importance to its makers. Each year, more than 1.4 billion litres of high quality cow's milk is delivered by over 13,000 dairy farmers.

ONE-OF-A-KIND TEXTURE

A unique chemical reaction is behind Jarlsberg's distinctive, perfectly-round air holes. A culture in the milk breaks down the lactic acid, forcing air between the curds which continues as the cheese matures.

PROTECTED FLAVOUR

A food-grade plastic rind is applied to the cheese before maturation in order to protect the delicate flavour of Jarlsberg, meaning it reaches the end consumer tasting just as it should.

Also in Norseland's Scandinavian range are Snøfrisk, an award-winning semi-hard goats cheese with a delicate, tangy flavour. Its home of Ørsta, on Norway's south west coast, is partly to thank for its quality – the goats producing the milk inhabit an area boasting magnificent fjords and mountains, which results in pure white cheese; hence the name – Snøfrisk means 'snow fresh'.

Another popular Nordic cheese in Norseland's Scandi offering is Gudbrandsdalen, which inhabits the other end of the flavour and colour scale. A classic brown cheese, it's made with cow's cream and goat's milk and works well on cheeseboards and in desserts thanks to its rich, caramel-like flavour.

> A household favourite in Britain for over 60 years, Jarlsberg's mild, nutty and sweet taste makes it the perfect addition to a cheeseboard

@specialityfood

JARLSBERG THROUGH THE YEARS

1956
Ole Martin Ystgaard, professor at the Agricultural University of Norway, collaborated with students and food scientists to produce a cheese which combined a unique texture and flavour with round air pockets – the resultant cheese was named Jarlsberg

1960–65
The Cantarella family introduced Australia to Jarlsberg, swiftly followed by the UK and Canada. Exportation to America then commenced, and the cheese has since gone on to become one of the most popular imported cheeses in the USA

1978
Norseland Foods Inc. was founded in America by the TINE cooperative of Norwegain farmers to support Jarlsberg's popularity and uphold the brand's principles. They did this by overseeing the production of Jarlsberg from the dairy farms in Norway to the finished product on shelves, therefore maintaining the quality which made it so popular with the American population

1988
Just 10 years after the founding of Norseland Foods Inc. and 13 years after the cheese was introduced to America, the ten millionth wheel of Jarlsberg was shipped to the USA – bringing the nation's overall consumption of the cheese to 100 million kilograms

2000
The production of the Jarlsberg sold in America is relocated to the US

2001
The American population buys their 15 millionth wheel of Jarlsberg. Lined up, the wheels would cover the distance between New York and Los Angeles

2016
Jarlsberg celebrates its 60th birthday and annual international sales of around 27,000 tons per year

Norseland

innovative cheese specialists

Award Winning Cheeses

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Snøfrisk®

Semi-hard ripened cheese made from pasteurised goat's milk. Easy to slice with a pure, rich, mild flavour.



Jarlsberg® Special Reserve

Smooth, distinctive, rounded taste. Made with Jarlsberg's secret recipe since 1956. Matured for 12 months.



Gudbrandsdalen

Classic Norwegian brown cheese made from the best quality Norwegian goat's milk and cow's cream.



Applewood®

Smoky, smooth and with a dusting of paprika. Made from quality West Country Cheddar. UK's No.1 Smoky Cheddar*.



Applewood® Vintage

Smoky, smooth and creamy. Made from 12 month matured West Country Cheddar.



Mexicana®

Add an extra kick to culinary escapades, dare you try it!... UK's No.1 Spicy Cheddar*.

*Kantar Worldpanel 52w/e 26th February 2017

www.norseland.co.uk

A variety of the above are available from Harvey & Brockless, Carron Lodge, Hawkridge, Midland Chilled, Anthony Rowcliffe & Son.

For sales enquiries and to try our delicious cheeses, please contact:
James Whitfield: jwhitfield@norseland.co.uk 07554 426745



INTERNATIONALLY INSPIRED

Eurilait makes sourcing sought-after Continental cheese a breeze, explains James Millward, managing director

As a leading distributor of high quality, continental cheese and dairy products, Eurilait, a subsidiary of the two leading French dairy cooperatives, Laita and Eurial, is well positioned to offer an extensive range with an inherent understanding of the needs of the farm shop, delicatessen and small retailer. Based in Somerset, it operates from a 44,000-square-foot facility where it cuts, packs and distributes in a wide variety of formats and holds a BRC grade A+ certification.

Eurilait's products are unrivalled in quality and heritage; a network of 20 certified creameries throughout western France produce market-leading goat and cow's milk cheeses, as well as butter, cream and yoghurts. A full range of Continental cheese from throughout Europe is available, sourced from long-standing, trusted partnerships.

Eurilait's Merci Chef goat cheese is made by the award-winning Soignon dairy, owned by its parent company Eurial, and benefits from over 100 years of cheese-making experience and tradition. Eurial is, in fact, the number one goat cheese producer in the world, processing 190m litres of goat's milk every year.

A growing number of food programmes have fuelled a consumer desire to experiment with cheese beyond the world of Cheddar and Edam. As a result, the UK consumer is experimenting with new flavours and is looking towards the specialist retailer for inspiration. It's fantastic to see growth in Continental and speciality cheeses as consumers seek out a new experience; positive growth in spend (+6.8% YOY) on Continental cheese during 2016 has been cited by Kantar Worldpanel, to January 2017.

Eurilait's insight and understanding of the market, in line with current trends, is the key to creating the right products – the company has witnessed growth in Feta and Halloumi, soft Italian cheeses and cheeseboard essentials such as Manchego and continental blues which meet the needs of the adventurous, variety-seeking shopper.

Nurturing expertise in its people by undertaking initiatives such as training by the Craft Guild of Cheese Graders is part of the company's success – it has scooped over 100 awards in three years – and is now forging closer relationships with the food industry by becoming a Business Partner of the Craft Guild of Chefs, too.







FAMILY AFFAIR

Following its 30th anniversary, we catch up with The Swaledale Cheese Company about its past, present and future

Swaledale cheese has been made in the dale that shares its name for centuries. Brought to the Yorkshire Dales in the 11th century by Cistercian monks, the traditions and methods of creating the cheese had been handed down for generations until it came to Louise and Sam Reed to adopt the cheesemaking custom. The Swaledale Cheese Company was handed down to the brother and sister duo by their parents, David and Mandy, in 2012, and since being at the helm of the business they have witnessed it go from strength to strength.

"The past five years have been about me, Sam and the team maintaining the business while we all settle into the new roles," Louise says. "We've been learning a lot." That's no overstatement, as The Swaledale Cheese Company produces an extensive array of different cheeses, including cow's, smoked, blue, sheep's, goat's and additive varieties. The company has achieved PDO status for its Swaledale Cheese, which now boasts a dedicated following.

Keeping the company in the family is something that Louise and Sam feel very strongly about. "It's massively important to keep the business as part of the family – it was our parent's baby and dream," Louise explains. "They worked for years to build it, and it's mine and Sam's legacy from them. For me, I think the business and all its achievements is a way for my daughter, Evie, to be close to her grandparents and have a relationship with them."

Year of importance

2017 is a significant year for The Swaledale Cheese Company as it celebrates its 30th anniversary. The company was originally set up in 1987, and has since grown year-on-year. "As the company turned 30 in February, we are planning to roll out a year of celebrations," Louise says. "We've launched a rebrand and promotions and plan to expand the business into new markets."

Louise believes the company will continue with its upward trajectory. "The future is hopefully a very bright one," she says. "We plan to grow the business and expand its product range, and continue to add mine and Sam's personality and stamp to the history books of Swaledale." Watch this space.

The Swaledale Cheese Company

Yorkshire's Finest Artisan Cheese Maker
1987 – 2017

Producer of Award winning fine artisan cheeses including a range of cow's milk cheeses including Traditional Swaledale PDO, Sheep's and Goats cheeses and more!

To find out more about our range of cheeses or inquire about becoming a stockist and receiving samples call or email.



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YORKSHIRE BORN AND BRED

There have been major developments over at The Wensleydale Creamery, Sandra Bell, marketing manager, tells Cheese Buyer

WHY IS THIS SUCH A SIGNIFICANT YEAR FOR THE WENSLEYDALE CREAMERY?

It has been a big start to 2017 for The Wensleydale Creamery as we celebrated the 20th anniversary of the formation of our dedicated Milk Producer Group. The Creamery, based at Hawes in Wensleydale in the heart of the Yorkshire Dales, now sources milk from over 40 local farms, contributing more than £12m to the local economy through milk payments, wages and purchases.

We're passionate and proud of our Yorkshire heritage and provenance and are delighted to be celebrating 20 years of working closely with our Milk Producer Group as we move into the 21st year. It's a significant landmark and achievement that the group continues to work together and support each other 20 years on!

Our family of farmers is integral to the production of our award-winning cheeses, yogurts and butter, and it's vital that we support them to ensure a sustainable milk future for the Yorkshire Dales. We are now actively looking for more Yorkshire farmers to join the Milk Producer Group.

We believe that we have a responsibility, along with other British food producers, to continue to support and grow our British supplier base to safeguard UK farming and ensure a sustainable future for us all.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR MAJOR INVESTMENT AND NEW VISITOR CENTRE

There has been significant investment, around £5m, in our new dairy and cheesemaking facilities, including our cheese blending and packing operation, plus further investment in whey processing technology and equipment.

We continue to invest in our popular on-site Visitor Centre, with the recent completion of our new interactive Cheesemaking Viewing Gallery as part of our Yorkshire Wensleydale Cheese Experience. Visitors can discover a wealth of exciting information and now see 'behind the scenes' of Yorkshire Wensleydale cheese being handcrafted by our master cheesemakers from touch screens, as well as watching first-hand from the Viewing Gallery.

HOW WILL THIS INVESTMENT HELP THE CREAMERY?

Our new dairy was a significant investment, with both cheesemaking and cheese-blending facilities, but one which was vital to ensure we have the capacity to meet demand for growth and innovation in the UK and internationally. Streamlining processes and the addition of whey processing will ensure we are more efficient, enabling us to operate successfully, and allow us to meet the challenges of the marketplace.

Whilst we're custodians of tradition, with a 1,000 year history, we're relevant to the 21st century. What will never change is the quality, provenance and unique, authentic taste of Yorkshire Wensleydale cheese.

Our popular Visitor Centre continues to perform well, attracting over 250,000 visitors each year. It is important that we review, refresh, develop and invest in our offer in order to not only meet but exceed our visitors' expectations and experience when they are with us. We're a proud showcase for fantastic Yorkshire food and drink.

WHAT ELSE HAS THE CREAMERY GOT PLANNED FOR 2017?

There are big plans ahead for us this year. We are celebrating 25 years since the management buyout of The Wensleydale Creamery. It was thanks to this buyout in 1992, following the closure of The Creamery earlier that year, that cheesemaking in Wensleydale was reborn, and we are planning some exciting things to celebrate this year!

We continue to monitor market trends, retaining our traditional methods of handcrafting cheese to time-honoured recipes whilst being innovative with the development of new cheese recipes and products. We have some exciting new product plans in the pipeline for the deli and dairy category, and will continue to shout about our recently launched Blue 16 cheese.

"Whilst we're custodians of tradition, with a 1,000 year history, we're relevant to the 21st century. What will never change is the quality, provenance and unique, authentic taste of Yorkshire Wensleydale cheese"

Love Wensleydale Cheese... make sure it's from Yorkshire!

Not all cheeses bearing the Wensleydale name are actually produced in Yorkshire!

By stocking Yorkshire Wensleydale your customers can be assured that they are buying an authentic product, traditionally handcrafted with integrity in the heart of the Yorkshire Dales.



WENSLEYDALE CREAMERY

PROTECTED GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION

Yorkshire Wensleydale Cheese is protected

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BLOG wensleydale.co.uk/blog



CHEESES OF CHARACTER

Harvey & Brockless' Owen Davies tells us about the fine food maker and distributor's new goat's varieties and the growing demand for artisanal produce

ARTISAN CREDENTIALS

The value of provenance is becoming increasingly recognised and is deeply rooted in the creation of artisan cheeses. It traces the complexity of flavours and also forms an experience and a conversation piece – front of house staff have something to talk about which engages customers. Whether it is on the cheeseboard or forming part of a recipe, almost all artisan cheeses have their own unique story, which is a great sales tool for retailers and front of house.

NEW CHEESES

We introduced three new unpasteurised goat's cheeses last September, as we noticed a demand for goat's milk cheeses and at certain times of the year were unable to fulfil the demand with our existing range. George Bramham heads up our dairy at Broomhall Farm in Worcester. He spent considerable time in France with one of our highly regarded French goat's cheesemakers perfecting the art of making goat's cheese. The varieties are Blanche (a gooey, sensuous little cheese), Clara (ash-coated with a creamy, buttery-tasting interior) and Ashlynn (a pure white interior set against an ash-coated rind with a thin layer of charcoal running through its centre – it is stunning).

INGREDIENT TRACEABILITY

Having tried using pasteurised milk to create our own cheeses, we found it just didn't deliver the depth and complexity of flavour found in raw milk. We now source raw milk locally from farmer Helen Wallis. Her herd of 400 goats are meticulously cared for; the majority of the feed is grown on her farm, which shows in the quality of the milk.

RAW MILK

There's an increasingly positive awareness around the benefits of eating unpasteurised cheeses, despite some arguments over the risks in the press lately. When I visited the makers of Baron Bigod, I was introduced to drinking raw milk for the first time. You can really feel the goodness when you taste it – it's packed full of healthy flora and fauna that help to fight off harmful bacteria. We support Raw Milk Appreciation Day on 22nd April, which is a great celebration of all raw milk products.

BESPOKE CHEESE CUTTING

We understand that food costs are continually being looked at, along with staff costs and waste. In answer to this we offer a bespoke cutting and portioning service at a fixed price, reducing the added labour cost if prepared in-house. We have speciality cheese-cutting facilities at our London depot with the ability to cut and bespoke pack to our customer needs.



A TASTE OF ADVENTURE

Cheese Buyer finds out how family-run Butlers Farmhouse Cheeses has garnered critical and celebrity acclaim

The Butlers family has been farming in the Inglewhite area of Lancashire since the 1930s. Richard and Annie Butler used milk from their own herd to make cheese by hand in the farmhouse kitchen – cheese was even matured in the family bedrooms! Now, their granddaughter Gill runs the business along with great grandsons Daniel and Matthew, and the milk which makes their award-winning cheese still comes from the family farms thanks to Gill's brother, Andrew and niece, Nicola.

The cheese that started it all for the family is the traditional Farmhouse Mature Lancashire cheese which is still made in small batches to the original family recipe in the dairy at Wilsons Field Farm. It takes a great deal of time, but Butlers still proudly makes this cheese with a small amount of starter culture and extreme care to produce the signature "buttery crumble" texture that is the hallmark of this cheese. After maturation, anything between seven and 14 months, the cheese has developed a rich, savoury flavour.

It's easy to understand why Butlers Farmhouse Lancashires have earned so many awards over the years. The most recent are three gold medals at the 2016 Global Cheese Awards, one each for Butlers Farmhouse Crumbly, Creamy and Tasty Lancashires, and the prestigious Gold medal for Lancashires at the 2016 British Cheese Awards for Butlers flagship rinded Trotter Hill Tasty Lancashire – marking it out as an essential addition for leading speciality cheesemongers across the country.

Butlers have never been ones to stand still, and nowhere is this more



obvious than with the favourite of cheese lovers and chefs: smooth, creamy Blacksticks Blue. This is a modern cheese with a sense of adventure and daring, too! With its striking amber hue, soft and squishy texture and full rounded blue tang, it proudly stands apart from other blues. Since its creation back in 2003, it has won an incredible 65 awards and has been lauded by north west celebrity chefs Simon Rimmer and Nigel Haworth as well as many further afield.

Some people are unsure what to do with blue cheese beyond the cheeseboard, but Blacksticks Blue is a versatile ingredient which can add a twist to many dishes, from steak pie to stroganoff. Current marketing and social media is engaging with fans in their 1,000s who are slicing Blacksticks cheese to melt on steaks and burgers, crumbling the cheese with breadcrumbs and herbs into field mushrooms for grilling or trying more adventurous dishes such as tartiflettes and fondues. This summer, Blacksticks Blue will be on the road at a number of festivals up and down the land, so offer your customers a taste of the unexpected and give Blacksticks Blue pride of place amongst your speciality blue cheese display.

> "Offer your customers a taste of the unexpected and give Blacksticks Blue pride of place amongst your speciality blue cheese display"





PIONEERS IN CHEESE

Rightfully renowned for its Blue Stilton heritage, Long Clawson also uses century-old expertise to create a diverse range of other exciting English cheeses, too

With a company history dating back to 1911, Long Clawson has evolved alongside the cheese industry to keep up with consumer demand for eclectic options. Today, over 40 farms in the Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire areas supply the company with approximately 70m litres of milk every year, ensuring future prosperity for years to come. Twinned with that network is a dedicated vision to develop a repertoire of speciality cheeses, including fruit blends, savoury blends, a Leicestershire Red and a number of formats for Blue Stilton. "We have produced additive cheeses for almost 50 years," says Janice Breedon, marketing manager at Long Clawson. "Our first offerings were launched in the late 1960s. The market saw incredible growth for this category in the mid-2000s and this has gone from strength to strength with customers increasingly more receptive to new flavour combinations and ideas. The evidence of the success of the additive cheeses is during Christmas, where flavours include alcohol and some more intriguing presentations, which are testament to the acceptance of this category by consumers."

Bastion of blue cheese

Most cheese lovers will immediately recognise the Long Clawson name from its revered Stilton and blue cheese portfolio. Its Blue Stilton is made in the heart of the Vale of Belvoir by master cheesemakers, who began crafting the cheese over 100 years ago. Each Stilton is individually graded and hand-selected to ensure the finest quality. The cheese is aged for between eight and 12 weeks and has a rich flavour and distinctive blue cheese taste emanating from the veins radiating from the centre of the cheese; it's this level of attention to detail that has made the cheese a pillar of the company.

"All the offerings that Long Clawson produces are important to its repertoire," explains Janice, "but at the heart of our business is Blue Stilton. As this cheese has PDO status, flavour development is limiting, which is why different format options are so important. The sliced market is in growth – it's currently worth approximately £140m and unit growth is at 7% year-on-year. Blue Stilton is Britain's favourite blue, so to introduce a slice which offers customers a great flavour and in a convenient format makes perfect sense."

Red success

One of Long Clawson's biggest success stories is its Rutland Red, which has plenty of accolades to its name. "We launched our Leicestershire Red in 2007," says Janice. "We'd worked for a long time to develop a traditional Leicester cheese in the area it took its name from – we are the only dairy in Leicestershire to make a pasteurised Red Leicester cheese. As a specialist cheesemaker, we knew we had the expertise to develop something we could be proud of. In 2008 – just a year after its launch – it won Supreme Champion at The Global Cheese Awards and Best UK Non-Territorial Cheese at The British Cheese Awards. Since then it's gone on to win over 40 awards, including Super Gold at The World Cheese Awards."

It's easy to understand why Rutland Red has proven successful, with its flaky open texture, slightly sweet caramelised flavour and rich golden orange colour. "Our Rutland Red is cloth-bound, buttered and left to mature for up to six months," explains Janice. "This aids the development of the rust red coat. The richness of the orange colour comes from both the addition of Annatto – a natural plant dye – and butter."

Such is the attitude of Long Clawson that it is still looking to diversify and expand on its facilities and offering. "We are currently in the middle of an extension and improvement programme which will see £22m invested in facilities over the next five years," explains Janice, "A new cold storage facility was opened in 2016, and a packing hall is due to open this summer. We are committed to the long term and investment and sustainability is key. We want to lead the speciality cheese market with new cheese and new formats."





"As a specialist cheesemaker, we knew we had the expertise to develop something we could be proud of"

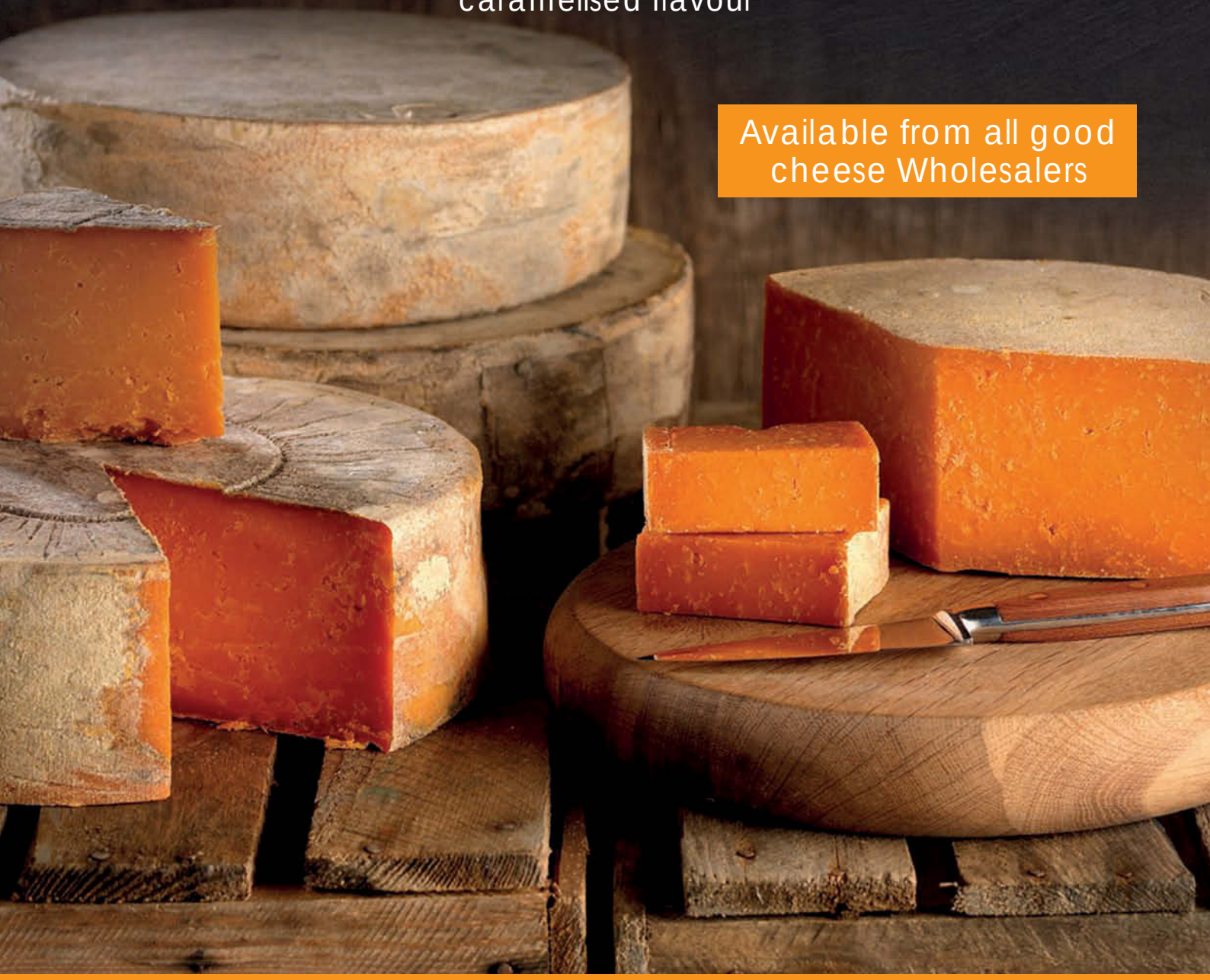
CLAWSON
Cheesemakers Since 1911

Rutland Red®

Traditionally made and lovingly crafted by cheese making experts in the heart of the Vale of Belvoir

It is clothbound, buttered and matured for up to six months creating an intensely orange, visually stunning cheese with a sweet, caramelised flavour

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TASTEFUL TRUCKLES

Cheese Buyer speaks to Richard Newton-Jones, commercial director for Snowdonia Cheese Company, about the iconic Welsh brand

SO FAR, WHAT HAVE BEEN THE HIGHLIGHTS OF 2017?

2017 had an incredible start, as our iconic Black Bomber was announced, for the second time, as the Best British Cheese Brand in the annual Best Brands supplement. The extra mature Cheddar was launched in 2001, so to receive this accolade definitely was a sweet 16th birthday present.

This award is voted for by independent retailers, which includes all of the deli owners, cheesemongers and farm shop managers that we've developed relationships with over the years, making it all the more rewarding.

WHY DO YOU THINK THE BRAND HAS BEEN SO SUCCESSFUL?

Snowdonia Cheese Company has successfully created a family of cheeses that are bursting with character. Consumers are really attached to our cheeses! The range of 10 colourful waxed cheese truckles offers something truly distinct. Each cheese is carefully made to deliver real depth of flavour, from the chilli hit of Red Devil through to the perfectly balanced Green Thunder.

Flavour-added cheeses should capture the imagination. We're also careful to ensure that we offer pairing and serving suggestions to help consumers get the most from their cheese selection. It helps that Snowdonia Cheese Company is known as the original in this format, and the vibrant wax coatings are an essential part of our striking brand identity. Similarly, we're immensely proud of our Welsh farming heritage. The valleys, lakes and mountains of North Wales significantly inform and influence the cheeses we produce and that is conveyed in everything we do.

ARE THERE ANY NEW PRODUCTS IN DEVELOPMENT?

Another aspect of the business' ongoing strategy is innovation. A more recent addition to the range is Ruby Mist, which has rich warming hints of port and brandy.

This summer we are reintroducing Red Storm, one of our best performing cheeses. Unavailable since the middle of 2016, it takes up to 18 months to mature, so we're keen to welcome it back.

WHAT'S YOUR PROMOTIONAL FOCUS OVER THE COMING MONTHS?

This summer we're supporting retailers' summer sales with a dedicated 'Smokin' Snowdonia' campaign. Making the most of the current barbecue trend, we've created a series of burger recipes incorporating cheeses from our range. These will feature in printed POS and take-home recipe cards. Snowdonia's cheeses lend themselves as a complex accompaniment to barbecued meat and vegetables.





THE HOME OF ALPINE CHEESE

Discover a range of fine mountain cheeses at Entremont

Offering a strong range of French Alpine cheeses such as Emmental, Comté and Gruyère in a variety of formats is Entremont, which "originally was a specialist in the hard cheeses of the Savoie region in the Alps," says sales manager, Jerome Reignier. "The number one cheese produced by Entremont is Emmental, which is really the Cheddar of the French – it's the one you will always find in our fridges. In France, this is mostly consumed in a grated format and the retail sector mostly sells it in that form. In the UK the grate of cheese is quite thick and wide, but because Emmental is less fatty, and drier, the grate is very fine, making it perfect for dishes such as onion soup. We offer classic Emmental in portions, grated, sliced or cubes or cossettes, which are smaller cubes."

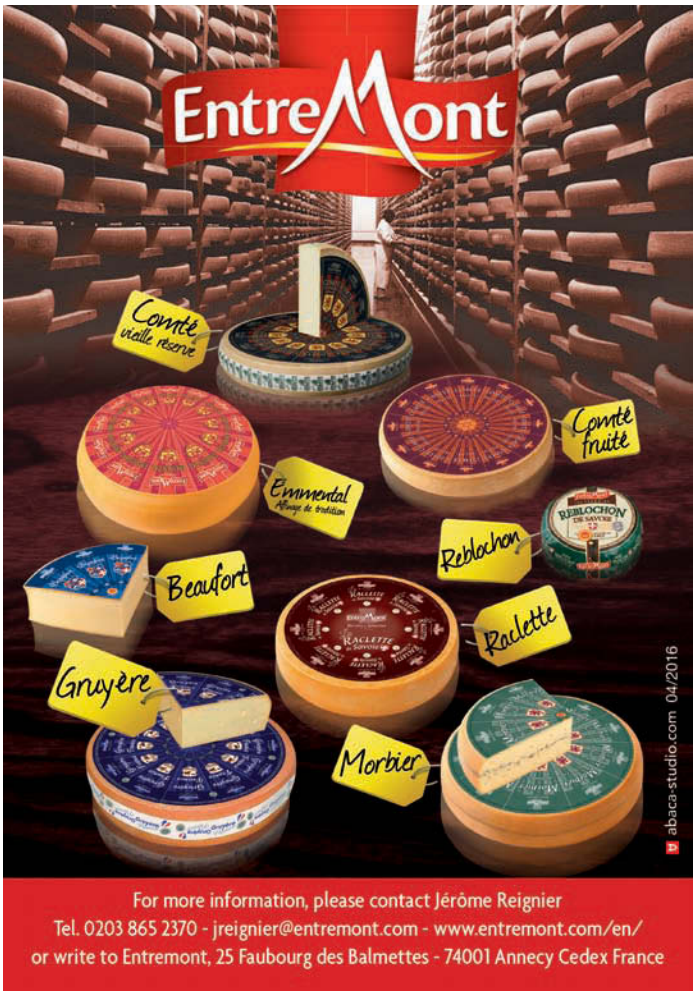
"Together with Emmental and Gruyère, we have a number of speciality cheeses from Savoie and from Jura, which borders Switzerland : Comté, Morbier, Reblochon, Beaufort and Abondance. These cheeses have a special flavour which culminates in the floral notes originating from the meadows where cows graze and where hay is collected to feed them in the barn. The deep, lasting flavours of these cheeses are the result of using this raw milk and allowing long maturation times. Comté, has been increasing in popularity in recent years. I believe Morbier, Reblochon and especially Abondance should gain more awareness from UK consumers

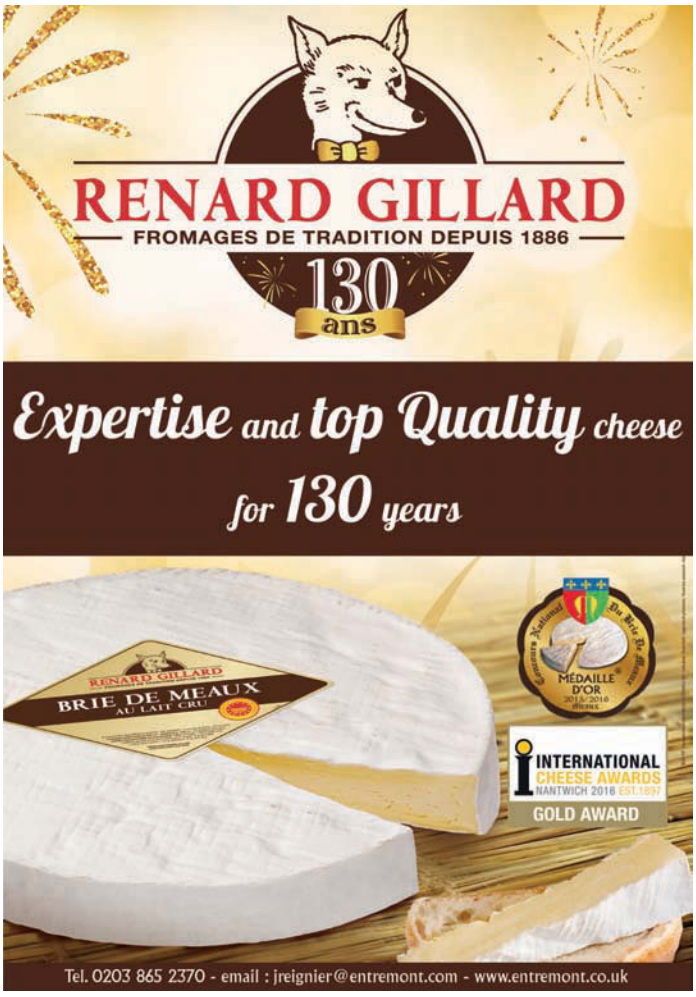
Easily recognizable the Abondance wheel can go from a golden yellow to a brown colour. the firm but supple ivory-yellow paste is creamy and velvety, exceptionally well balanced with fruity hints of pineapple and hazelnut. The handcrafted wheel is made using traditional methods in the Savoie mountains.

The milk used comes from at least 45% of Abondance cows. Fed from natural pastures in summer and hay during winter, the feed is guaranted without GMO or silage. Abondance is a raw milk cheese and the feed impacts directly the quality of the cheese.

The flavours of these cheeses are quite unique, Jerome says. "When you buy an Alpine cheese you first taste the saltiness and the milkiness on the front of your tongue. Then, as the cheese spreads in your mouth, you get another flavour, which is more complex. The nuttiness, the bitterness and acidity comes in. As you swallow it, other notes emerge. Our cheeses can have a finish that's reminiscent of roasted coffee, fudge and crusty bread. You can still taste an Entremont cheese a few minutes after you have eaten it. We offer quality with flavour in a range of handy formats, ideal for the farm shop or delicatessen."

"Once people taste these flavours, they will be hooked," Jerome says. "The Emmental products will also have appeal for people looking for an affordable alternative to Cheddar."





EXCITING TIMES FOR GODMINSTER BRIE

An award-winning cheese from the heart of the Somerset countryside

Godminster is based in the rolling green pastures surrounding the picturesque town of Bruton in the heart of Somerset. The farm was certified organic in 1999 and today encompasses over 1300 acres of beautiful countryside. Godminster Farm is home to nearly 300 organic dairy cows and boasts fruitful orchards filled with a variety of delicious fruits and herbs which inspire many of the Godminster products.

Godminster Organic Brie is an award-winning, traditionally air-ripened soft cheese that is handmade using fresh milk from their single herd of dairy cows. They graze on pastures only a mile away from the dairy itself, ensuring the Godminster cheesemakers have deliciously fresh and creamy organic milk to produce tasty organic Brie and the distinctive Vintage Organic Cheddar encased in Godminster's signature burgundy wax.

The Godminster Organic Brie range features three carefully crafted flavours: Traditional, Black Pepper and Garlic & Chive. All three are created by Godminster's skilled cheesemaking siblings, Steve and Malcolm Dyer, and all are wrapped by hand which ensures a quality that can only be achieved with an artisanal product.

The Godminster range has won several awards over the years, including gold awards at the International Cheese Awards, British Cheese Awards and Global Cheese Awards in 2016. The most recent accolade is a coveted Great Taste Award for their Heart-Shaped Traditional Organic Brie. It joins a Great Taste roll of honour that includes biscuits, chutney and their infused 'Fruits & Roots' Vodka Spirit range. These awards are the result of almost two decades of hard work from Godminster's founder Richard Hollingbery and his dedicated team.

Godminster recently won a portion of an £8.7 million grant fund available from the South West Growth Fund to expand the brie making facility.



Deborah Bradfield, Godminster's commercial director says, "Since the brie was launched in 2013, demand has grown year on year. In the last 12 months' sales are up 34%. Our recent grant funding from South West Grant Funds will enable us to invest in more machinery, a new fridge store and create six more jobs. We're excited at the prospect of supplying more farm shops, delis and wholesalers nationwide with our award-winning Organic Brie range."







WELSH PRIDE

Aled Rowlands, cheesemaker at Bodnant Welsh Dairy talks us through its cheese range, expertise and awards

The Bodnant Dairy was built to establish artisan cow's milk cheese production in Conwy, North Wales. Since its inception in 2012, the dairy has created a range of award-winning cheeses based upon traditional and regional Welsh recipes.

True artisan cheese

With fresh Welsh milk coming from a local, single Friesian herd half a mile away, we are able to offer the highest quality, consistently with full traceability. The cows graze on the lush green pastures in the foothills of Snowdonia. Our farmer transports the milk tank with his tractor three times a week to our dairy. Our team of cheesemakers then pasteurise the fresh, raw milk to produce cheese with unique flavours using traditional artisan methods.

Traditional artisan methods

We produce small batches from the evening and morning milk, handling them with great care to retain the natural taste of the milk, and this results in the cheeses being full of flavour. Our Welsh milk has a high butter fat content and we leave all the cream in the milk to achieve a creamy flavour.

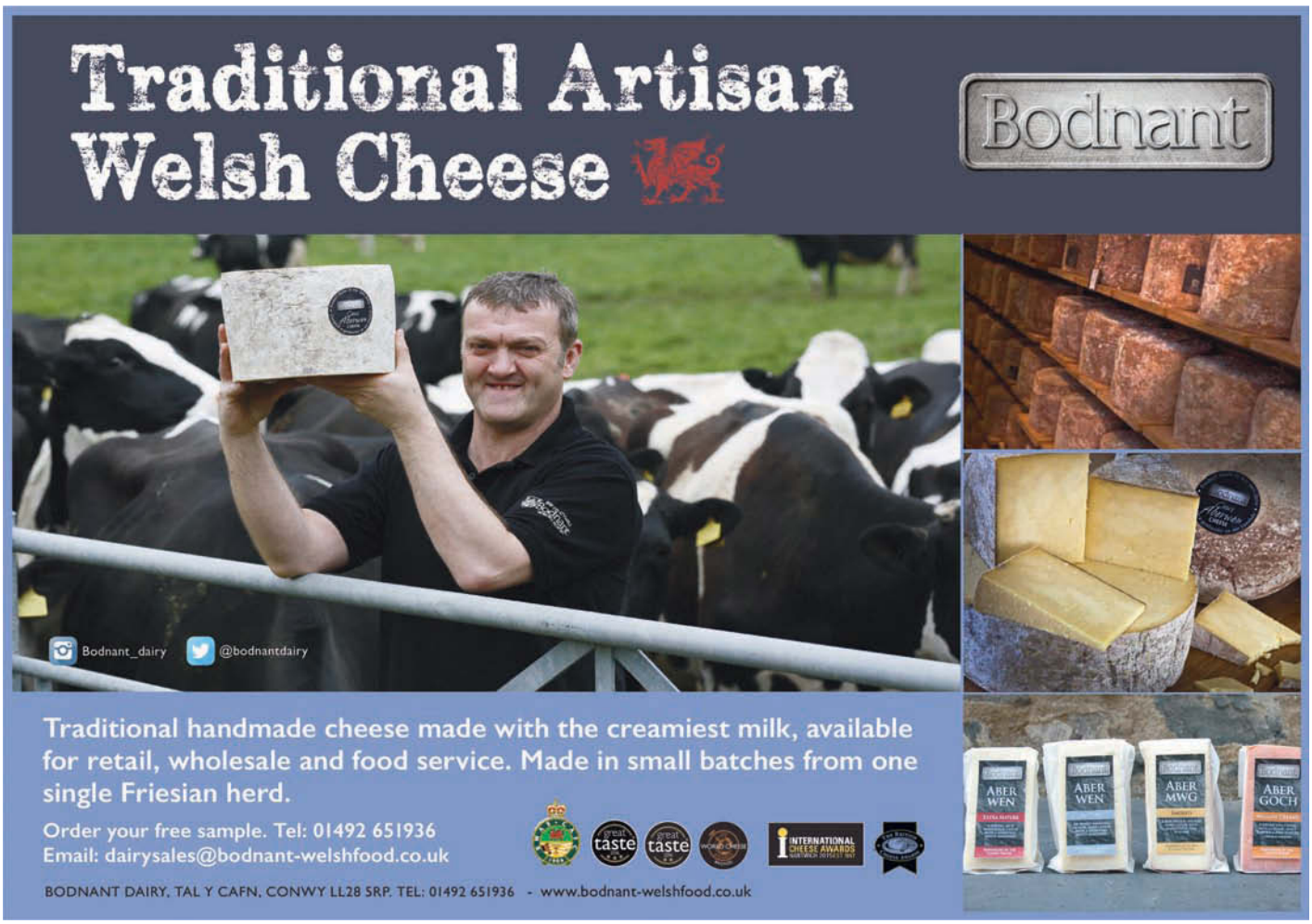
The cheesemakers hand-salt the cheese to control the production process and maintain a consistent flavour profile and hand-bandage in muslin cloth in order to allow the cheese to breathe and develop its flavour within our cheese maturing stores. The cheese rounds are regularly hand-turned by our cheese makers to develop the textural characteristics and flavour. The team hand-cut all our cheeses into rounds, quarters and wedges. Our cheeses are also hand-labelled and some are now hand-wax dipped!

Retail ready and delicatessen artisan range

We offer a full delicatessen range from 10kg wheels to 750g quarters, plus complete retail-ready pre-packed wedges with shelf-ready packaging for chiller units. We have recently added a gifting option to our range, with hand-waxed wedges.

Our cheeses continue to be recognised, and last year won awards at the British and International Cheese Awards as well as three stars at the Great Taste Awards for our Traditional Welsh Caerphilly.

Aberwen was our first cheese to be produced – it's a farmhouse-style cow's milk hard cheese that is matured in our stores for five months and is based on a 300 year old recipe. This gives it its creamy full-rounded flavour. Abergoch is a coloured cheese adapted from the Aberwen recipe – it is milder and creamy with a slightly nutty flavour. Abermwg is a smoked cheese, smoked over naturally fallen Welsh beechwood using a two-day cold smoking process. Our Traditional Welsh Caerphilly is created from the traditional territorial recipe and offers a young, fresh, lactic taste.





BARBER'S ASSURED: QUALITY GUARANTEED

A close relationship with farmers is key for this Somerset Cheddar-producer

Based in the village of Ditcheat, Somerset Barber's Farmhouse Cheesemakers are the oldest surviving cheesemaking business in the UK and the oldest Cheddar makers in the world. Now with the sixth generation at the helm, the Barber family continue to evolve the business and add to the legacy of cheese making since 1833 providing a unique heritage which continues to thrive and develop into new markets at home and internationally.

As Giles Barber explains, "The conversion of the best grass grown in the near perfect conditions offered by the Somerset and Dorset countryside into milk, and ultimately into cheese, in principle remains unchanged. Although the cheese-making process has evolved over the generations the one truth that remains constant is that without the best quality milk you will never make the best quality cheese. The best quality milk can only be obtained from the healthiest and happiest cows.

Since Barber's started farming and making cheese in Ditcheat in 1833, milk production from the Barber's own family farms has expanded considerably. "We now farm across 11 of our own separate farms which are all smaller herds based on the traditional outdoor grazing system. We completely understand the vital importance of the quality of the milk and the welfare of our herds and in working with the countryside on which we depend," says Giles.

"In addition to the milk produced from the family's own farms, and to meet the increasing demand for Barber's cheddar, we work with many other family dairy farms across Somerset and Dorset to provide us with all of the milk we need.

"Our relationship with all of our farmers is critical. Working closely with them to ensure that milk we purchase consistently meets the quality assurance expectations of our customers remains really important," he explains.

From January this year, to support and underpin these requirements, Barber's launched new standards required of their own and all supplying dairy farms – 'Barber's Assured'. These new standards are designed to recognise and underpin 'best practice' throughout the milk supply chain.

"We wanted to endorse, encourage, and reward the highest standards from our dedicated farmers and so we have provided further support to incentivise the new specification through the application of a price premium to support the quality levels," says Giles.

So what are the standards? "Milk quality is crucial as the core ingredient upon which our entire business is dependent. Barber's Assured protocols ensure that milk is of the highest and consistent quality. This supplied to the family's two production facilities, at Ditcheat, Somerset, and Ford Farm, Dorset".

Milking parlour hygiene and dairy plant wash protocols are required to ensure that appropriate dairy chemicals and rinsing processes are used.

"In addition to the quality cheese ranges produced, premium grade high whey protein powders to Infant Formula standards are also marketed. It remains crucial that all of our products are produced completely free of any chemical residues from any part of our supply chain and this starts on the farm.

"Our customers consistently tell us that the health and welfare of all of our cows is one of the most important factors to them in choosing their cheese. So, animal welfare standards are a critical part of the new Barber's Assured programme. One area of increasing focus is a requirement for more limited and better managed use of antibiotics. Whilst limited use of them is important to ensuring a healthy herd, antimicrobial resistance is also an increasingly important issue of focus for consumers and the industry alike. The Government's commissioning of the O'Neil report published last year including a focus on the role and responsibility agriculture has within this increasingly high profile resistance debate.

"We have taken this responsibility seriously," says Giles. "For example, we have integrated the necessary safeguards within our new protocols to reduce third and fourth generation antibiotics used within animal treatments. In addition, to ensure where farmers have no choice but to treat animals to combat disease, all milk from treated cows must be tested clear with an antibiotic detector test before readmitting any milk for sale to us."

Barber's are also encouraging a closer working relationship between their farmers and their on farm veterinary practitioners; not just in the reduction of antibiotic prescriptions, but in animal disease herd health prevention plans with protocols introduced to manage BVD and Johnes Disease.

To provide added farmer support, the Barber's Assured package had a phased introduction, with the provision of 'in house' assistance and vet-led workshops to deliver the new standards.

Giles concludes, "Our farmer's high quality milk to the Barber's Assured standards is a pivotal and integral part of the Barber's proposition to our expanding range of customers in the UK and abroad. We're very proud of the fantastic work that they do and they love being involved with a cheese that they can rightfully call their own".

Whilst sourcing high quality milk has remained a consistent attribute of 184 years of Barber's heritage of cheese, Barber's Assured underpins milk quality to a new level to confidently meet the increasingly competitive standards customers require and expect.

> "Milk quality is crucial as the core ingredient upon which our entire business is dependent"



MADE ON OUR FAMILY FARM

BARBER'S 1833

ORIGINAL RECIPE

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VINTAGE RESERVE CHEDDAR

CRAFTED IN SOMERSET SINCE 1833

– MATURED 24 MONTHS –

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It has a slightly brittle and often crunchy texture as a result of its long and slow ageing

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