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# CHEESE PARINGS

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Volume 2, Issue 2 THE NEWSLETTER OF THE MAINE CHEESE GUILD

March 2004

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## MAINE



## CHEESE GUILD

Officers:

**Caitlin Hunter, President**  
Appleton Creamery, Appleton  
**Cathe Morrill, Vice President**  
State of Maine Cheese Co., Rockport  
**Scott Gardner, Treasurer**  
1797 Farm, Auburn  
**Anne Bossi, Secretary**  
Sunset Acres, Brooksville  
**Jennifer Betancourt, Newsletter Ed.**  
Smiling Hill Farm, Westbrook

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Waldoboro  
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Patricia Spinney, Little Barn Farm,  
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Eric Healy, cheesemaker-at-large,  
Belfast

### From the President's Desk:

*2004 is looking like a busy year for Maine's cheesemakers. Already we have had two beginner cheesemaking workshops, and two advanced workshops are in the planning stages. The Second Annual Cheese Festival is now scheduled for October 16, at the Portland Public Market. (Stay tuned for more details!) A special HACCP workshop designed for farmstead cheesemakers is being planned for May. And add to that Dairy month in June, a busy summer farmers market schedule, and increasing recognition for Maine cheeses, and we've got a full agenda. Check our meeting schedule and plan to join us for an upcoming meeting, bring some cheese, and share the joy and art of regional cheeses.*

*Caitlin Hunter*

### Maine Cheese Guild Meeting Schedule 2004

**April 5 - Appleton Creamery, Appleton.**

See the kids!

**May 17 - Smiling Hill Farm, Westbrook**

**June 28 - Town House Farm, Whitefield**

**August 9 - 1797 Farm, Auburn**

**Sept 27 - Sunset Acres Farm, Brooksville**

**Oct. 16 - Second Annual Cheese Festival**

**Nov, 8 - State of Maine Cheese Co., Rockport,  
ANNUAL MEETING**

**Dec. 13 - Christmas party, location TBA**

All times 10 am – 2 pm unless otherwise noted.

## Practical Cheesemaking with Kathy Biss

We are pleased to announce Kathy Biss of West Highland Dairy, renowned cheesemaker, author and cheese consultant, will be giving a workshop on Practical Cheesemaking. The focus of this class will be hard cheeses. The workshop is set for April 14-16 at the State of Maine Cheese Co. in Rockport. The cost of the course is \$200 per person with lunch included.

Kathy Biss has a National Diploma in Dairying from Monmouthshire College of Agriculture and a Certificate of Technical Teaching from Birmingham University. To all her course participants and consultancy clients she offers a telephone 'help line.' Kathy has written several books on cheesemaking including Practical Cheesemaking (1988 Crowe Press, out of print).

In addition to the workshop, Kathy is available for on-farm consults for \$400 a day. If you are interested in a consult please email [info@mainecheeseguild.org](mailto:info@mainecheeseguild.org) immediately as Kathy will need to coordinate her itinerary.

We will need volunteers to help with Kathy's transportation; picking her up in NH and returning her after the workshop. This is a great opportunity for someone with a car and some time to meet and greet one of the world's leading cheese figures. She will stay with Cathe Morrill while she's doing the workshop, but individuals interested in consultations will need to arrange accommodations.

You do not want to miss this class! Class size is limited, so don't delay. Fill out the sign-up sheet below and send with payment to Maine Cheese Guild C/o Scott Gardner. Workshop questions should be directed to [info@mainecheeseguild.org](mailto:info@mainecheeseguild.org)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Ph: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Practical Cheesemaking with Kathy Biss - **\$200**

State of Maine Cheese Co., Rockport

April 14-16, 9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Please mail with payment to:

Maine Cheese Guild  
C/o Scott Gardner, Treasurer  
1797 Farm  
337 Fickett Road  
Auburn, ME 04210

### Maine Cheese Guild Member Labels

We are pleased to announce the first printing of Maine Cheese Guild Member labels. These labels were designed by Gabe McPhail of CEI. Printed in black and gold, they lend a high caliber image to your products. The first printing (10,000 stickers) was funded by the Market Development grant the Guild received in the Spring of 2003 from the Maine Department of Agriculture. These labels were distributed to Maine Cheese Guild members on a first come first serve basis at the Agricultural Trade show in January. If you did not receive any, or wish to receive additional labels please contact [info@mainecheeseguild.org](mailto:info@mainecheeseguild.org). Once we have enough interest we will be ordering more. The cost will be about \$15-20 for a roll of 1,000.

### Packaging Resource List

At the last meeting, we discussed different types of packaging and wrapping for cheeses. As a result of these discussions, we are generating a resource list for posting on the web site, and available for distribution. If you have anything to add to our list, please email the Guild at [info@mainecheeseguild.org](mailto:info@mainecheeseguild.org), and we'll add your favorites (or horror stories).



The Maine Cheese Guild's display at the Agricultural Tradeshow in Augusta. Samples were available of a Muenster and Blue (front left and far right) that the guild crafted at the Peter Dixon Workshop in November.

### Second Annual Maine Cheese Festival – Planning Has Begun

We are thrilled to announce that planning is already underway for the Second Annual Maine Cheese Festival (the date is set for October 16, 2004 at the Portland Public Market!). At the last guild meeting we brainstormed ideas for seminars and workshops and discussed festival intricacies (selling buttons for festival admission which would entitle wearers to partake of cheese samples, wine tastings, activities for children etc.) We also discussed selling tickets to the individual seminars and workshops to ensure that none of them are overbooked. This will allow people to customize their cheese festival experience and pay for only the workshops they wish to attend.

We are still very much in the planning stages, so come to the next meeting with solid ideas. At that meeting (to be held at Appleton Creamery) we will compose a solid list of seminars/workshops to offer at the festival. We will definitely need volunteers. It's a great opportunity to hobnob with your favorite Maine cheesemakers and to show your support for regional cheeses. Anyone interested in volunteering please mark your calendars and let us know at [info@mainecheeseguild.org](mailto:info@mainecheeseguild.org). It promises to be a spectacular event and the more people involved the better.



Cheese pairings from the 2003 Maine Food Festival, as laid out for Kris Horton's seminar.



## April Meeting

In keeping with the decision to have meetings at members facilities the April 5 meeting will be at Appleton Creamery from 10am-2pm. Please come and join us! Get a chance to see Caitlin's farm and participate in planning the 2004 Maine Cheese Festival. Bring a bag lunch and cheese to share.

## In other News...

Smiling Hill Farm/Silvery Moon Cheese has received a NESARE Farmer Grower Grant to research available technologies and requirements for environmentally sound cheese caves. The culmination of this project will result in a manual on cheese cave construction. This manual will be available through Smiling Hill Farm's website as well as the Maine Cheese Guild website.

Appleton Creamery is finishing up winter renovations. We put in a walk in cooler, replacing five junker refrigerators. We're looking forward to beginning to buy in sheep milk from EllsFarm and creating a new line of sheep milk cheese. Kidding season is in full swing. As of today, 44 kids born out of 21 does. 13 to go.

Caitlin Hunter of Appleton Creamery will be giving a cheese talk/demo at the Waldo Co. Cooperative Extension's 11th Annual Spring Garden Celebration on Saturday, March 27 at the Searsport Middle School in Searsport. Call 1-800-287-1426 for more information about all the events. Preregistration (\$20) is necessary.

## The University of Connecticut invites you to attend...HACCP for the Cheese Industry

Driven by consumer concerns, regulatory requirements and customer demands, the food industry (from lettuce growers to sausage makers and everyone else in between) has had to adapt to a new focus on food safety. Even the artisanal cheese industry needs to take a fresh look at the safety of their products and how they make cheese. The University of Connecticut Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources has been working with several New England farmstead cheese makers to develop HACCP food safety plans for their operations that will serve as models for other cheesemakers. At this workshop, we will give you the information you need to write Standard Sanitation Operating Procedures for your operation and create your own HACCP food safety plan.

**Where:** State of Maine Cheese Co.  
321 Commercial Street  
Rockport, ME 04856

**When:** Monday, May 10 and Tuesday,  
May 11 (a two-day workshop)  
Day 1: 8:30-4:30 PM  
Day 2: 8:30-3:00 PM

**Why:** To help cheese makers gain the knowledge and skills needed to develop cheese products using principles of HACCP and food safety risk reduction.

**Who:** Cheese makers, regulators, and educators

**Detailed brochures will be mailed to all licensed cheesemakers in Maine once the details have been finalized.**

For more information, contact:  
Diane Wright Hirsch...(203) 407-3163

## Words from the [www.mainecheeseguild.org](http://www.mainecheeseguild.org) Webmaster

### **Announcing Cheese Talk - A new members only feature of the [www.mainecheeseguild.org](http://www.mainecheeseguild.org) web site.**

Cheese Talk is an online journal intended for sharing information among Guild members. The journal uses a weblog [blog] format. All members may participate by adding their own entries under a unique self-identifying username. The log is set up as a searchable chronology. Each entry will be archived by date and may be accessed through index pages or search. The main page of the journal will list the most recently posted entries in their entirety. It is not a discussion or bulletin board. Any member can read Cheese Talk by navigating to the members only section and hitting the link for Cheese Talk, which currently has some demo entries from Caitlin Hunter aka: appleton and Jennifer Pierce, aka: webwench. It will serve as a handy place to announce farm specific events, or to post technical information, recommend supply sources or whatever.

Participating is easy. Navigate to the members only section and hit the "Cheese Talk Primer" link. There you'll find terms of use, instructions on getting your username/password and how to add entries etc. Fill out the form you find referenced there to request your username and password.

### **Cheese Labels Needed**

If you have not already done so and you want your products promoted on the Guild web site, please send your cheese labels via snail mail.

Webmaster contact info:

[webmaster@mainecheeseguild.org](mailto:webmaster@mainecheeseguild.org)

Jennifer Pierce

170 East Waldo Road

Waldo, ME 04915-3317

207-338-5084

Note: the Webmaster will be unavailable from Feb. 28 to March 11.

### **Clickable Photo of Maine Made Cheese**

Work is under way on a clickable image map using the wonderful cheese photo by Ben Magro that was in Downeast Magazine last May. This will appear on the cheese page. Please see the members only Notices section for an annotated version of the photo, then email me with details relating to your cheese. In October at the Cheese Festival, we'll get a new image containing all the current members cheese!

**The guild's website is getting decent traffic.** There was a big spike in November and December, probably because of the increase in online shopping for the holidays. Collected 11 names requesting notification of the guild's next cheese sampler offering.

If you have a web site, please help promote Maine cheesemaking and the Guild by adding a link to <http://www.mainecheeseguild.org>! You may request a small MCG logo for inclusion on your site as well. Reverse linking helps us all rank higher in some search engines and drives traffic both ways. In the first half of February, Appleton Creamery and MOFGA's links to MCG resulted in 8 users finding the guild site.

February search terms that resulted in site visits: maine cheese guild, maine dairy, Maine cheese, cheese department display, cheese making courses, cheesemaking supplies, smiling hill farm maine, smiling hill farm westbrook maine, A List Maine Cheese Makers, ARTISAN CHEESE MAKING, Betancourt goat cheese, Cheese Parings, Goat Cheese Festival, Goats Milk Farms and Maine, Hart Hart Farm, Maine Cheese, Maine Cheese Guild, Making Mozzarella, Smiling Hill Farm in Maine, artisanal cheeses maine.

## **February Meeting**

The Guild's February 23rd meeting was held at Hahn's End with Debra Hahn hosting. Packaging was the topic of discussion. Fresh from the Fromagex presentation on February 16th several members were able to display various types of cheese wrapping paper samples they had received. There was also a variety of plastic tubs and catalogs from which others had purchased supplies. Cathe Morrill, Anne Bossi and Jennifer Betancourt briefed attendees on their discussion with the Portland Public Market concerning the Cheese Festival in October. A tour of the Hahn's End cheese kitchen and ripening room followed the meeting.

## **Mainers' Weekend at Westminster Dairy in Vermont**

Kerri Sands of CEI/Farms For the Future is in the process of organizing a weekend for Maine cheesemakers and farmers to visit Peter Dixon in Westminster, Vermont. At press time a date has not been set, and final details have yet to be determined. If you are interested in attending and have not contacted Kerri please do so immediately at [kcs@ceimaine.org](mailto:kcs@ceimaine.org) or 207-460-2680.

## **Upcoming Cheese Course at Cal Poly**

Cal Poly Cheese Short Course I - March 23-26

Dairy Products Technology Center

San Luis Obispo, CA

Registration: Laurie Jacobson 805-756-6097

email [ljacobs@calpoly.edu](mailto:ljacobs@calpoly.edu)

## **Beginner Cheesemaking - Cow 101**

On February 20 a beginner's workshop was held at Hahn's End in Phippsburg. The group of nine prospective cheese makers spent the day discussing everything CHEESE...everything from product suppliers to reference sources to equipment. Participants also had the opportunity to handcraft three artisanal cheeses: A fresh cheese with herbs, a soft aged Basket Cheese, and a semi hard Tomme. Many of the attendees are now members of the Maine Cheese Guild and are looking forward to future classes as a way to build on the basic principles presented in this workshop.

Attendees included Daphne Kigsley, Heidi Klingenhoffer, William & Margaret Sturm, Tabitha Kaigle, William Blaiklock, Hope Griscom, Cindy Rubinfino, and Laurie Mackie-Malcolm.

## **New York State Cheese Makers Organize**

In January our colleagues in New York formed a trade association, the NY State Farmstead and Artisanal Cheese Makers Association. We look forward to exchanging ideas and promoting artisanal cheese throughout the Northeast.

## ***Classifieds***

Wanted: Used livestock trailer to haul sheep. Would prefer trailer that has two compartments. No bigger than 12 foot. Ball hitch required. [Ellsfarm@aol.com](mailto:Ellsfarm@aol.com) or 785-2118. Union, ME.

## **Guild Presence at the Agricultural Trade Show**

The Maine Cheese Guild was well represented at the Agricultural Trade Show held at the Civic Center in Augusta in January. Members brought samples of their own cheeses as well as Muenster and Blue cheese that was made during the Advanced Cheesemaking Workshop with Peter Dixon in November.

We would like to thank Glen Meheuren from the State Department of Agriculture for his presentation—Getting Licensed For Cheesemaking In Maine. This lecture was well attended. In addition to giving an overview of cheesemaking regulations in Maine and the process of becoming licensed, Glen was available to answer specific questions that attendees raised. Thanks Glen!

### **Future Grants**

As a result of our experience at the Maine Agricultural Trade Show, we generated a list of ideas and useful items to put together for a traveling display. Caitlin Hunter is currently working on a grant to create a trade show display for the Guild. This display would be used anywhere the Guild has an informational table.

Caitlin is also looking into other grant sources to finance other guild projects, but many of them are dependent on our 501(c)3 status, which is in process. If you have any ideas for specific grants the guild might be eligible for please bring suggestions to the next meeting.

## **EllsFarm in Union**



The new milking parlor (above) and sheep (below) at EllsFarm



Guild member Jane Russo (left) at the Guild's booth at the Agricultural Trade Show

## Become a Member

The Guild welcomes any individual who is a friend of the Maine cheese trade including all farmstead and artisanal cheesemakers, small dairy producers, sellers, suppliers, chefs, consumers and researchers with an interest in cheesemaking, dairying and cultured milk products.

### Membership Levels

Principal Members: Any individual, organization or other entity that is producing cheese or milk products in Maine, milking dairy animals in Maine, or involved with getting Maine made cheese, milk, or milk products to the consumer.

Associate Members: Any other individual, organization or other entity with an active interest in the Maine cheesemaking, dairy or agricultural communities.

Membership dues have been set for \$25 for our startup year. This includes newsletters, reduced workshop fees, Guild product stickers, listing and links on the website, inclusion in promotional materials about Maine cheeses (if a cheese producer).

To become a member please make check payable to:

The Maine Cheese Guild and mail to:  
Maine Cheese Guild  
C/o Scott Gardner, Treasurer  
1797 Farm  
337 Fickett Road  
Auburn, ME 04210

## Fromagex Presentation

Many, many thanks to Simon at Fromagex for making the long trip down and spending a wonderful day at State of Maine Cheese Co. in February. Simon explained the ins and outs of various molds, draining mats and cheese wraps carried by Fromagex as well as various pieces of cheesemaking equipment. More than a few of us are planning a drive up to the Gaspe to visit their headquarters! Send a request directly for their new English version catalog (they were not available yet when Simon made his visit) or simply check out their website at [www.fromagex.com](http://www.fromagex.com)



Simon from Fromagex presenting a plethora of cheesemaking wares.

**MAINE**



**CHEESE  
GUILD**

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c/o State of Maine Cheese Co.  
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[www.mainecheeseguild.org](http://www.mainecheeseguild.org)

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