

# Artisan and Specialty Cheese: in America & at Wegmans

Dairy Practices Council Annual Conference

November 10, 2017

# What is “Artisan or Specialty” Cheese?



### **Artisan**

produced by hand in small batches with particular attention to the tradition of the cheesemaker's art; as little mechanization as possible

The leader in promoting and supporting  
American cheeses



## 2016 State of the U.S. Artisan/Specialty Cheese Industry Report of Key Findings

The American Cheese Society  
commissioned the  
University of Connecticut  
to conduct this study.

### **Specialty**

Limited production with particular attention to flavors and textures

*Wegmans*



## Cheesemaker Demographics

### Geographic Distribution of Cheesemakers

Artisan, farmstead, and specialty cheese-makers operating in the U.S. can truly be found across the country. Of the over 900 cheese-makers invited to participate in this study, 39% were in the West; 23% in the Midwest; 21% in the South; and 16% in the Northeast. The geographic data for respondents is reflected in the map at right. These numbers do not include large commodity producers, nor do they reflect production volume by region; they solely reflect the number of artisan, farmstead, and specialty producers in each region.



## Years Cheesemakers Have Been in Operation

Cheesemakers in the United States have been in operation, on average, for 15 years. While regional averages offer some insight, survey respondents included many young businesses in their first or second year of production. As a result, the median length of time in operation also offers valuable insight. Across the country, years in operation ranged from 1 to 107 years (in addition, two companies reported starting production prior to 1900). The median, however, was 9 years for the Midwest, South, and Northeast, and 10 years for the West. It is clear that while many cheesemakers are continuing longstanding traditions, younger businesses are also regularly entering and leaving the market.

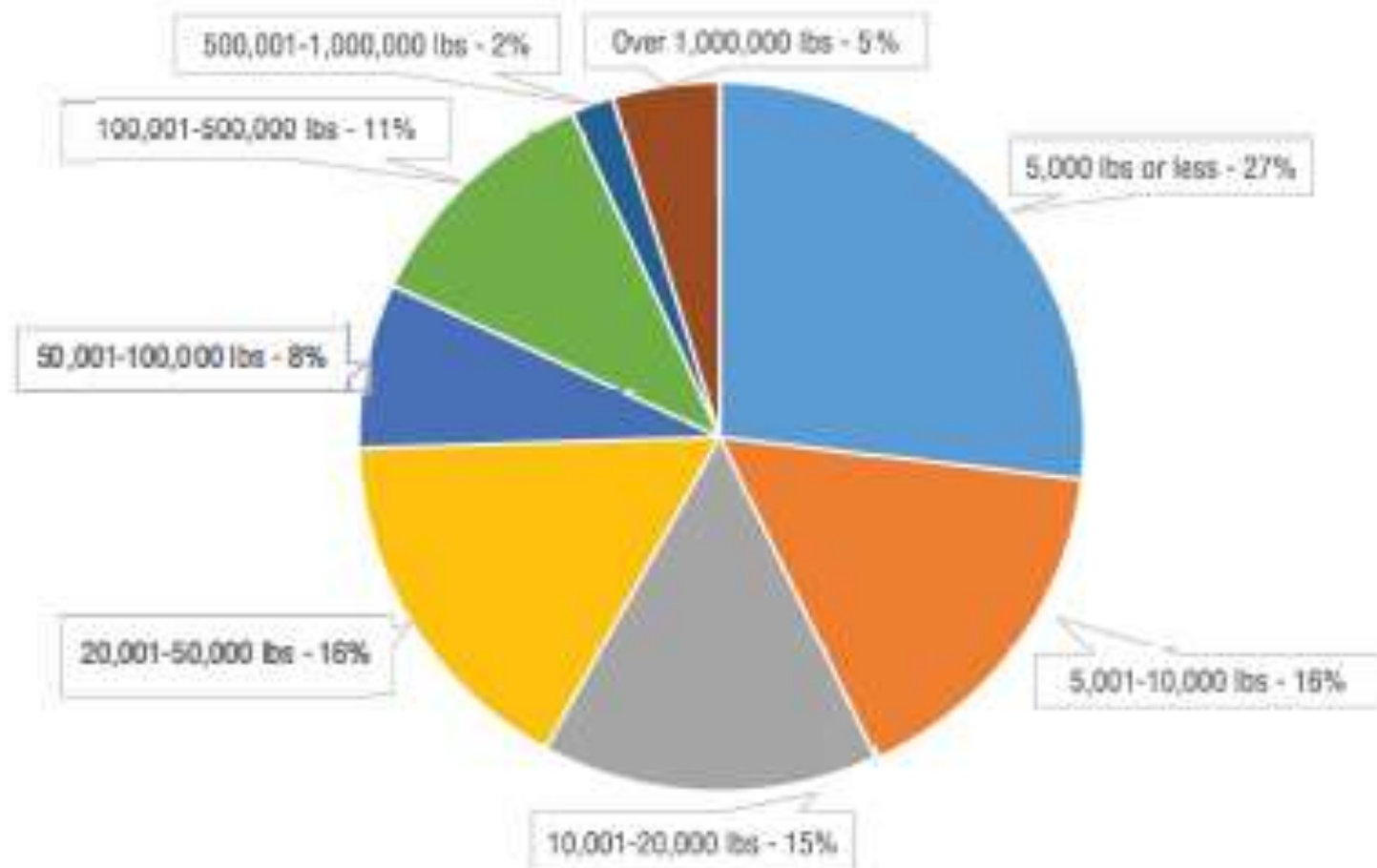


# Cheesemaker Demographics

## Production Volume

As this report focuses on artisan, farmstead, and specialty producers, it is not surprising that cheesemakers' production volume is far smaller than one might expect from commodity producers. 74% of cheesemakers indicate annual production volume of 50,000 lbs or less, and only 5% indicate production over one million lbs per year.

**58% produce  
20,000 lbs/year  
or less**

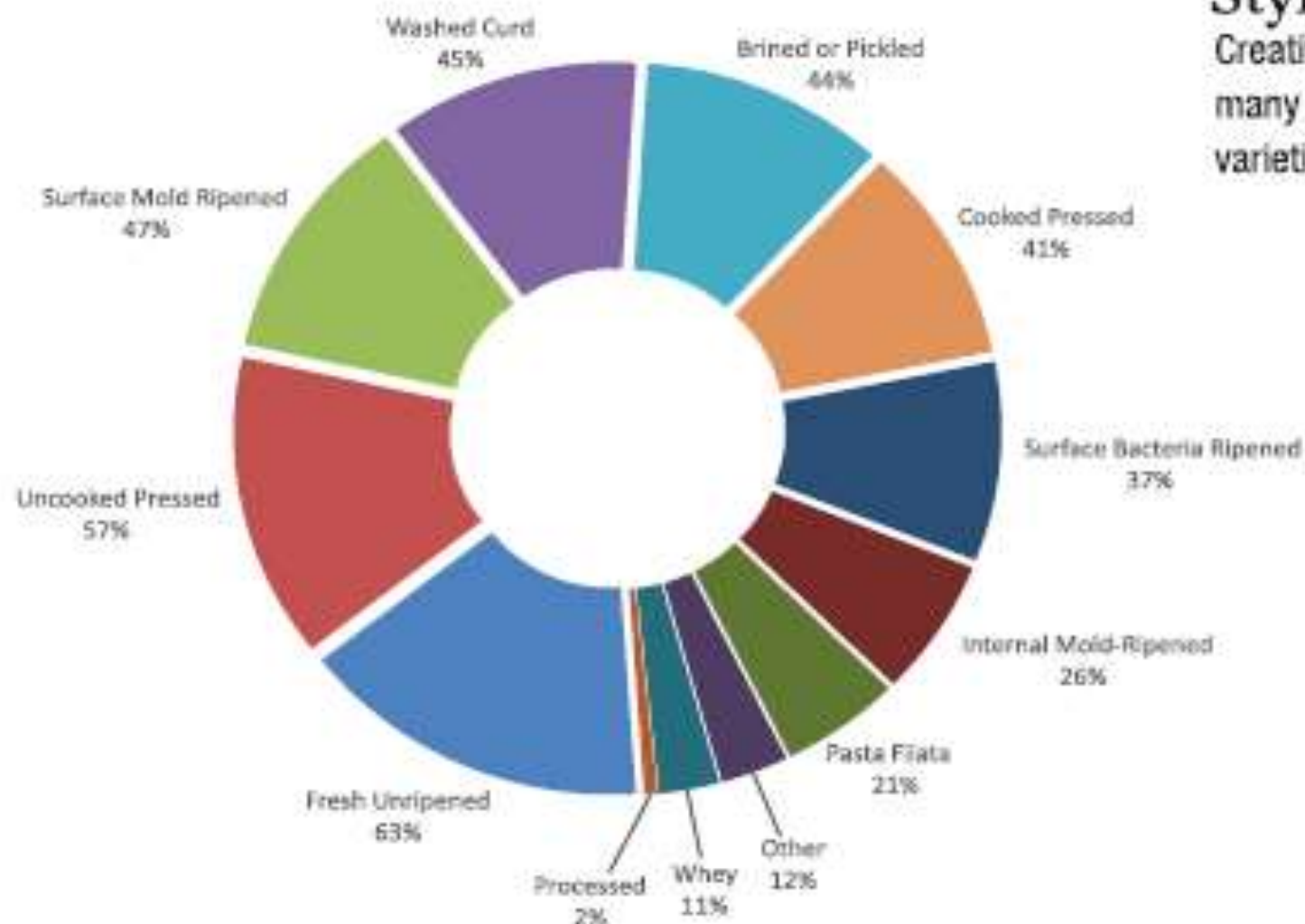




# Cheesemaking Practices

## Styles of Cheese Produced

Creative cheesemakers are producing cheeses of many styles, ranging from fresh unripened varieties to cooked, pressed, and aged varieties.



## Cheese Trends

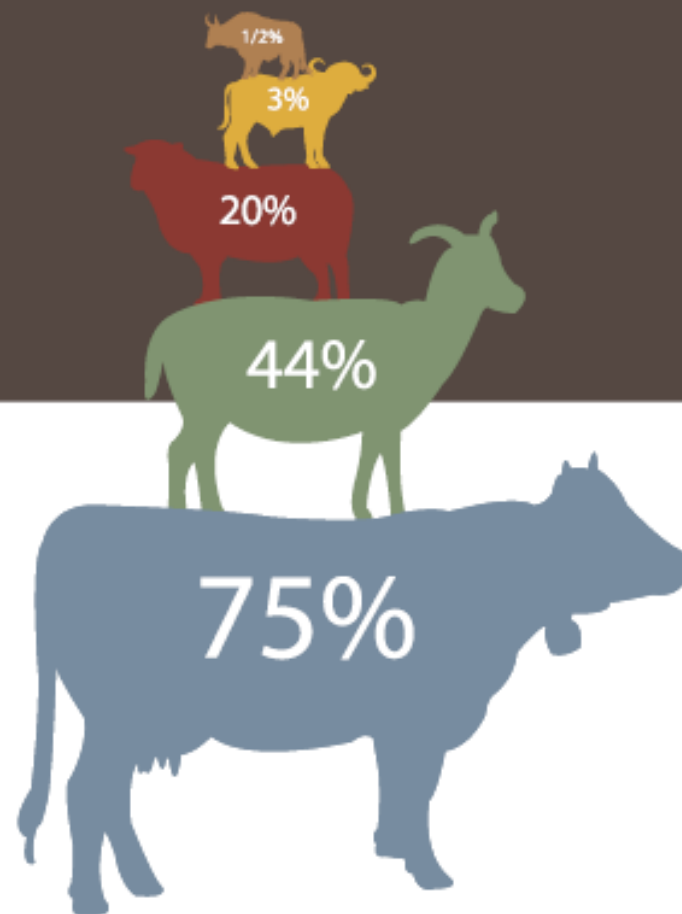
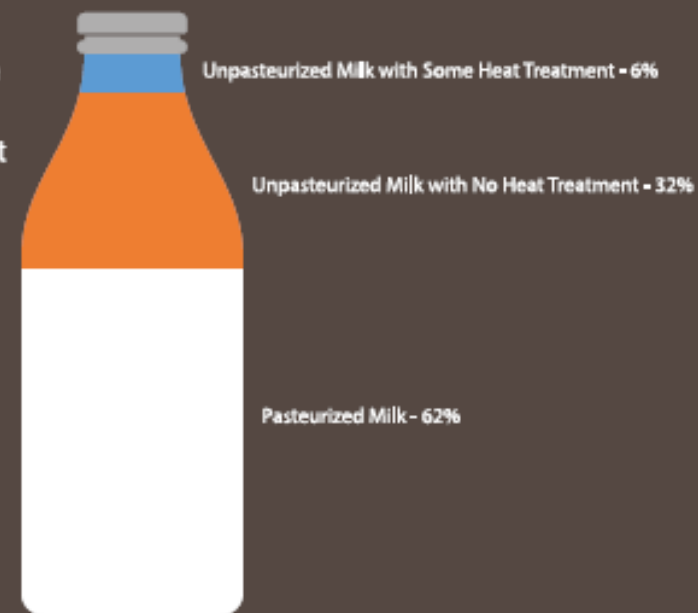
Entries in the ACS Judging & Competition doubled in the last decade, with 1,843 unique cheeses and cultured dairy products entered in 2016.



## Cheesemaking Practices

### Raw vs. Pasteurized Milk

62% of cheeses produced are made with pasteurized milk, while 38% are made with unpasteurized milk. Among these cheeses made with unpasteurized milk, 6% are made with milk that is not pasteurized, but receives some kind of heat treatment.



### Milk Type

While cows' milk is the most common type of milk used for cheesemaking, milk from other dairy animals is used regularly. Milk types used for cheesemaking include, from most to least common: cow, goat, sheep, buffalo, and yak (less than 1% of cheesemakers indicated the use of yaks' milk in their cheese; the female yak is known as a nak!)



# Our Vision

We will sell the best cheeses in the world, perfectly ripened. Our passionate people will welcome customers as everyday friends who trust our suggestions.



# Overview of Wegmans Cheese Caves

## Why Build Cheese Caves??

- To improve the quality of many of the cheeses Wegmans carries, most importantly Soft Ripened cheeses
- To simplify ordering of imported cheeses for the stores
- DIFFERENTIATION!!
  - Only retailer in the USA with Cheese Caves
  - Create cheeses that are unique to Wegmans



# Affinage... but... What is Affinage?

The craft of Affinage consists of leading a cheese to the best quality it can attain, often translated to cheese maturing or ripening.

This is accomplished by controlling the environment of the cheese such as temperature and humidity in a “cave”. The affineur is the master behind this environmental control to bring the cheese to its best quality.





# Affinage...

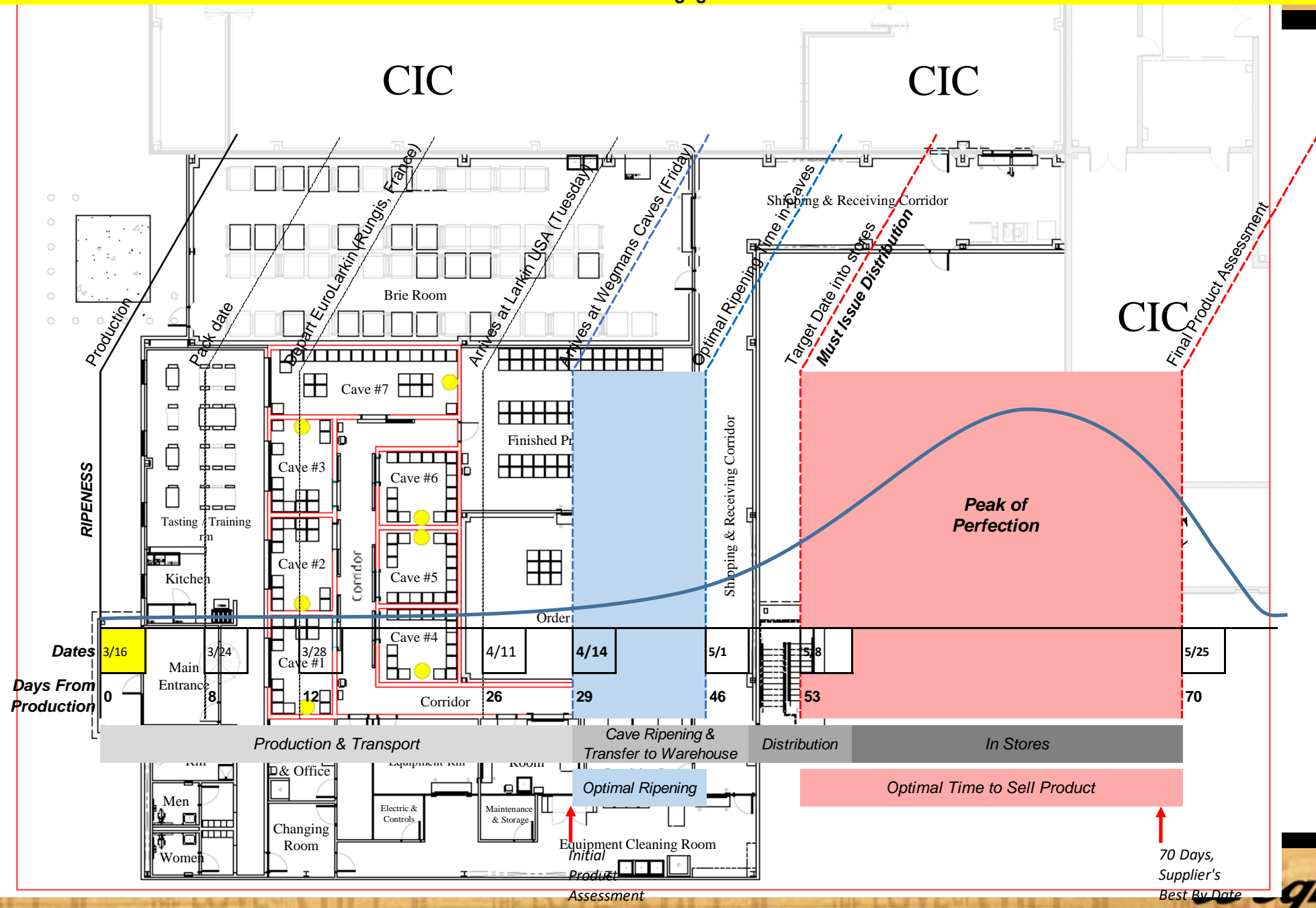


**LEFT: Very Ripe**

**RIGHT: Not Ripe**

During ripening, we can observe:

- Development of taste, smell;
- Change of the texture;
- Formation of the rind;
- The appearance of the color.



# 5 “Ingredients” to Success!

Need to control...

1. Temperature
2. Humidity
3. Fresh Air
4. Time
5. Care

...is the combination of these five elements that creates affinage.



# 2 Weeks of Affinage for 1916



# Our Cheese Caves Products

## 3 Cheese Categories

AFF's – Wegmans exclusive recipes aged & washed in the cheese caves (5-7 items)

BRT's – Triaged for quality & stored in the Brie Room (50-60 items)

BRW's – 6 Bries that follow a ripening recipe & stored in the Brie Room until cheese is at peak of perfection for our stores

### Wegmans Exclusive AFF's produced in the caves

\*Wegmans 1916 – Aged Goat

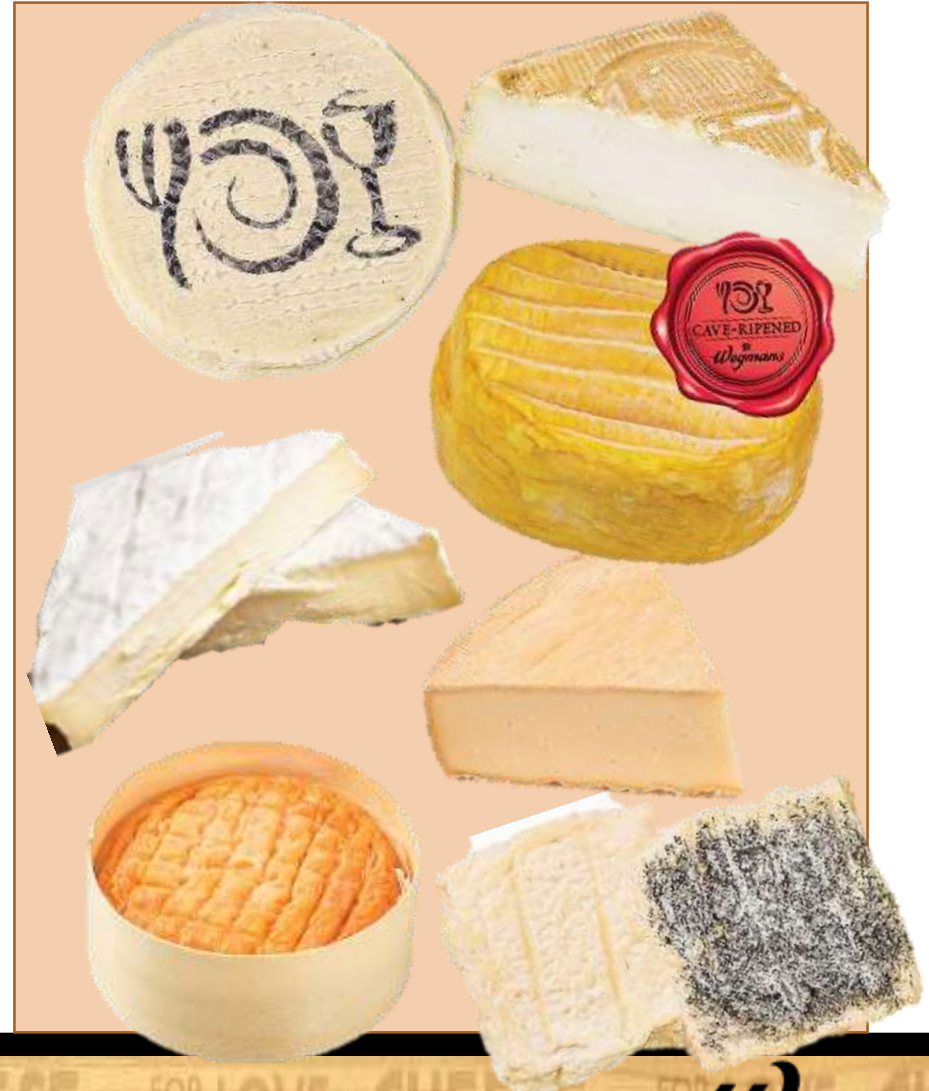
Oro Cremoso – Washed Taleggio

Affidelice – Washed Rind

Holiday in Italy – Washed Rind

\*Hudson Valley Jewel – Soft Ripened

\* Domestic



*Wegmans*



# Cheese Shop- Misting Case



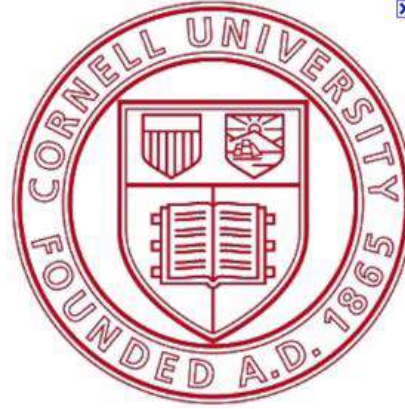


# Holiday in Italy Video

# THE OBVIOUS CHOICE: TASTE OF THE SEASON



***We are truly proud of these products...***



## Wegmans-Cornell Partnership to Boost the Artisan and Specialty Cheese Industry in New York





# Project Goals

- Develop new levels of cheese-making competencies for artisan cheese manufacturers in NYS
- Develop the industry, make significant improvements in efficiencies and cost of production
- Improve quality and safety of artisan cheese

# Project Provided:

- environmental sampling of each facility for one year
- SOP development/support for the artisans and industry as a whole
- affinage support and education



# Milk Facts

[Milk Composition](#) | [Nutrition](#) | [Microbiology](#) | [Processing](#) | [News & Research](#) | [Resources](#) | [FAQ](#) | [Cheese Extension](#)

## Milk Facts

- [Milk Composition](#)
- [Nutrition Facts](#)
- [Microbial Issues](#)
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- [Resources](#)
- [FAQ](#)
- [Cheese](#)

## Welcome to Milk Facts

Our goal is to provide consumers with factual, scientifically supported information about the composition, nutritional content, health issues, and microbial issues associated with milk. It is our hope that this information will be used by consumers to make informed choices about the consumption of pasteurized and raw milk products. For additional information on dairy science, milk microbiology, and other subject matter related to milk, [visit the Milk Quality Improvement Program website](#).

## UPCOMING WORKSHOPS and SEMINARS

A complete list of upcoming Cornell University Food Science Workshops and Seminars can be found at:

[Cornell Dairy Extension Calendar](#)

## REGULATIONS





# Milk Facts

[Milk Composition](#) | [Nutrition](#) | [Microbiology](#) | [Processing](#) | [News & Research](#) | [Resources](#) | [FAQ](#) | [Cheese Extension](#)

## Cheese Extension

[Standing Operating Procedures Audits](#)  
[Cave Aging Shared Education and Information Network](#)

## Standing Operating Procedures

[Ingredient and Packaging Receipt](#)  
[Cheese Making from Pasteurized Milk](#)  
[Cheese Making from Raw Milk](#)  
[Environmental Sampling](#)  
[Brine Making and Maintenance](#)  
[General Cleaning](#)  
[Raw Milk Receipt](#)  
[Recall Plan \(coming soon\)](#)  
[Production Day Preparation \(coming soon\)](#)  
[Finished Product Protection \(coming soon\)](#)

# Partnership Outcomes

- Increase safety and quality of artisan cheese in NY
- Developed the model to share with industry, including American Cheese Society
- Increase the exposure of artisan cheese in NY
- Expand the economic development of the industry

# Level One Food Safety

- Consortium was developed between Lund Food Holdings, Inc., Wegmans Food Markets, Inc., and Whole Foods Markets, Inc..
- In cooperation with Cornell University



# Level One Food Safety

- Small processors need to produce safe food
- Small processors may have limited resources to devote to program development
- Recognition that smaller processors may need a stepwise approach to certification

# Level One Food Safety: The Audit

- Evaluated existing audit systems (SALSA, Everclean, and others)
- The three retailers worked to develop an audit that would fit their needs, with input from Cornell University
- Developed the Artisan Cheese Maker Level One Audit

# Level One Food Safety: The Audit

## Purpose:

To develop and agree upon Level 1 (Basic) food safety standards for cheesemakers, primarily artisan/farmstead to be used by retailers



# Level One Food Safety: The Audit

- Regulatory Requirements
- HACCP and GMP's are included
- Initial audit is not scored
- Corrective actions are required
- 'Critical Deficiencies' must be corrected before using the supplier
- Designed for 'once certified, accepted everywhere'

LEVEL 1 AUDIT VER.3 EXCEL					
This documentation is used by _____ to review a new or existing local supplier. Please provide a copy of ALL					
Date:					
Supplier Name:					
Address:					
Phone Number:					
Owner/Manger Name:					
Hours of Operations:					
Buyer:					
Region/Store:					
Products Made and being considered for review:					
<b>Section 1 – FOOD SAFETY MANAGEMENT:</b>					
		yes	no	n/a	value
1.01	Are all ingredients and sub-ingredients compliant with Food Safety and Quality Standards?				
	What do you require from your raw material suppliers: i.e. COA's, allergen statements, antibiotic free claims, 3rd party audits etc.?				
1.02	Does the milk used for cheese production meet all regulatory requirements for antibiotic testing?				CRITICAL
	What test are being conducted to verify the milk does not contain antibiotic residue?				
1.03	Does the facility use its own dairy producing animals to provide milk used in products?				
	Please tell us how many dairy animals are in the operation.				
	If milk is supplied from on-site animals, please describe the milking procedures used and how contamination is controlled or minimized.				
	If the milk used for making cheese is NOT produced on-site, please answer next question				
1.04	Please provide source for the milk used to make cheese products.				
	If milk is supplied from off-site animals, please describe the milking procedures used and how contamination is controlled or minimized.				
	What type of systems are in place to verify the milk meets the Food Safety and regulatory standards?				
1.05	Provide a list of products produced and production capabilities				
	Provide a list and the possible amount of product that you may produce safely without exceeding your production capacity.				

# Best Practices Guide for Cheesemakers

*Published February 15, 2017*





# Level One Audits: Wegmans Examples

- Over 10 NEW Cheesemakers to market
- First Light Creamery: from one store to company-wide (95 stores)



