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Bep tells of her recent trip to the United States to visit relatives in upstate New York. This was one of the few vacations that she and Simon have taken in a number of years. While visiting in New York in mid-April they encountered a heavy snow storm which amazed them both very much for Holland has a rather mild winter.

By 6:10, the morning's milk is pumped from the parlor into a second vat in the cheese room. Bep takes milk for the next day's starter culture and puts it into pots. "I sterilize the milk myself and can keep the starter going for up to a year," she explains.

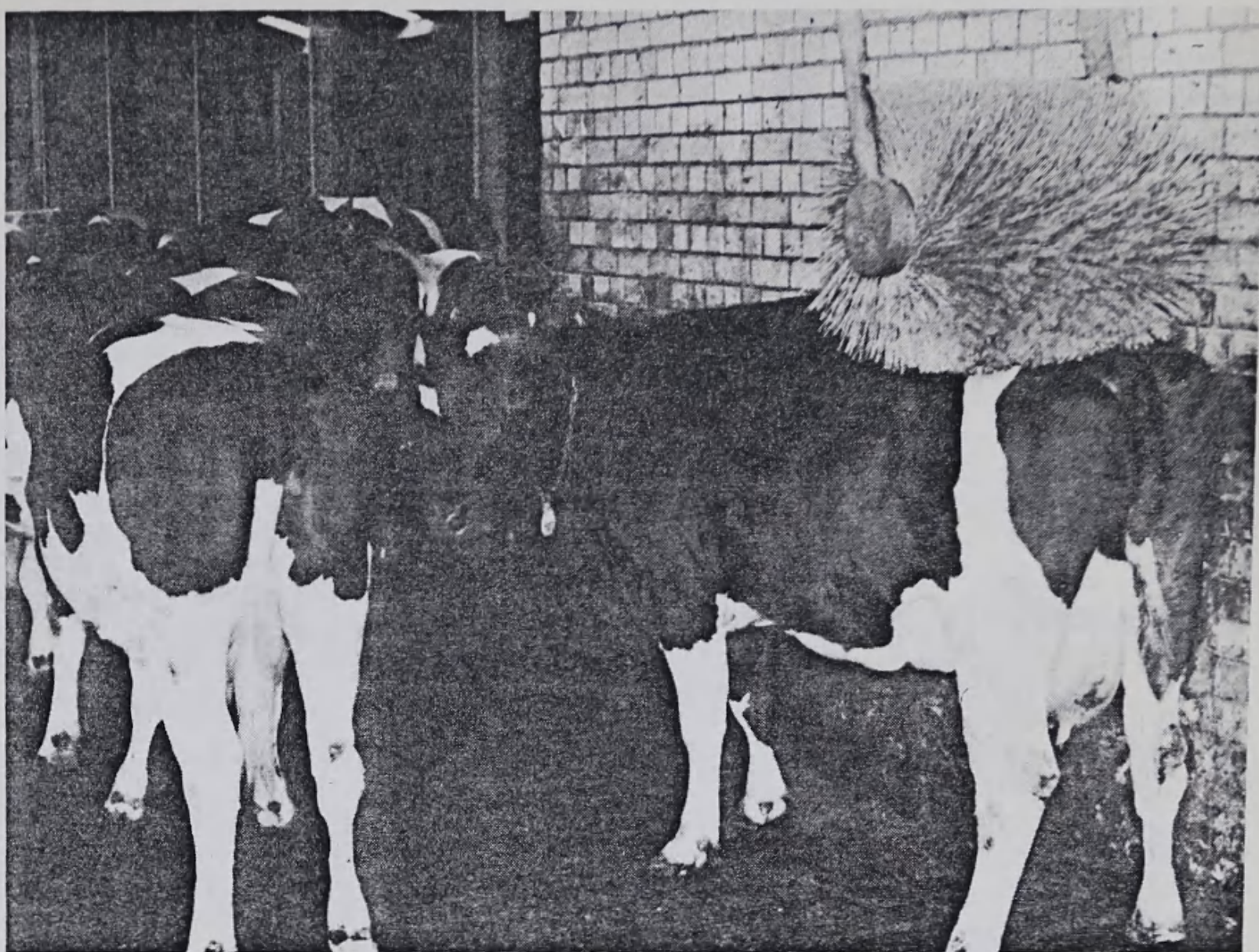
After a second coffee break, we are joined in the cheesemaking room by Simon. Simon's approach to his work exhibits the same pride and ingenuity as does his wife's. Like Bep, he's experienced a few disappointments in his dairy career.

His automatic cow-scratcher, for example, was not entirely trouble-free when originally installed. Designed by a friend, the device aims to relieve the herd's itches with an overhead brush like those used in car washes. The contraption relieved one of its original customers of both minor back irritations and a tail. With a few adjustments, Simon spared the rest of the herd similar embarrassment.

Back in the cheeseroom, Bep drains off the rest of the whey while Simon cleans the plastic cheese molds. She explains that although Leyden cheese is flavored with herbs, its outside surface must be kept free of the flavorings to avoid mold growth. Before adding the 1,000 grams of cumin and caraway seeds, the couple place thin layers of curds on the bottom of the molds. They also remove two five-gallon buckets of curd to use later for the top layer.

After mixing in the herbs, Bep and Simon work quickly to fill the cheese molds before the curds cool off. In the process, the whey runs all over the floor as it drains from the molds and spills down into the floor drain. The unseasoned curd in the buckets is then placed on top of herbed cheeses.

Simon's automatic cow scratcher was not entirely trouble free.



To complete the cheesemaking process, the couple affix the Booeren Kaase labels. Fourteen cheeses, each weighing about 20-pounds, have been made. The molds are then placed in the cheese press.

Everything in the cheeseroom is now cleaned. The vat, floor and tables are all scrubbed and by 7:10 everything is as we found it when we began the day at four. Bep will start the process over tomorrow at the same time.

Bep will still have to flip the cheese over at four that afternoon and they will stay under the press until the following morning. Then, they will be removed from the molds, soaked in a brine tank for 4 days and dried for another two days. Finally, they will be colored on the surface with annatto vegetable dye to a red-brown color, and coated with a special plastic coat to prevent dehydration.

"We age our cheese three weeks," Bep explains, "and then a commercial cheese marketer collects our cheeses and stores them for further aging until sold. Besides Leyden cheese, we also make Gouda (pronounced Howda) once a week."

The rest of the morning we spent with Simon as he guided us around his canal-rimmed farm. As he showed us his Holsteins, which are smaller than the North American variety and closer in stature to our Guernseys, he told us that meticulous care of the animals was a crucial part of cheesemaking. It was obvious to us that he took as much pride in his farm's condition as he did in his cheesemaking.

It was a wonderful experience meeting Simon, Bep and their children. After witnessing the individual craftsmanship of this farm family in their cheesemaking operation, it was easy to understand and appreciate what sets farmstead-produced Dutch cheese apart from factory varieties.

Cheesemaking for Pleasure & Profit

Peter N. Witt
Knightdale, N.C. August 25, 1982
Route 2, Box 522, 27545

When I considered early retirement at age 62, I had no wish to just sit around. It seemed much more attractive to plan for a new occupation which was suited to my likes, age and circumstances. After having been a state employee for 35 years, it seemed interesting to become the master of my own time and career, i.e. to start a small business.

15 years earlier we had moved to a small farm on the outskirts of Raleigh, N.C. Not only were the living conditions for us more

to our liking than those in a suburban home, but luck would have it that it was even more affordable than houses with small gardens in the area. There were 17 acres of fields, two ponds and a stream, and about 15 acres of forest. This would be just enough to raise the feed and support a small herd of goats. I had had experience with breeding animals, had kept a few goats for the last 25 years. It was easy to

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increase the size of the herd, spend time on growing most of their feed, and plan on using them for profit.

In order to produce food for human consumption, a license is required. When we explored the conditions for starting a goat dairy, it appeared that only a relatively large, machine-operated business would be profitable; this required a larger financial investment than I was ready to make. My wife had always made some fresh cheese in the kitchen. Now she suggested that we explore conditions for obtaining a cheesemaker's license in North Carolina. While I began to read books on cheesemaking, soil treatment, feeding, tried out recipes and, in contrast to earlier years, kept most of the newborn kids, first contact with the N.C. Department of Agriculture was established. A knowledgeable and friendly inspector from the Department visited the farm. He gave advice and outlined minimum requirements, such as testing of water and goats, building special rooms etc. Soon a sanitary milking chamber had replaced the accustomed single milking stand in the corner of the barn. A cheeseroom with washable walls and ceiling, covered lights, cement floor with drainage, and facilities for heating and cooling air and water was built by remodeling existing structures. 8 months after the start of retirement I had obtained my license and standardized the cheesemaking procedure. The financial investment was a little more than \$3,000.

After one and one half years of having produced and sold my goat cheese, I find that all expectations have been surpassed. Only my own milk is used, assuring high quality from the health tested herd and good, fragrant feed, free from chemical residues. Every day begins with feeding and milking before breakfast. The raw milk is immediately filtered and cooled. After a leisurely breakfast with my family, I look after the welfare of the animals, clean the stables, work in the fields, turn ripening cheeses. About two times per week comes a cheese day: usually 6 gallons of fresh, cooled goats milk are used to make about 5 pounds of hard cheddar-like cheese, and the whey is made into ricottone for our own kitchen. The three months old cheese is sold and registered under the trade mark of "Pete's White Cheese". It has been aged for three months in a temperature controlled, converted refrigerator at 52° F. It is either sold directly to consumers who come to the house, at \$3 per pound, or it is ordered by cooperatives, wholesalers and health food stores. The small quantity makes

it unnecessary to spend much time on marketing. Whoever shows interest gets a sample to taste. That is usually followed by an order. In this my second year I expect a net profit of about \$1,500, but I plan for larger profits in the future, when the operation is improved on the basis of experience. Any increase in production would require a substantial higher investment in time and money. It is not planned to pursue such plans.

Everything connected with the new operation is enjoyable. The work in the fields on a small scale is good exercise and fills the extra time comfortably. Everybody who has kept goats knows the pleasure that daily contact with these animals provides.

The praise which satisfied cheese-buyers give is pleasing. I find the additional aspect of starting the first time a small business and leading it to success an additional reward.



Classifieds

Cheesemaking Workshops: I give workshops on cheesemaking at my farm. These are presented in three 5 hour sessions. I also wish to be listed as a source for non-homogenized whole milk in my area. For more information write to: Patti Fehr, Burge Mountain Farms, 111 N. Siwash Creek Rd., Tonasket, WA 98855. Phone 509-485-3414.

Help Wanted: Seeking sincere person to start/run/enjoy small cheesemaking business. Beautiful, organic, 20 acre Jersey Cow Farm. Please write to: John Cooper, Box 99, Owl Creek Farm, Spencer, NY 14883.

Cheesemaking Workshops: for 5 to 8 people in my home. This is a hands-on workshop. A hard cheese, Mozzarella, and ricotta will be made the cheesemaking technique will be discussed thoroughly. A cheesemaking workbook and home made bread and cheese lunch are included. For more information and registration contact: Mary Rosenblum, 9100 S.E. 152, Portland, OR 97236. Or call 503-761-7407.

Wanted: If you know of any dairy in your area which sells non-homogenized milk we would appreciate receiving the name and address of the dairy for we are compiling a list of sources for non-homogenized milk across the United States to assist the home cheesemaker who must purchase milk at the grocery store. Write to Cheesemakers' Journal, Box 2, Ashfield, Massachusetts.

Do you have something to sell or swap? Would you like to introduce yourself to other cheesemakers in your area? Does your club have an announcement to make. These classifieds are FREE to all subscribers. Please try to limit your ad to 30 WORDS.

Browse: Published six times yearly by the Ontario Dairy Goat Society, Box 579, RR4, Mallorytown, Ontario, Canada, KOE 1R0. Rates per calendar year \$11 incl. membership for Ontario residents. For out of Province residents only, subscription to *Browse* \$8 p/year, if desired.

Wanted: Used Cheese press, churn, separator, tattoo kit, dehorner, goat magazines, etc. Also: would like to meet with other cheesemakers in the Ontario area. Please write to: Marian Martin, P.O. Box 726, Lindsay, Ontario, Canada K9U 4W9.

For Sale: 3 purebred alpine goats. 2 excellent milking does and one yearling doe, as yet unbred. Would like to sell as a starter herd, very reasonably, but will sell separately. Write to The Frechettes, P.O. Box 92, Sherborn, MA 01770. Or call 617-655-2774.

Wanted: Seeking Cheesemakers' Apprenticeship in Pacific N.W. Mature Woman (30) independent, responsible, honest, hard working, recently completed dairy program at University of Minnesota. Knowledgeable and experienced in herd management, dairy sanitation, dairy food microbiology. Have interest in apprenticing to commercial raw milk cheesemaker. If my qualifications meet your needs contact: Kit Dennis, P.O. 1565, Apache Junction, AZ 85220. Phone 602-982-8859.