



# Harmony Valley Farm

## Cheese Plate Newsletter

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### CHEESE SELECTIONS OF THE WEEK

**Otter Creek Organic Dairy's Pesto Cheddar:** One of last year's favorite selections from Otter Creek, we think you will certainly enjoy this flavored cheddar. This cheese is made with basil-infused olive oil from local artisan producer, Renaissance Farms. Mark Olson, the owner and chef, is a strong voice in the local foods movement, thus it makes sense to pair his product with Otter Creek Dairy's cheese to make this tasty cheddar. The cheese is smooth, subtle and delicious. (Pasteurized)

**Castle Rock Organic Dairy's Mild Cheddar:** This is one of our personal favorites from Castle Rock. A simple, pure cheddar you will find this cheese to be mild and creamy. This cheese is a great snacking cheese, but also can be used in cooking. (Pasteurized)

**Butler Farms Garlic Brebis:** Members have raved about this cheese for the last two years and we will agree that it's another quite tasty cheese. This is a fresh, soft, spreadable sheep's milk cheese that has been lightly seasoned with garlic. Use this cheese first, within 5-7 days. This is perfect spread on crostini, pizzas, mixed into scrambled eggs or used in savory tarts, quiches or pasta dishes. (Pasteurized)

### Welcome to the third season of the HVF cheese share!

This year you will experience a variety of different cheeses including a selection of cheddars, unique veggie flavors and specialty selections. We will be delivering a variety of sheep and cow's milk cheeses from our producers and friends including Bill & Janet Butler of Butler Farms, Pastureland Dairy Cooperative, Otter Creek Organic Farm, and Cedar Grove Cheese. For the first time ever, we also have the opportunity to sample a certified organic fresh goat cheese! In addition, we will be creating some specialty vegetable flavored cheeses with vegetables from our farm that will be combined with the milk from Otter Creek Dairy or Castle Rock to create one-of-a-kind cheeses that you likely won't find anywhere else. **Back by popular demand, we are going to continue to produce ramp cheddar and roasted garlic and beet cheddar. You can also look for several new cheeses including spinach leek and maybe even rhubarb habañero (our sample batch is being made this week).** Along with the cheese, we'll deliver stories from the dairies and the cheese makers. You'll get to know the people who raise the animals to produce the milk, as well as the artisans who create the end product.

**Our excellent farm chefs will guide you through the season with tips and suggestions for storing, serving and cooking with your cheeses.** Cheese is an excellent complement to the vegetable and fruit boxes you will be enjoying at the same time. Be sure to check out the recipe selections in each newsletter for suggestions on ways to use your cheese with your veggies and fruits to create delectable meals. Newsletters will be available in print at your site and online as well. We've also archived the last two year's newsletters, with recipes, stories and all.

Once again we are offering several different cheese share selections; you may be signed up for the **Full Cheese** share (19 every other week deliveries), the **Once a Month** Cheese (10 once a month deliveries) or the **Cuatro Queso** (the first four cheese deliveries only). **Please make sure to look carefully at the check off sheet at your site when you are picking up cheese.** If your name isn't on the list, it's not your week to pick up a Cheese share. Your cheese will arrive bagged, in a cooler. Please only take one bag of cheese; each will be identical. Leave the coolers at your site for the farm to pick up and re-use.

Reuse the paper bags your cheese comes in to pack a lunch for work or school. They also make great hand puppets! Or, we can reuse them for the next delivery, reducing our costs and waste. Please place your cheese bag in the container provided for return to the farm.

**We hope you enjoy your cheese adventure throughout the season!**

## In the Cheese Drawer....

...life goes on. Cheese is a living food and continues to undergo changes with time. **Knowing how to store cheese properly will ensure you enjoy your cheese instead of having to discard it.**

-**Fresh cheeses**, such as Brebis, feta, and ricotta should be stored in a closed container such as the tub they come in. They usually are best eaten within 7 days.

-**Semi-hard and hard cheeses** such as cheddar, Monterey jack, and Colby should be wrapped in parchment paper, waxed paper, or a paper towel once their original sealed package is opened. You can store the wrapped cheese in a plastic bag with a few holes punched in it to allow air flow.

-More pungent cheeses such as blue cheese should be wrapped in paper and put in a sealed container so the aroma doesn't dominate your refrigerator.

**If you notice mold on either semi-hard or hard cheese, you can simply trim it off with a knife.**

Take care to wipe the blade of your knife clean after each cut so you don't spread the mold to the rest of the cheese. If a cheese seems/smells questionable, discard it. In general, mold on cheese is just a result of the natural cheese aging process and does not render the cheese inedible.

**If you have more cheese on hand than you think you will eat, you can freeze it.** Freezing cheese will make it more crumbly when thawed, but it will still be usable. Crumbly cheese can be used to garnish soups, top off tacos, or used in cooking....and you won't have to clean the cheese grater!

### **Pasteurized or Not?** *What do the terms mean?*

#### **Pasteurized Cheese:**

Milk is heated to 161°F for 15 seconds

#### **Heat Treated Cheese:**

Milk is heated to 145°F for 15 seconds

#### **Raw Cheese:**

Milk is only heated to the cooking temperature of 101-102°F.

Everyone needs to make their own personal choices regarding whether they feel comfortable eating only pasteurized cheeses versus also including heat-treated and raw cheeses. We receive many inquiries from members who may be under advisement from their medical practitioner when pregnant or with other health conditions to avoid raw cheeses. While we can't make those personal decisions for you, we will include information in each newsletter to let you know how the cheese was made so you may make your own decision. All raw cheeses must be aged for a minimum of 60 days and are then tested for harmful bacteria before they are released. We hope this information is helpful for you to make your own decisions with regards to these cheese selections.

## Nettle Frittata with Green Garlic and Butler's Brebis

*Serves 6*

1 bunch nettles

1 piece green garlic, minced (all of the white part and most of the green part)

¾ cup chives, minced

2 Tbsp olive oil

Sea salt and freshly ground pepper

6-8 eggs

½ cup grated parmesan cheese or other hard cheese

½ cup Butler Farms Garlic Brebis

1 ½ tbsp unsalted butter

--Preheat the broiler. Bring a large pot of water to a boil for the nettles. Plunge the nettles into the boiling water using a pair of tongs. Cook them for about 2 minutes until they turn bright green and limp. Drain. Press out excess water, then chop finely. (Once cooked they won't sting.)

--Chop the green garlic and chives.

--Warm 2 Tbsp olive oil in a 10-inch nonstick skillet.

Add the garlic and chives and cook over medium-low heat, stirring occasionally, until softened. Add the nettles and cook until any water they exude has evaporated. Season with salt and pepper.

--Beat the eggs lightly with ½ tsp salt, then stir in the parmesan cheese and nettles mixture from the pan. Add the Brebis, leaving it streaky.

--Wipe out the skillet and return it to the heat with the butter. When the butter has foamed, then subsided, pour in the egg mixture. Slide the pan back and forth a few times, then turn the heat to medium-low and cook for several minutes until the eggs have set around the edges and are pale gold on the bottom.

--Slide the pan under the broiler and continue cooking until the top is set and lightly colored. Cool slightly or to room temperature before serving.

Adapted from Deborah Madison's *Local Flavors*