

Rogue Creamery Judged Best Cheese in North America Again



At the 27th Annual American Cheese Society (ACS) Judging and Competition in Montreal, Rogue Creamery's Rogue River Blue was crowned Best in Show, beating out 1675 other entries. The ACS is the largest cheese competition in North America and often is referred to as the "Academy Awards of Cheese."

This is the second time in three years that Rogue Creamery and its signature blue cheese, Rogue River Blue, have won this prestigious award. The creamery is owned by Cary Bryant and David Gremmels and located in Central Point, Oregon.

"We are honored by this recognition of Rogue River Blue, an American blue that represents the flavors of our region," says Co-owner and Cheesemaker Bryant. "We enter the ACS Competition and Judging annually for the score sheets. Both technical and aesthetic cheese judges from around the world participate in this competition and provide invaluable feedback on the cheeses they score. The Best of Show for us not only celebrates Rogue River Blue as the finest cheese in North America, but it showcases our teams' dedication to

quality from the dairy, to the make room, aging caves and packaging."

Co-owner and Cheesemaker Gremmels adds, "It takes a lot of hard work, planning and passion to make Rogue River the most distinctive blue cheese in the world. The recognition from ACS affirms this effort put forth to achieve the distinguishing flavor character, texture and quality inherent in a raw milk cheese."

Rogue River Blue is handmade using autumnal equinox milk from Brown Swiss and Holstein cows' milk, certified sustainable by Food Alliance. The cows graze in 1,650-foot elevation pastures along the Rogue River and in 5,000-foot elevation pastures along the Klamath River, where they eat a variety of grasses, wild herbs, and wild flowers supplemented with grass hay, alfalfa and grain grown on the ranch. The 5-pound (2.2-kg) wheels are made by hand and aged in specially constructed caves. The cheese ripens from naturally occurring molds found in the Rogue River Valley and, therefore, reflects a deep connection to the land. After maturation, the cheese is wrapped in Syrah grape leaves from Carpenter Hill Vineyard, which have been macerated in Clear Creek Pear Brandy and tied to the wheel with raffia. The cheese is released annually starting in September.

Rogue River Blue was honored as World's Best Blue at the 16th World Cheese Awards in London, beating out entries from all over the world. That was the first time that an American blue cheese has won the title. The creamery also made history in 2007 by becoming the first American exporter of raw milk cheese to the European Union; its cheese is carried in Whole Foods Market, Neal's Yard Dairy, London and Fromagerie Laurent Dubois, Paris.

Rogue Creamery was founded in 1928. The Vella family from Sonoma, Calif., acquired it from a co-op in Southern Oregon in 1935. In the 1950s, it began making some of the country's best blue cheese. In 2002, Ig Vella selected Cary Bryant and David Gremmels as the new owners, and it now produces a variety of award-winning cheeses. It offers the only vertically integrated third-party certified sustainable cheese in the U.S. Its local dairy, Rogue View, and creamery, Rogue Creamery, both are certified sustainable by Food Alliance and Steritech, and certified organic by Oregon Tilth.

Source: Rogue Creamery