

Farmhouse Cheddar Cheese Recipe

3 gallons whole milk

Mesophilic Culture (1/4 tsp Abiasa, 1/8 tsp Danisco, or 1/16 tsp Sacco)

2 teaspoons calcium chloride (only needed for store bought milk)

1.5 tablet rennet or 3/4 tsp liquid rennet

1/4 cup unchlorinated water

1 Tbsp salt

- Combine milk, (calcium chloride) in 16 qt stock pot (double boiler to prevent scorching)
- Slowly heat mixture to 86 degrees. Turn off heat and stir in lactic cheese culture. (Different types of culture create different flavors of cheese) Stir gently throughout. Cover mixture and allow to rest undisturbed at 86 degrees for 45 minutes.
- Dissolve rennet tablet or liquid rennet in 1/4 cup water.
- Keep the milk at 86 degrees. Stir the rennet mixture into milk slowly but thoroughly. Allow milk to set undisturbed for 30 – 45 minutes or until curd shows a clean break.
- Using long knife, cut the curds into 1/2 inch squares, then stir gently just to break the strips of curds into chunks. Let it sit to rest for 5 minutes.
- Slowly heat the curds and whey to 102 degrees, raising the temperature 2 degrees every 5 minutes. Stir curd gently to prevent matting and reduce their size to half peanut size. A large whisk works well by placing it to bottom of pot and putting up right so curds break as they fall through the whisk. Hold curds for additional 30 minutes at this temperature
- Place pre-warmed with hot water colander over a pot and pour the curds into it.
- Reserve 1/3 of the whey and pour back into the cheese pot. Set colander of curds onto the cheese pot. Cover top with cheese cloth and lid to keep in warmth. Allow curds to drain for 45 to 60 minutes. This is called the cheddaring process.
- Cut slab into pieces and press through French fry cutter or cut by hand.
- Add 1 tablespoon coarse salt. Using your hands, gently mix the salt into curds. You can eat these curds now, or press into a wheel.
- Place the curds into cheese press and follow the directions for dressing with cheese cloth for the next 12 hours.
- Remove cheese from press, unwrap the cloth, place cheese on drying mat to air dry for 12 hours, creating a nice skin over the whole cheese. Cheese is ready to slice and eat or you can wax and age for stronger cheddar flavor.
- Mix 1 tablespoon of salt with 1/2 cup of water. Use a corner of the cheese cloth to lightly apply a saltwater wash to the cheese.