

Gouda

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Equipment:

One 10 quart or larger stockpot plus a larger stockpot in which it fits to construct a water bath.

Kitchen thermometer accurate to 1 degree in the 70-120F range.

2 pound cheese mold lined with cheesecloth

Cheese press

Ingredients

2 gallons of whole milk (goat or cow).

1 packet direct-set mesophilic culture or 4 ounces prepared mother culture

Optional: 1/8 tsp mild lipase powder

Optional: 1 tablespoon dry hot peppers or caraway seeds, boiled in 1/2 cup of water and cooled.

1/4 teaspoon calcium chloride (if using goat or homogenized milk)

1/2 teaspoon liquid rennet in 1/2 cup non-chlorinated water (do not dilute until ready to use)

Optional: 2 drops annatto extract cheese coloring

Saturated brine solution

Method

Heat milk to 90F (88F for goat milk) in a water bath, add mesophilic starter and stir well. Add spices, if using. If using lipase, sprinkle it on top of the milk surface at this point.

Allow to ripen 10 minutes.

Add annatto coloring, if using. Add calcium chloride, if using. Dilute rennet and add, stirring for 1 to 2 minutes. Brake the agitation with the spoon or ladle.

Allow to set for 1 hour, or until a clean break is achieved.

Cut to 1/2-inch cubes. Be gentle as curds will be very fragile.

Let curds set for 15 minutes to let them heal.

Increase heat to 100F (98F for goat milk) over 30 minutes, heating no more than 2F every 5 minutes. Stir while heating, using your hands at first since the curds will be very fragile. Every ten minutes (a total of 3 times over the 30 minutes), remove 8 cups of whey and replace with 8 cups of water at 100F (98F for goat milk). This is called washing the curds.

Pour off whey and allow curds to mat into a lump. It is not necessary to drain curds into a colander.

Line a 2 pound mold with cheesecloth, and fill with curds.

Press at 20 pounds of pressures for 20 minutes.

Remove and redress cheese, and press at 40 pounds for 3 hours.

Create a saturated brine solution by mixing 1 1/4 pounds (approximately 3 cups) of salt into 1/2 gallon of cool water.

Brine the cheese for 3 hours, turning it over after 1 1/2 hours. The cheese will float in the brine.

Remove the cheese, place on a wooden board or a wooden mat and air-dry for 3 weeks in a cool location, ideally 50F. Turn the cheese daily and wipe with a cloth dampened with vinegar if any mold begins to appear. After 3 weeks the cheese should be dry to the touch.

Wrap the cheese in plastic, wax, or vacuum seal the cheese and age at 50F for 2-3 months.

(Adapted from a recipe by Mary Rosenblum)