

# CHEESE MARKET NEWS®

The Weekly Newspaper Of The Nation's Cheese And Dairy/Deli Business



Scan this code  
for breaking  
news and the  
latest markets!

## A fromage marriage: Demand rises for cheese wheel cakes

By Chelsey Dequaine

**MADISON, Wis.** — It seems the negative strings behind the phrase “who cut the cheese?” are falling off. Instead of traditional wedding cakes, brides and grooms are cutting their cheese wheel wedding cakes and saying “I do” to an artisan cheese movement.

Ken Monteleone, owner, Fromagination, Madison, Wisconsin, says he wasn’t shocked when his cheese shop began receiving requests for cheese wheel wedding cakes.

“It happened organically,” he says. “Customers came to us asking for cheese trays for weddings, then we got calls asking for cakes of cheese.

It’s still in its infancy, but it seems to be catching on. Being in Wisconsin, people are going to serve cheese at weddings any ways, so why not do it in a unique way?”

Monteleone says Fromagination has two types of customers: those who want a cheese cake at a wedding and those who are looking for cheese in addition to a cake as a reception course before dinner. He says it’s been fun working with couples.

“You can get very creative, especially if you look at the beauty of an artisan cheese wheel,” Monteleone says. “Our cheesemakers are so creative in the shape of their cheeses that they become perfect for a cake.”

Fromagination began making cheese wheel cakes five years ago. The service wasn’t marketed, but Monteleone says the company made them as they were requested.

“The last two years it seems more people come to us wanting cakes,” he says. “We love it. It’s another way to showcase what’s going on in our state with artisan cheeses.”

Depending on the cheese, cakes can be paired with dried fruit. Fromagination also offers

guidance with cake decorations.

“It’s interesting when you look at colors and textures,” Monteleone says. “You can make it very unique.”

The demand for Fromagination’s cakes isn’t only in Wisconsin. This month, Monteleone says the store shipped a Groomsmen cake (\$50), a small side cake, to Brooklyn.

While Monteleone says most of Fromagination’s orders are custom, he wanted to create a page on the company’s website showcasing what the shop does or could do. Click on the “shop” tab at [www.fromagination.com](http://www.fromagination.com) to find “cakes of cheese.”

“The website is a starting point,” Monteleone says. “We sit down one-on-one with people and ask a series of questions. They taste cheeses, then we establish what they like. We build the cake on their preferences. Regardless of the kind of cheese they prefer, we can build a cake from there.”

Fromagination’s El Cantito Cake is the cheapest cheese wheel cake offered on its website (\$65). The two bottom layers are LaVon Brie made with cow’s milk. The middle layer is LaClare Farms Martone made with cow’s and goat’s milk.

The top layer is Landmark Creamery Petit Nuage made with sheep’s milk. The entire cake serves about 52 people.

“El Cantito — the little song — is not enough for a grand fiesta, but it will serve a small gathering of well-wishers or wedding attendants,” Fromagination says. “All three of the cheeses incorporated pair well with other reception items such as wine, fruit, crackers and preserves.”

The website also features a Rustic Reunion Cake (\$350), Meadow Memoir Cake (\$350), Summer Festival Cake (\$450), La Reine du Pacage Cake (\$550), Pure Bliss (\$450) and The Old Country Cake (\$550).

“Depending on your ancestry, this cake might help you include the spirit of your great-grandmother at your wedding,” Fromagination says of The Old Country Cake, which can serve up to 200 guests. “It features a blend of cow and sheep milk cheeses from Wisconsin, Spain, Ireland and Minnesota.”

Cypress Grove Chevre, Arcata, California, began selling cakes of its signature Humboldt Fog cheese in 2008. The company says the cheese

Turn to WHEEL, page 19 ⇨

### INSIDE

◆ **Australia, China sign free trade agreement.**

For details, see page 3.

◆ **Guest column: ‘Congress clears path for expanded trade opportunities.’**

For details, see page 4.

◆ **Cheese, butter stocks up from a year earlier.**

For details, see page 5.

◆ **Nutcher Milk Co. begins marketing in glass bottles.**

For details, see page 12.

## U.S. Senate passes TPA bill; president expected to sign

**WASHINGTON** — The U.S. Senate Wednesday passed Trade Promotion Authority (TPA) by a vote of 60-38, sending the legislation to the president who is expected to sign it into law. TPA will help streamline the passage of trade agreements such as the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) by allowing only an up or down vote by Congress with no amendments. Last week the U.S. House passed the TPA legislation.

Senate Finance Committee Chairman Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, who authored the bill along with Finance Committee Ranking Member Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Ore., and House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Paul Ryan, R-Wis., says Washington has not acted on trade policy of this magnitude in nearly 15 years.

“With Trade Promotion Authority back in our trade arsenal, we can continue as the premier leader on global trade and open more international markets for American farmers, ranchers and businesses,” Hatch says.

Dairy and other agriculture industry organizations praised the Senate’s passage of TPA, saying it will help bring more export opportunities for their products. (See column, “Congress clears path for expanded trade opportunities,” on page 4 in this week’s issue of Cheese Market News.)

“The U.S. dairy industry will continue to grow and prosper with increased trade opportunities, and TPA is critical to ensuring that U.S. dairy companies receive the best deal in future trade agreements,” says Connie Tipton, president and CEO of the International Dairy Foods Association. “We thank all the senators and representatives who supported TPA and look forward to the president signing this important legislation into law as soon as possible.”

The National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF) and U.S. Dairy Export Council (USDEC) say TPA, which expired in 2007, is important

Turn to TPA, page 18 ⇨

## GMA, IDFA appeal ruling on Vermont GMO labeling law

**WASHINGTON** — The Grocery Manufacturers Association (GMA), International Dairy Foods Association (IDFA), Snack Food Association and National Association of Manufacturers this week filed a brief with a federal appellate court claiming that a district court judge erred in refusing to block implementation of a Vermont law that would require the labeling of products with ingredients from genetically engineered (GE) plants.

In the appellate brief filed in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, the four trade associations are challenging Vermont’s Act 120 as violating the First Amendment’s free-speech guarantee because they say it imposes burdensome new speech requirements on food manufacturers and retailers.

The Vermont law requires food manufacturers to include a label on certain products with GE ingredients that indicates the

Turn to GMO, page 18 ⇨

## Winners named in 2015 Wisconsin State Fair Contest

**WEST ALLIS, Wis.** — Winners have been selected in the 28 classes of the 2015 Wisconsin State Fair Cheese & Butter Contest, which took place here yesterday at the Wisconsin State Fair Park.

The 2015 Grand Master Cheesemaker will be named and recognized, along with the other winning cheesemakers, during the Blue Ribbon Cheese & Butter Auction

Turn to CONTEST, page 10 ⇨



## NEWS/BUSINESS



### WHEEL

*Continued from page 1*

looks like a cake because of its bloomy white penicillium candidum rind that protects the cheese and the line of ash through the center.

"We didn't think of stacking the different sized wheels into cake form until Venissimo (a San Diego cheese shop with four locations) sent us a picture of its creation," says Janne Rasmussen, marketing manager, Cypress Grove. "We've been selling them directly and through distributors and retailers ever since."

Cypress Grove's 9-pound Ultimate Cheese Cake (\$205+) starts with a 5-pound wheel of Humboldt Fog, a 3-pound Truffle Tremor in the middle and a 1-pound Humboldt Fog Mini on top. Optional add-ons include a 1-pound Truffle Tremor Mini (\$27) or slices of Bermuda Triangle (\$37.50) around the outside of the bottom two layers.

"We're glad to see other cheesemakers and cheese shops jumping on board and offering their own versions," Rasmussen says. "From groom's cakes to gluten and sugar-free options, we love seeing cheese become a bigger part of special moments."

Rasmussen also says Cypress Grove is launching a Facebook giveaway contest of its Ultimate Cheese Cake. Participants tell the company about someone they know who deserves the cake. Cypress Grove will choose one winner who will have a year to claim a Ultimate Cheese Cake for the special occasion of his/her choice. For more information, visit [www.Facebook.com/CypressGrove](http://www.Facebook.com/CypressGrove).

Carr Valley Cheese Co., Middleton, Wisconsin, lists four "Celebration Cakes" on its website ([www.carrvalleycheese.com](http://www.carrvalleycheese.com)), but says the possibilities are endless. The company began offering cakes in 2010.

"I see a movement away from the traditional cakes to more non-traditional choices, so this follows that trend," says Patty Koenig, senior administrator, Carr Valley. "I see it growing for the future."

Because Carr Valley offers different types of wheels, the cost varies on the age, style and milk used. Koenig says average prices are \$150-\$300.

Koenig also says a typical cake would be a 10-pound bottom layer of its Gouda, a 6-pound middle layer of its Glacier Point Blue and a 3-pound top layer of a custom-made Cranberry

*Turn to CAKES, page 20 ➡*



*Ultimate Cheese Cake; photo courtesy of Cypress Grove Chevre*

## BLUE RIBBON CHEESE & BUTTER AUCTION

Join us at the 2015 Blue Ribbon Cheese & Butter Auction — sponsored by the Wisconsin State Fair Dairy Promotion Board — on Thursday, August 13. Meet the award-winning cheesemakers and find out who will be named the 2015 Grand Master Cheese Maker.

**MOVED  
TO NEW  
THURSDAY  
DATE!!**

**Mark your calendar...  
Thursday, August 13, 2015**

Saz's Hospitality Village  
Wisconsin State Fair Park

4 p.m. – Reception  
5 p.m. – Cheese Maker Recognition & Auction

To purchase tickets, contact **Katy Katzman**  
at (262) 903-6727 or [katzman@idcnet.com](mailto:katzman@idcnet.com).



Auction proceeds fund student scholarships and dairy promotions at the Wisconsin State Fair.

For more information please email [katzman@idcnet.com](mailto:katzman@idcnet.com)



Ken Heiman, Master Cheesemaker

*125 Years  
in the Making...*  
**You will Taste  
the Difference!**

**From humble beginnings to time-honored traditions, Nasonville Dairy always offers "A Family Tradition of Quality."**

- Over 30 Varieties, Styles and Types of Award-Winning Cheese
- Extensive & Unique Cheeses from Traditional to Specialty
- Crafted by a Master Cheesemaker
- Consistent, Affordably Priced Product
- Third Generation Wisconsin Dairy Supporting Local Dairy Farmers

Explore our online store and product offerings by visiting our website at [www.nasonvilledairy.com](http://www.nasonvilledairy.com)



**Nasonville Dairy**

10898 Hwy. 10 West  
Marshfield, WI 54449  
Phone: 715-676-2177  
Fax: 715-676-3636

Email: [mailorder@nasonvilledairy.com](mailto:mailorder@nasonvilledairy.com)  
[www.nasonvilledairy.com](http://www.nasonvilledairy.com)



*Award-Winning  
Wisconsin Cheese*



For more information please visit [www.nasonvilledairy.com](http://www.nasonvilledairy.com)



## NEWS/BUSINESS



## CAKES

Continued from page 19

Chipotle Cheddar all dipped in white wax for \$175. Most cake choices take two to three weeks to prepare. The white wax covering allows the hosts to decorate them as they please.

"These cakes have become a favorite of cheese lovers and have been served in place of dessert for those who do not have a sweet tooth, but more commonly we see these as a beautiful and creative way to serve artisan cheese during a cocktail hour or reception," Koenig says. "The leftovers are a great party favor to offer guests. The partial wheels can be cut, wrapped and distributed to guests

as they leave."

The demand for cheese wheel wedding cakes isn't just in the United States. Bespoke Cheese Co., England, offers several ready-to-go cake designs (\$238-\$301). However, Sophie Wilcock, owner, Bespoke Cheese, says the majority of its business is for custom Bespoke designs.

"Customers come to us with their favorite cheeses, the number of people attending the occasion, accompaniments needed and any other details," Wilcock says. "Then we design a cake tailored to their requirements."

Bespoke custom designs are typically for larger cakes costing around \$475. Wilcock says hard cheeses, such as Cheddar and Yarg, are the most popular.

The biggest cheese wheel wedding

cake Bespoke has made was 26-pounds of cheese. While Wilcock says she sees cheese wheel wedding cakes being ordered by mostly young couples, she says cheese knows no age.

"We've found while traditional cakes still have a place at weddings, couples are looking for something different — quirkier," Wilcock says. "Traditional cake is often left at the end of weddings, whereas cheese seems to go down well and can double as evening food for guests."

Currently, Bespoke offers artisan cracker selections on request with cakes purchases. However, Wilcock says cake accompaniments is an area the company is looking to expand into in the near future.

While Sartori Cheese, Plymouth, Wisconsin, does not offer completed cheese wheel wedding cakes, it does offer 20-pound wheels of its Reserve Line cheese (\$300-\$350) via an online cheese shop for customers to assemble their own cakes.

"We've been helping cheese aficionados make their wedding dreams come true with these wheels," says Hannah Geise, assistant marketing manager, Sartori Cheese. "Those connected to the local food, artisan movement are more likely to have this type of presentation."

Geise says Sartori's Merlot BellaVitano is popular for cheese wedding cake inquiries because of its purple rind. Additionally, the product description has a wedding theme.

"By wedding this rich, creamy cheese to the berry and plum notes of Merlot, we've created a marriage of flavors destined to make your taste buds say, 'I do,'" says the Merlot BellaVitano description on Sartori's website. "If you invite a few friends from our pairing guide — toasted walnuts, thin slices of prosciutto and semisweet chocolates for dessert — the honeymoon never has to end."

Geise also says Sartori's BellaVitano Gold also is a common choice because of its white/ivory tone. As a cake topper, the 6-pound wheel of Dolcina Gorgonzola (\$100) is commonly purchased.

"With specialty cheese trends on the rise and more people falling in love with the artisan movement, we see this happening more often," Geise says. "It's something different and memorable, and cheese is a unique alternative for couples who aren't interested in sweets."

Fromagination also offers a service where its cheesemongers cut and serve the cake at the wedding or event. If declined, a cake diagram will be included to describe each layer, flavor profile and how to cut it.

Most commonly, Monteleone says fresh cheese is in demand in the summer months, pairing with strawberries, blueberries and champagne. In the fall and winter months, alpine-style and heavier cheeses are more common.

Wedding favors are another new segment of business Monteleone didn't expect to grow at Fromagination. Instead of buying wedding favors, customers can offer slices of a reserve.

"It's opening another area of development for us," he says. "We never thought we would be in the wedding business."

Monteleone keeps the store active with wedding events. In April, Fromagination held a vintage-inspired wedding open house. In fall, Monteleone says the store plans to be involved in more wedding expos. The company was even included in the June issue of *Martha Stuart Weddings* representing Wisconsin as it showcased its Wedding Favor Package in "50 Born-in-the-USA Favors".

"We are learning about where cheese is becoming more popular and has presence," Monteleone says. CMN

**MIFROMA**  
DELICIOUS SWISS CHEESES  
**PREMIUM**

Labels on cheese wedges: CRESTA, SPALEN, HEIDA, L'ETIVAZ AOP Private Collection, GLARNER ALPKÄSE AOP, LE BON DU JURA, MILCHZAPFE, SENIOR, FORMAGGIO D'ALPE PIORA AOP, GREEN FAIRY, HOP ON TOP, CEWETIE, CHAPEL HILL CH, SPITZBÄRG GOAT.

**WE CLIMB TO NEW HEIGHTS**

MIFROMA PREMIUM is a line of only the finest cheeses made in Switzerland. We have sourced cheeses from all regions, of all milks and types. Cheeses that reflect craftsmanship through taste and texture. Cheeses that show character and tell a story. You will happily listen.

**SCHWEIZ SUISSE SVIZZERA SWITZERLAND**

**Cheeses from Switzerland.** [www.cheesesfromswitzerland.com](http://www.cheesesfromswitzerland.com)

Switzerland. Naturally.

For more information please visit [www.cheesesfromswitzerland.com](http://www.cheesesfromswitzerland.com)