



2023 UNITED STATES CHAMPIONSHIP CHEESE CONTEST

2023 Expert Judges



TAMMY ALDERMAN MILLER

Colony Brands
MONROE, WISCONSIN

Tammy is a Cheese Sourcing Manager at Colony Brands in Monroe, Wisconsin. She has over 40 years of experience in the cheese industry in QA, lab, production, and procurement. She has been a licensed Cheese Grader since 1996.



JILL ALLEN

Tillamook
TILLAMOOK, OREGON

Jill has been evaluating dairy products for technical consistency, best tasting, and highest quality for contests and consumers, for 23 plus years. Jill is the Director of R&D Product Excellence at Tillamook.



GREG ANDERSON

Kroger Company
MONROE, WISCONSIN

Greg currently works as a Senior Dairy Sourcing Leader for the Kroger Company. Greg has 50 years of experience in the cheese industry including cheese manufacturing, retail and food service packaging, sales, and sourcing.



VALERIE ARECHIGA

Glanbia Nutritionals
TWIN FALLS, IDAHO

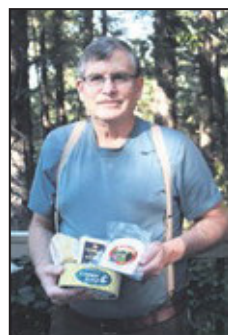
Valerie works as the Research Manager for the Cheese R&D team at Glanbia Nutritionals. Valerie has eleven years of experience in the dairy industry ranging from quality to farmstead cheesemaker to new product development.



KIRK BALDWIN

KB Consulting
MILBANK, SOUTH DAKOTA

Kirk worked 40 years in the dairy industry as an educator and research scientist. He has spent many hours volunteering in the industry as FFA dairy foods coach and collegiate judge.



MARC BATES

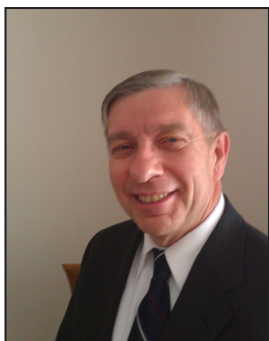
Bates Consulting LLC
CANNON BEACH, OREGON

Marc, owner of Bates Consulting LLC, is semi-retired after a 55+ year career in the cheese, dairy and food industries. He has been an independent consultant since 2000.



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LARRY BELL

LBell Consulting LLC
GREEN BAY, WISCONSIN

Larry worked in the cheese industry for 35 years in R&D, quality control, cheese grading and food safety before retiring. For several years he has assisted with sampling and grading cheeses for the Master Cheesemaker Program.



THEODORE BROWN

Cabot Cheese
CABOT, VERMONT

Theodore has been involved in grading numerous types of dairy products for the past 26 years. Having the opportunity to see all types of domestic and international products has certainly broadened his perception of dairy products as a whole.



DAVID BURK

Marathon Cheese Corp.
MOSINEE, WISCONSIN

David works as a Procurement Manager at Marathon Cheese where he has worked for 42 years with over 30 years of grading experience. He has previously judged multiple United States and World Championship Cheese Contests.



KIMBERLEE BURRINGTON

American Dairy Products Institute
MADISON, WISCONSIN

KJ is the V.P. of Technical Development at ADPI. She has over 30 years of product development experience, including her 23 years as Dairy Ingredient Applications Coordinator at CDR and has been judging for over 15 years.



DOMINIQUE DELUGEAU

Saputo
MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

Dominique has been in the dairy industry for 35 years. He is VP of Contract Manufacturing and Industrial Sales at Saputo Dairy USA. Prior to that he was Sr. Vice President of Specialty Cheese & International Trade at Saputo.



CHRIS ECKERMAN

KDI Cheese
SIOUX FALLS, SOUTH DAKOTA

Chris is the Chief Operating Officer of KDI Cheese Company, LLC. He has held industry roles in research and development, cheese technical development, and has supported numerous plants as a culture rep and consultant.



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DR. NANA FARKYE

Cal Poly - Prof. Emeritus
SAN LUIS OBISPO, CALIFORNIA

Dr. Farkye is a professor emeritus of Dairy Foods at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, and a dairy foods consultant. His expertise is in milk and cheese technology and cultured dairy foods. He is a member of ADPI's Center of Excellence.



CHAD GALER

Dairy Management Inc.
GLENVIEW, ILLINOIS

Chad is the Vice President of Product Research at Dairy Management Inc. He leads programs with a focus on research programs at major universities to drive dairy innovation of products and ingredients on behalf of U.S. dairy farmers.



GLENN HATCHER

Pacific Cheese
HAYWARD, CALIFORNIA

Glenn is currently Director of Quality Systems for Pacific Cheese Co. He is a Registered Microbiologist and a Certified Quality Auditor with 50+ years' experience in the manufacture of various cheeses, ingredients and cultures.



KORY HYVONEN

Kory's Cheese Sales
OMRO, WISCONSIN

Kory is a returning contest judge. His 20 years experience in the industry puts him in rare company. Kory is a Wisconsin licensed cheesemaker, multiple product cheese grader, and butter grader.



JOHN JAECCI

Center for Dairy Research
BROOKLYN, WISCONSIN

As a third-generation cheesemaker, John coordinates the Center for Dairy Research Cheese Industry and Applications Group activities in addition to being the Coordinator of the Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker Program.



ANDY JOHNSON

Dairy Connection, Inc.
MADISON, WISCONSIN

Andy is passionate about cheese and working with cheesemakers. With more than 15 years experience in the industry as a cheesemaker, he is currently helping cheesemakers with his new role at Dairy Connection Inc.



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DR. MARK JOHNSON

Center for Dairy Research
MIDDLETON, WISCONSIN

Mark has been at the Wisconsin Center for Dairy Research for 43 yrs. He has served as an international judge in Australia, judged for the American Cheese Society, US and World with WCMA and National Milk Producers Federation.



AILEEN KACVINSKY

Schuman Cheese
MADISON, WISCONSIN

Aileen has cheese manufacturing experience with Italian, mozzarella, cheddar and American Styles. She has judged cultured products, cheese, and ice cream at various contests including the US and World Contests.



KYLE KOLL

Sargento Foods
PLYMOUTH, WISCONSIN

Kyle is a Supply Quality Manager - Corporate Cheese Grader. He has been part of the Sargento Family grading cheese for 13 years.



ANNA KU

Tillamook
TILLAMOOK, OREGON

Anna works at Tillamook County Creamery Association as a Sr. Product Development Scientist. She has been developing new ice cream, cheese and yogurt products that consumers love for over 10 years.



LAURA LAEHN

Masters Gallery Foods
PLYMOUTH, WISCONSIN

Laura has been in the dairy industry for 15 years, with experience being in Supplier Quality, which entails grading and evaluation of cheese. She holds all three Wisconsin Grading Licenses, American, Swiss, and Brick & Muenster.



DR. SUSAN LARSON

Center for Dairy Research
MADISON, WISCONSIN

Susan works with dairy ingredients at the Center for Dairy Research. She has 14 years working on dairy ingredient applications and functionality. She was on the dairy judging team in college and was assistant coach.



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TERRY LENSMIRE

Lensmire Dairy Consulting
MANITOWOC, WISCONSIN

Terry currently works as a consultant to the dairy industry in cheese making. He is a licensed cheesemaker, licensed grader and a Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker. He has held positions in quality, grading, and plant management.



CHRISTOPHE MEGEVAND

Schuman Cheese
FAIRFIELD, NEW JERSEY

Christophe started in traditional cheese making in the Alps and has a broad knowledge in many high-end specialty cheese types. He is Schuman Cheese's Executive Vice-President of Cheese Manufacturing and leads a team of the best and brightest in the industry.



DR. LLYOD METZGER

Valley Queen
BRUCE, SOUTH DAKOTA

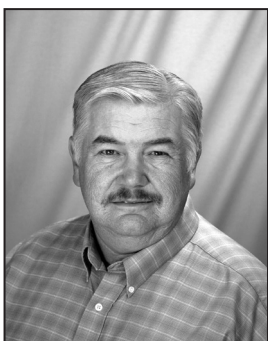
Lloyd is the VP of Quality and Technical Services at Valley Queen and leads the QA, product development, and process technology teams. He also has 20 years of experience in academia and was a Professor at SDSU and U of MN.



GINA MODE

Center for Dairy Research
MADISON, WISCONSIN

Gina works as a Cheese Researcher at the Center for Dairy Research. She has over 30 years of experience in the dairy industry and has judged at county, state, national, and international cheese contests.



MICHAEL PEDERSON

Wisconsin Dept. of Agriculture
ARGYLE, WISCONSIN

Michael worked for the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture since 1991. Since being hired on as a cheese grader, his job frequently includes performing routine inspections for cheese and butter, ensuring compliance with Wisconsin's cheese grading regulations.



ADAM PORATH

Winona Foods
GREEN BAY, WISCONSIN

Adam works as a cheese procurement specialist and a cheese grader. He has 10 years of experience in the cheese industry working in cheese conversion, cheese grading, and procurement.



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ROB RICHTER

Great Lakes Cheese
GREEN BAY, WISCONSIN

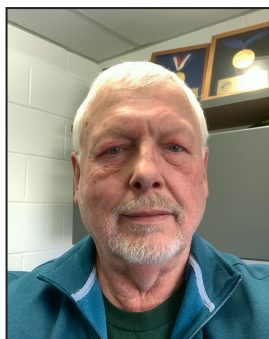
Rob has over 20 years of experience in cheese, whey, and affinage. He is a proud Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker.



DAVE SATTERNESS

Retired - Chr. Hansen
SIOUX FALLS, SOUTH DAKOTA

Dave has participated in cheese grading over forty years, beginning with his Wisconsin Cheese Grader's License in early 1980s. He has been a cheese contest judge at IMPA Cheese Contest since 1996 and the US and World Championship Cheese Contests since 2011.



STEVE SCHENKOSKE

Tosca Services
GREEN BAY, WISCONSIN

Steve works at Tosca Services in Green Bay, Wisconsin. He has been active in the cheese industry for 48 years. During his career, he has had experience in cheese making, packaging, and procurement.



BEN SMITH

Hilmar Cheese Company
MODESTO, CALIFORNIA

Ben is the Product Manager for Hilmar Cheese Company. He has been making cheese professionally for 10 years, holding roles in operations, research and development, and technical services.



MARIANNE SMUKOWSKI

Marianne Smukowski Consulting
MADISON, WISCONSIN

Marianne has over 35 years experience in the dairy industry working in such roles as regulatory, private industry, and academic. She was involved with food safety, education and training, and judging dairy contests.



DEAN SOMMER

Center for Dairy Research
MADISON, WISCONSIN

Dean has worked as a cheese technologist at the Center for Dairy Research for the last 20 years, serving as a technical resource to the U.S. cheese industry. Prior to that Dean worked at Alto Dairy Cooperative for 18 years.



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GIDEON ST. AUBIN

Dairy Farmers of America
COLFAX, WISCONSIN

Gideon works as the Senior Cheese Grader for DFA. He has 15 years of experience in the dairy industry in cheese powder production in multiple roles, Sensory Lab Tech/ Safety Coordinator, then transitioned to Senior Cheese Grader.



CATHY STRANGE

Whole Foods Market
AUSTIN, TEXAS

Cathy is a Global VP with Whole Foods Market and has been a specialty industry expert for over 30 years. She is an international ambassador for the international Les Guilde des Fromagers and has judged in cheese competitions around the world.



ERIC VORPAHL

Masters Gallery Foods
PLYMOUTH, WISCONSIN

Eric is the Director of Procurement - Bulk Cheese & Risk Management at Masters Gallery Foods. He has passionate about all things cheese and has nearly twenty years of experience in the dairy industry.



JULIE WINANS

Chr. Hansen
OGDEN, UTAH

Julie has worked as a Technical Account Manager for Chr. Hansen Inc. for 16 years, supporting the dairy industry. Julie also serves as the Committee Chair for the Idaho Milk Processors' regional dairy product contest.



NIAL YAGER

Washington State University Creamery
PULLMAN, WASHINGTON

Nial has spent 30 years at the WSU Creamery making the finest cheese and ice cream. He is a Certified Cheese Professional and has judged national and international competitions for ten years.



MATT ZIMBRIC

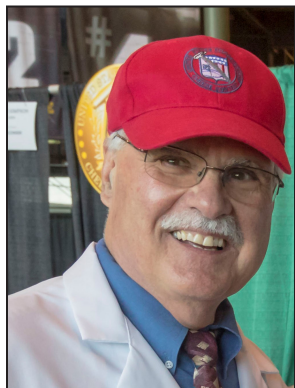
Foremost Farms USA
WAUNAKEE, WISCONSIN

Matt currently is the Senior Director of Cheese Technology at Foremost Farms USA. He has been working in the dairy industry and tasting cheeses for 25 years. He is a big fan of all cheeses!



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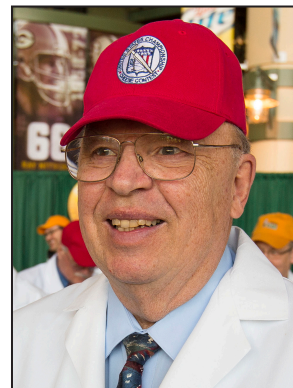
Contest Leadership



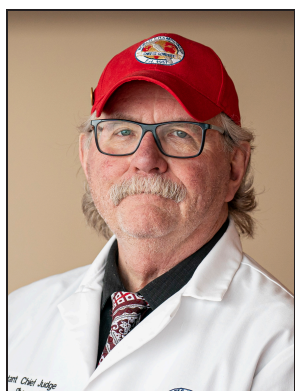
Chief Judge
JIM MUELLER



Chief Judge Emeritus
BILL SCHLINSOG



Chief Judge Emeritus
BOB ASCHEBROCK



Assistant Chief Judge
STAN DIETSCHÉ



Assistant Chief Judge
TIM CZMOWSKI



Assistant Chief Judge
SANDY TONEY



Assistant Chief Judge
**MARIANA
MARQUES DE ALMEIDA**



Assistant Chief Judge
JOSEF HUBATSCHEK



Director of Logistics
RANDY SWENSEN
