

Jack Cheese Recipe

Ingredients:

1 gallon whole cow's milk
¼ tsp. Mesophilic Starter Culture (1/2 if using raw milk)
¼ tsp. calcium chloride (if using pasteurized milk), diluted in ¼ cup unchlorinated water
¼ tsp. liquid rennet, diluted in ¼ cup unchlorinated water
1 tablespoon Cheese salt or other non-iodized salt

Instructions:

Sterilize all equipment. Prepare a cheese mold by lining with sterilized cheese cloth. Heat milk over low-medium heat to 86°F.

Turn off the heat. Sprinkle the starter over the surface of the milk, and allow it to rehydrate for 5 minutes. Stir in with a whisk or slotted spoon, using up-and-down motions, for about 1 minute. Cover and maintain temperature for 45 minutes to allow the milk to ripen

NOTE: Milk retains its temperature very well. Using a stainless steel pot and covering it during the ripening period will maintain the temperature.

Add the diluted calcium chloride and mix using up and down motions for about 1 minute. Add the diluted rennet and mix using up and down motions for about 1 minutes. Cover pot and let set for 30 minutes, maintaining temperature at 86 degrees.

Check for a clean break, where the curds and the whey start to separate from each other. Cut the curds into ¾ inch cubes; let them rest for 5 minutes. Over low heat, slowly bring the curd temperature up to 102 degrees F, stirring continuously to prevent the curds from matting. This should take 20-30 minutes. Let sit undisturbed for 30 minutes. Ladle/pour out enough whey to expose the curds. Stir continuously for 10-20 minutes or until the curds matt and cling together when pressed in your hand.

Pour curds into colander lined with cheesecloth. Let drain for 5 minutes and then sprinkle in 1 tablespoon of the salt and mix with your hands. Line your mold with damp, sterilized cheese cloth (90 grade) and place on a draining rack (baking sheet with cooling rack works great). Gently ladle the curds into the mold and gently press with your hand to compact the curds – repeat until your mold is full. Fold the cloth tails of the cheese cloth over the curds, place the follower on top and press at 8-10 pounds for 1 hour. Remove cheese from the mold, unwrap, flip, redress and then press at 10 pounds for 12 hours or overnight.

Remove cheese from the cheese mold. For natural rind - place in a ripening box and ripen at 50 to 55 degrees F for 2 weeks flipping daily. When you flip, check for mold. If mold appears clean it off with white distilled vinegar and a soft bristle toothbrush or cheese cloth. Or, after removing from cheese mold pat dry with paper towels and vacuum seal. At 2 weeks you can eat if desired. If you would like to age it longer, vacuum seal or wax and continue to store at 50-55 degrees.