



Courtney Haase

Northeast SARE's Sustainable Farmer Educator



Haase can speak to workshop and conference groups about processing and adding value, direct marketing, licensing, and issues that relate to dairy products and goat milk production.

Call 603/927-4176 or send e-mail to nunsuch@conknet.com. The mailing address is HC 65, Box 45, Bradford, NH 03221.



Courtney Haase is the owner of Nunsuch Dairy and Cheese, a licensed, grade-A goat dairy that produces and sells milk and cheese. It has been named a New Hampshire Farm of Distinction, and the goat cheese has been voted the best in her state by *New Hampshire Business Magazine*. The farm has also been showcased on the Fox Network's "Breakfastime," PBS's "Cooking with Gail Grecio," *Better Homes and Gardens*, *Country Home Magazine*, and in travel books and articles about the Lakes Region of New Hampshire.

Haase also runs the Small Dairy Project, which trains farmers to make informed decisions about whether to become value-added producers or whether to pursue other options that will allow them to sustain their farm.

"The decision to add value—whether it's making cheese or some other product—can be difficult," Haase says. "By giving them the pros and cons of becoming a value-added producer, we can help the farmer get a clear view of the work and time it takes to succeed."

Over the years, Haase has worked with over 200 farmers in the U.S. and Canada, and she has developed a program for loaning a Micro Process Design Vat Pasteurizer that allows farmers to try out making farmstead cheese and other milk products before committing to a large investment.

The SARE Sustainable Farmer Educator appointment fits in well with what Haase thinks is important: "I have become a successful cheese-maker and realized my dream, and I have a desire to assist others in realizing *their* dreams. This is an opportunity to spread the philosophy of success in maintaining a small herd of milking livestock."

This philosophy is simple: "It all started in 1978 with two goats," she says, "and right from the beginning we wanted to work in conjunction with others rather than create competition. I firmly believe there are enough clients in the world to enjoy cheese—either goat cheese or cow cheese—and if I can train the farmer to become a cheese-maker, educate the farmer on the principles of marketing, and help in purchasing the necessary equipment, then a lot of people benefit."

The Nunsuch goats are Toggenburgs that are milked seasonally, from February to September, then bred for kidding the following February. "Our goats produce the only milk that makes our cheese," says Haase, "and this enables us to keep a close eye on the quality of their milk and the conditions in which they live." They live well, it seems, since they produce not just excellent milk but "wonderful entertainment."

"I believe in small farms," Haase says. "I believe in the dream of all farmers to have a profitable and productive establishment. I started from the ground up—my five acres was originally a gravel pit—and by being creative and steadfast I now have a successful farm and business. Helping others is vital for me, and is part of my commitment to sustainable agriculture."

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