

Small dairy farms in Vermont, and the U.S., are declining in number as significant variation over time in the farm price received for fluid milk contributes to make small scale dairying financially infeasible. In Vermont, small dairy farms contribute to the agricultural aesthetic of the state and the rural working landscape which is a factor in attracting tourism revenue. The Vermont Institute for Artisan Cheese (VIAC) has identified the adoption of on-farm value added dairy production, such as cheese, butter, yogurt, milk and ice cream, as a strategy to improve small dairy farm viability. In order to benefit from the implementation of value added production it is important for producers to capture a price premium for their products. This research assesses consumer willingness to pay for attributes of cheese including artisan production, farmstead production, organic certification, local production and renewable energy use at the source of production. These are attributes which a cheese producer may elect to convey in labeling and marketing materials and the results of this research will aid in understanding the relative importance of each to cheese purchasers.