



TMK Creamery

PROFILE: Value Added Producer Grant Recipient

Canby, OR

Grant Amount

\$228,000

Grant Period

2016 - 2018

Grant Summary

Grant funds were used to process artisan cheese and support labor and marketing costs, and processing materials and supplies in order to expand into new markets.

About the Grant Recipient

TMK Creamery is owned by a husband and wife team, Todd and Tessa Koch. The farm consists of 30 acres and 20 milking cows, (Jersey, Brown Swiss and Holstein). The value added operation sells the cheese on the farm as well as to restaurants and grocery stores. Along with the location in Canby, the Kochs also have a hay farm in Klamath Falls. TMK Creamery sells their cheese at their on-farm retail location and to other, nearby farms.



How is the public engaged with TMK Creamery?

In addition to buying products on the dairy, customers may also take a tour of the facilities and pet a milk cow (cowlebrity). “The secret to success is...don’t have secrets,” says Tessa Koch. “Have transparency; have trust in your product.” At TMK Creamery, the whole cheese making process is shown through a window in their farm store.

“A customer can taste all the different cheeses and watch that same product being made from start to finish.”

— Tessa Koch



IMPACT OF VAPG FUNDING

Overall, the operation became more efficient with the addition of equipment and people. They also were able to expand their marketing and branding.

Mandy Cole from the USDA Rural Development office. According to Koch, applying was a long process and Mandy working with them was helpful. When inputting information in the application process, they found the dates had to be very specific or the system would not accept it.



PHOTO PAGE 1
The whole cheese making process may be viewed through a window in the retail store.

PHOTOS THIS PAGE
TOP LEFT Some of the TMK crew, showing off their Jersey and Holstein cowlebrities.

TOP RIGHT Curds have been produced in many flavors. Cheddar curds is a real crowd pleaser.

BOTTOM RIGHT View of the front of the retail operations and new parking area.

“TMK Creamery was able to add cheese making tools which, in turn, allowed for more products and shortened the window of production.

—Tessa Koch

NEEDS FOR FUTURE FUNDING

Koch says there are always funding needs in a small operation. However, immediate needs are to make improvements in their payment process, parking lot and milking robot. Longer term goals include expanding their market to Portland, add more varieties of cheeses, add beef, ice cream, and distilled spirits (whey from cheese).

ADVICE FOR OTHERS

The creamery applied twice for funding. During the first round, the farm made connections with

©2018. Funding provided by the Agriculture Marketing Resource Center (AgMRC), located at Iowa State University, www.agmrc.org. AgMRC is a national website dedicated to providing information to producers and service providers on value-added agriculture businesses. These partners collaborated to create the Value Added Producer Grant Profiles:

