How is the public engaged with Gothberg Farms?

Consumers may purchase cheese directly on their farm from a small retail cheese store on the honor system, and also participate in various tours and tasting events. Running regular booths at farmers markets also brings the public in direct contact with the Gothberg Farms people and their variety of products.

“Consumers learn how cheese produced on small local farms imparts unique flavors and quality.”
— Rhonda Gothberg
IMPACT OF VAPG FUNDING

VAPG funding enabled the Rothbergs to add new cheese varieties, build their brand and expand marketing techniques. Sales have increased as a result.

Effective business improvements included product displays on new cheese boards, enhanced on-farm events to draw more customers to the farm, and a better-trained workforce.

“Every dollar raised in cheese sales and farm-based experiences goes back into the local economy.”

—Rhonda Gothberg

ADVICE FOR OTHERS

“This grant is not for the average person to write. I have a MS in nursing and still paid a grant writer to help,” explained Gothberg.

She believes the grant application is geared to businesses who have a department for grant writing. “Not here. I’m the department of pretty much everything,” said Gothberg with a laugh.

Photos

Left: Rhonda is a hands-on business person.
Upper Right: The cheese product line has expanded in part due to VAPG grant funding.
Lower Right: Rhonda wears many hats on her farm, including the hat of cheesemaker.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS WITH YOUR FARM BUSINESS

“Quality first every time, never compromise on that,” instructs Gothberg. “Value product, goats, land, employees and customers above all.”

This successful farm started as a very small enterprise and a sole proprietorship. At the start, Rhonda and Roy never envisioned adding any employees. Their milking herd began with only seven goats.

Yet, over the years with steady careful management and the application of resources including the VAPG grant, the Gothbergs have built a sustainable business and a source of year-round jobs for the community.