



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Prairie Farms Cheeses Earn Top 3 Finishes at U.S. Championship Cheese Contest

French Onion Dip, 4% Small Curd Cottage Cheese, Gorgonzola, and Whey receive Honors

EDWARDSVILLE, Ill. (June 4, 2025) – The 21st biennial United States Championship Cheese Contest, a technical competition for cheese, butter, and yogurt makers, was held in Green Bay, Wisconsin in March. A team of technical judges from across the country met for three days to evaluate the best U.S. cheeses from dozens of manufacturers on a variety of technical merits, including flavor, body, texture, salt, color, finish, and packaging. After all the votes were counted, Prairie Farms received five awards including a pair of top finishes for Gorgonzola cheeses.

Prairie Farms' Caves of Faribault Minnesota team earned an impressive second-place finish in the Gorgonzola Cheese category with a 98.63 score for its AmaGorg® Gorgonzola cheese. This was followed up with a third-place finish by the Prairie Farms team at Mindoro, Wisconsin with a 98.625 score for its Mindoro Collection Gorgonzola cheese.

The Prairie Farms team at Quincy, Illinois earned a third-place finish and notable 99.475 score for its French Onion Dip in the Cultured Dips category. The Prairie Farms team at Fort Wayne earned a third-place finish for its 4% Small Curd Cottage Cheese in the Cottage Cheese category. Prairie Farms' Luana, Iowa team earned a first-place finish and extraordinary score of 99.9 for its whey powder in the Dry Whey category.

"These awards confirm our cheesemakers' commitment to making the best products from the quality milk that our dairy farmers provide," said Matt McClelland, CEO and Executive Vice President for Prairie Farms Dairy. "It always starts on the farm with fresh milk followed by the great skill and love for cheesemaking at our plants to make this happen. I'm proud of our cheeses and the people behind them."

The U.S. Cheese Contest awards follow big wins at the National Milk Producers Federation Dairy Product Judging Contest last fall where Prairie Farms won 18 ribbons and earned four category sweeps, the most of any other company competing in the contest. Prairie Farms Caves of Faribault division also earned silver and bronze awards for its cave-aged Gouda and Gorgonzola cheeses at the World Cheese Awards held in Portugal.

[The United States Championship Cheese Contest](#) is the nation's premier technical cheese, butter, and yogurt competition. The U.S. Contest is hosted by the Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association biennially since 1981. Entries are evaluated by a team of skilled technical judges from across the nation. Starting from a maximum possible 100 points, deductions are made for various defects found by each judge. A Gold medal, Silver medal and Bronze medal are awarded to the three highest-scoring entries in each class.



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Prairie Farms Dairy, Inc. is one of the largest and most successful dairy cooperatives operating in the Midwest and the South. Elements of the cooperative include almost 600 farm families, 7,000 associates, 48 manufacturing plants, 100+ distribution facilities, and annual sales of over \$4.69 billion. Prairie Farms is a nationally recognized leader in the dairy industry known for setting the standard for milk flavor innovations and producing award-winning milk, cheese, and cultured dairy products. With headquarters in Edwardsville, Ill., the Prairie Farms distribution footprint covers over 30 percent of the United States; products are available in grocery chains, mass merchandiser stores, club stores, convenience stores, dollar stores, drug stores, schools, foodservice outlets, and warehouse distribution centers. For more information visit

<https://www.prairiefarms.com/media>.

Photo Caption from L to R: Tara Schaal, Faribault Plant Manager; Francisco Zepeda, Faribault Production Manager and Head Cheesemaker; Brandon Hertramp, Luana Plant Whey Department Manager; and Kyle Kunsman, Mindoro Plant Manager.



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