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FARM PUTS MONEY WHERE ITS MICROBES ARE AND TAKES TOP HONORS

Greensboro, VT
July 30th, 2018

Jasper Hill Farm Wins Best of Show for Harbison and First Runner Up for Calderwood at the American Cheese Society Competition with Best of Class for Bayley Hazen Blue.

Awards announced July 27th in Pittsburgh, PA

The 35th annual [American Cheese Society](#) Conference and Competition was held this year in Pittsburgh. Over 2,000 cheeses were entered into about 120 style categories for evaluation by a [panel of judges](#). For each of these classes a First, Second and Third Place Award is announced. A final round of judging evaluated the First-Place winners from each class in order to determine the First, Second and Third Best of Show cheeses.

The team members behind Jasper Hill Farm, most of them live-streaming the event in Greensboro, were thrilled to watch as their raw milk, Alpine-style [Calderwood](#) took Second Best of Show and over the moon when their iconic soft cheese, [Harbison](#) took Best of Show. The team was also honored that their flagship, raw-milk, [Bayley Hazen Blue](#) took a Best of Class medal and happy to see their washed-rind specialist, Olivia Haver, accept a Third Best in Class medal on-stage for the [Willoughby](#) cheese that she is responsible for cave-ripening.

The increasingly high quality and number of entries makes it a huge honor to make the Best of Show podium. For two cheeses from the same company to occupy the top three is an unprecedented achievement. Harbison's top honor follows two Third Best of Show awards over the last three years, with a Murray's Cheese ripened variation of Harbison called [Greensward](#) winning Third Best of Show in the interim year.

More about the winning cheeses:

Harbison is a spruce bark wrapped, soft ripened, bloomy rind cheese with a spoon-able texture and lovely, rustic appearance. The signature, full-bodied flavor of the cheese is rich and creamy with notes of spruce, mushroom, roasted garlic and brassica vegetables, with aromas of raspberry and Dijon mustard. The bark contributes an oaky, vanilla character that makes the cheese an excellent companion for barrel-aged wines and beers that have notable acidity.

Harbison is named for the late Mrs. Anne Harbison, affectionately known as the 'Grandmother of Greensboro', who inspired many with an outstanding commitment to her community.

The quickly growing market for Harbison has been a key driver in recent growth for Jasper Hill. They consider it a symbol of the ongoing effort, along with other artisan cheesemakers, to

increase the perception of value for American cheeses and to expose more people to a category of cheese that places complexity over standardization and reflects a realistic cost of sustainable production practices.

Harbison can often be found on full-service and fine cheese counters from coast to coast and through several online outlets including Jasper Hill Farm's online store: jasperhillfarm.com/shop

Calderwood is a new variation of Jasper Hill's [Alpha Tolman](#), which is a raw-milk Alpine-style cheese. The project originated when Chef Dan Barber asked one of Jasper Hill's original and most supportive customers, [Saxelby Cheesemongers](#), to source a novel cheese for a [Blue Hill at Stone Barns](#) menu. Construction of an innovative hay-drying facility had just been completed by Jasper Hill in order to supply their cows year-round with locally harvested pasture that would have the best microbial profile for Alpha Tolman, as opposed to more economical and readily available fermented feeds. The building was dedicated to the Farm's late first cropping manager and christened the [Randi Albert Calderwood Cropping Center](#). To honor Saxelby's support and to tie out the story behind what drives value in Alpha Toman, the concept of coating wheels in hay for a unique aroma and appearance was developed.

To create Calderwood, wheels of Alpha Tolman are selected when they are several months old as their rosy, orange washed-rinds are at peak vibrancy. Somewhat finely ground particles of hay are dusted onto the sticky rinds before the wheels are vacuum sealed for several months within the caves. Finally, once the aroma and hay are fused with the cheese, the wheels are unpacked, and the rinds are allowed to bloom and recover from the anaerobic ripening phase. The result is a handsome looking rind with a muted green layer of hay overlaid with dappled white flora. Flavors are similar to the caramelized onion, meaty profile of Alpha Tolman but with aromas of hay and an amplified tropical fruit note.

After the Blue Hill menu cycle, Jasper Hill continued to develop the cheese with Saxelby's commitment to accept all resulting wheels. Their patience and support appear to have paid off in a culmination of quality recognized by the awards. Saxelby continues to be the sole purveyor of the cheese through her two NYC retail locations and growing wholesale business that serves both chefs and retailers. Calderwood can be ordered from their online store found at saxelbycheese.com

Raw milk cheesemaking is at the heart of the company's mission, which makes this award, and the First Place win for Bayley Hazen Blue, especially gratifying.

What explains Jasper Hill Farm's ability to produce the quality of cheese that led to this unprecedented industry recognition?

Jasper Hill has reached a medium scale of production that allows for specialization and focus at each stage of cheesemaking. Raw milk cheesemaking requires a greater level of vigor and expertise in order to make consistently delicious cheese with maximum flavor and complexity.

It takes a dedicated, passionate team of 80 employees to staff Jasper Hill's two small dairy farms and creameries, The Cellars ripening facility and the R.A.C Cropping Center.

The farm 'puts its money where its microbes are', investing in staff and infrastructure to enhance place-based quality. For instance, they employ a full time PHD Microbiologist, Panos Lekkas, to oversee food safety and culture research in an on-site lab. A Director of Ruminant Nutrition (Ruminant Nutritionist Kurt Cotanch) oversees cropping and farming efforts in order to make customized raw cheese-milk in an ecologically sensitive way. Jasper Hill could not be successful without the passion and commitment from this world-class team of people.

"What a thrill," co-founder Mateo Kehler says. "These wins represent the efforts of many dedicated people from our cropping crew and herdsman, through production and affinage to sales and support, it took a village working in concert to pull this off. Our mission statement is to be the standard bearer for quality and innovation in the artisan cheese industry. Andy and I set out to become the reference for artisan cheese in this country 15 years ago and today, because we have the best team, we feel like we are getting close."

Communication lead, Zoe Brickley remarks that "This recognition will fuel our mission to support our working landscape and redefine value in the American food system. We dedicate this one to the mongers, who work the front lines of the industry and help us build our vision one wheel at a time. What an amazing way to celebrate our 15th year!"

More information can be found at Jasper Hill Farm's website: www.jasperhillfarm.com

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