

Our Living Landscape

Grassland Topic Activity Guide: How to Make Cheese

Aim of activity

To know how to make a ricotta-type cheese

Resources

2 litres of full fat milk
150ml cream (optional)
Juice of 2 lemons (or $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp citric acid)
Large pan
Wooden spoon
Large bowl
Colander or sieve
A piece of muslin or a new teatowel
Cooking thermometer or probe
Plastic containers with lids
Salt (optional)



Delivery of activity

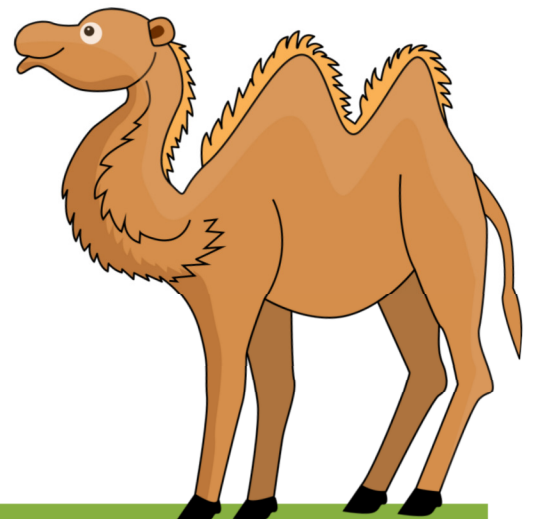
We recommend teachers prepare for delivering this activity by watching our video 'How to make cheese' [[click here](#)]. This video could also be used by children to make cheese at home.

A Step by Step Guide:

1. Introduction

Introduce the activity with a few facts which will grab the children's attention, e.g.:

- There are over 2,000 different kinds of cheese produced across the world – 700 of these are produced in Britain.
- Cheese isn't just made with cow's milk, but also with sheep milk, goat milk and less commonly buffalo milk, horse milk, donkey milk and even camel milk!
- Someone who sells cheese is called a 'cheesemonger'.



2. Key points to get across during the activity

- Cheese is a food made from milk. To make cheese, milk is curdled (heated with an acidic ingredient) to split it into curds (lumps) and whey (liquid).
- Some cheeses are hard (e.g. cheddar cheese) and some cheeses are soft (e.g. ricotta). What makes them different is how they are made: the longer a cheese is left to mature, the more liquid is removed and the harder the cheese will be.
- The key to making good cheese is the quality of the milk: use whole/full fat milk for a tasty, creamy cheese.



3. Instructions

1. Put the milk in the saucepan over a low heat and start to warm gently.
2. Add the lemon juice. Or if using citric acid, put two tablespoons of water in a small bowl or cup. Dissolve $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp of citric acid in the water. Add the citric acid to the milk. Stir in well.
3. Add the cream, if using.
4. Keep stirring, turn up the heat and warm until it reaches past boiling point (if you have a thermometer this will be at 194 degrees Fahrenheit or 90 degrees Celsius). Curds (lumps) will start to form.
5. Remove from the heat and leave to cool for 10 minutes.
6. Put the muslin or teatowel over a colander and place them in a large bowl. Slowly pour out the contents of the saucepan into the muslin-covered colander to separate the curds (lumps) from the whey (liquid). Discard the whey.
7. Take the muslin containing the curds and tie a knot at the top. Hang it over the empty saucepan for 30 minutes to allow the remaining liquid to drip out.
8. Squeeze the cheese and then open up the muslin and take out the cheese. Eat straightaway or keep in an airtight container in the fridge for lunch tomorrow!

4. Ask the group to consider the following question...

What other food products are made from milk apart from cheese?

Butter, yoghurt, cream, ice-cream, condensed milk, fromage frais, custard.

Additional Activities and Further Information

- Butter is even simpler to make than cheese, there are plenty of how to recipes online.
- Milk related activities: <https://www.nfuonline.com/back-british-farming/campaign-news/ten-top-stem-activities-to-celebrate-world-school-milk-day/> and <https://www.foodafactoflife.org.uk/7-11-years/food-commodities/dairy/>
- www.thisisdairyfarming.com
- www.countrysideclassroom.org.uk