



Mallory Ward (right) of Harrisonburg buys fresh goat cheese from Pam Green of Green Haven Farm Cheeses at the Harrisonburg Farmers Market on Saturday. Green Haven sources to city eateries Local Chop and Grill House and Bella Luna Wood-Fired Pizza, in addition to selling at the Harrisonburg Farmers Market, the Woodstock Market, North Mountain Vineyard and Friendly City Food Co-op.

The Fresh Connection

Woodstock Farm Brings Goat Cheese To City Eateries, Farmers Market

Story by HANNAH PITSTICK ■ Photography by AUSTIN BACHAND / DN-R

Pam Green of Green Haven Farm Cheeses Woodstock says she and her family started making cheese to support their goat habit.

"About 15 years ago, we started with two bottle babies, then we bought two pregnant sisters, and now we have about 80 Nubian goats," she says.

Soon they had more milk than they knew what to do with. So Green began experimenting with making a plain soft cheese, flavored cheeses — such as Western Ranch and Dill and Garlic — and then cheddars and feta.

What was supposed to be her retirement project turned into a full-time affair, with five flavors of soft cheese and three flavors of cheddar that she sources to city eateries Local Chop and Grill House and Bella Luna Wood-Fired Pizza, in addition to



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Her husband Billy and her two children milk the goats twice a day at 6 a.m. and 6 p.m., while she makes the soft cheeses fresh each week. She says the cheddar is much more time-consuming and is made during the winter months with-

out preservatives.

The Green property includes 3 acres in the "heart of the Shenandoah Valley" with 10 acres next door that belong to Green's father, which the goats use for grazing when they're not being milked.

Before being milked, the "girls" are fed hay or grain and are kept in the milking barn to avoid the ingestion of stray garlic or other pasture plants that

could cause off flavors in the milk.

Green says milk produced by Nubian goats is richer than the average cow's milk. But it makes a milder goat cheese than those goat cheeses found at the grocery store, which often contain added enzymes that some find off-putting.

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"My husband always asks why I do the tasting every Saturday, but people have gotta try it before they buy it," she says.

The free samples attract the goat cheese fanatics, who gush to Green about the variety of ways they prepare it, and how it's easier on their stomach

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Cheese

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than other cheeses.

“There are a lot of folks who are lactose intolerant that can better handle goat cheese, because the fat globules are broken down, which makes it easier to digest,” she says.

Green says she could compile an entire cookbook of recipes involving goat cheese that customers have told her over the years at the Market. And she’s discovered some impeccable pairings of her own.

She recommends putting the Chives and Garlic Soft Goat Cheese on baked potatoes, no butter necessary, the Dill and Garlic cheese on cucumbers and the Southern Ranch on rosemary breadsticks.

“Rosemary breadsticks from Staff of Life with my Southern Ranch is a really good combination,” she says. “I use that on Saturday mornings to bribe myself here.”

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