

FRANKLIN COUNTY CIDER DAYS

Tasting Notes for Cheese/Cider Pairing

Deerfield Community Center * November 2, 2014

All Cheeses Provided by Provisions Wine, Northampton, MA

Pairing #1:

Laguiole – Laguiole, France

The moist crumbly interior is bursting with tang! And it has a rich, smooth mouthfeel. Its round, buttery notes finish slightly grassy. A sort of relative of cheddar, Laguiole is perfect with apples and crusty bread. It has the added benefit of being completely accessible for picky eaters and yet still interesting for cheese lovers!

RAW COW

Averill Farms Hard Cider -- The Cidery at Averill Farms, Washington Depot, Connecticut

This cider is nearly dry and still, as were the traditional ciders of New England. It has a palate-cleansing balance of fruit, astringency, and acid, keeping the apple flavor at the forefront. 6.9% abv.

Pairing #2:

Fontina Val D'Aosta – Val D'Aosta Region, Italy

This wheel, in all its plumpness tastes of sweet alpine cow's milk, fruit, and whispers of earth and grass. It has a mellow sweetness that expertly expresses the quality of the raw milk used in its production. Fontina is one of the all-time best melters, so try it in a grilled cheese, mac'n'cheese, or fondue!

RAW COW

Melded -- Uncle John's Cider Mill, St. Johns, Michigan

This cider is from Uncle John's premium line of ciders. The name Melded comes from the variety of English, French, and American cider apples that are blended to produce it (Kingston Black, Porter's Perfection, Dabinett, Pomme Gris, Domaine, Calville Blanc, Wickson, Harrison, and Baldwin to name a few). Very dry and sparkling; ripe apple and citrus notes; soft tannins and mild acidity; 6.5% abv.

Pairing #3:

Eleven Brothers – Boston Post Dairy, Enosburg, Vermont

A 2013 American Cheese Society award winner! This is one of our favorite hard aged goat milk cheeses and we think you'll agree! It is hard and off-dry in texture, and it possesses a fully goaty flavor with hints of earthiness. Overall the flavors are clean and fresh. Good acidity. Well-balanced salt. A perfect aged goat cheese.

RAW GOAT

Extra Dry Still -- Farnum Hill Ciders, Lebanon, New Hampshire

Pale-gold and radically dry, Extra Dry Still displays its richness and range of fruit more vividly than Extra Dry, simply because it is completely without carbonation. Made from a range of late-harvest, difficult cider apple varieties, and nothing else; 7.5% abv.

Pairing #4

Dorset – Consider Bardwell Farm, West Pawlet, Vermont

Deliciously buttery with just a touch of funk from the washed rind. The texture is supple like a French Raclette which adds to its buttery attitude. This makes it perfect for bubbly, champagne-like wines! Since the Eden Sparkling Cider is double-fermented with champagne yeast, it's the perfect pairing for this cheese.

RAW COW

Sparkling Dry Cider -- Eden Ice Cider, West Charleston, Vermont

Made with locally grown apples, including traditional heirloom and cider varieties. Kingston Black, a classic British cider variety, accounts for 50 percent of the juice. Fermented and aged in French oak puncheons for a year, then bottled with a secondary fermentation that is created with additional juice rather than sugar. After another six months each bottle is hand-disgorged in a careful process that removes the yeast but retains the vibrant natural effervescence of the in-bottle fermentation. Full-flavored, tannic, clean, and very dry, with a champagne-like mouthfeel and bright acidity. 8.5% abv.

Pairing #5

Cabot Clothbound Cheddar – Cabot Cheese and Jasper Hill Cellars,
Peacham, Vermont

This quintessential and complex cheddar is hardwired into every New Englander's craving center. Hard, tender, and crumbly; sharp, mushroomy, dreamy creamy, and all around bold. Great with savory OR sweet pairings. How does the saying go? "Apple pie without the cheese is like a kiss without the squeeze!"

COW

Ashton Blend - Headwater Cider Company, Hawley, MA

A blend combining North American dessert varieties like Honeycrisp, McIntosh, and Cortland with two classic English bittersweets (Ashton Bitter and Ellis Bitter). The European apples lend a nice structure and balance to this off-dry cider. 8% abv.

Pairing #6

Bayley Hazen Blue – Jasper Hill Farm, Greensboro, Vermont

An addictive and intriguing raw milk blue cheese crafted by Mateo Kehler. Natural-rinded and crumbly but still deliciously creamy in flavor. Its unmistakable cowy and nutty character is omnipresent and drives this cheese's personality. Look for notes of anise, white pepper, and leather in the finish. Blue cheeses pair particularly well with dessert wines like Port, Sauternes, and Apfel Eis!

RAW COW

McIntosh, Wheel-View Orchard ("Ode to T") – West County Cider,
Colrain, Massachusetts

Made from 100% McIntosh apples. A very pure expression of Mac and ripeness, very aromatic and a touch sweet. Named in honor of the late, great Dean of American Cider, Terry Maloney, founding cidemaker at West County Cider.