

**For Immediate Release**

**Tickets are selling fast!**



## **CALIFORNIA'S BIGGEST CHEESE PARTY TURNS 20**

*A delicious showcase of California cheesemakers and artisan food and beverage producers*

SANTA ROSA, Calif.—March 9, 2026—If you love cheese, this is your weekend. The 20th Annual California Artisan Cheese Festival returns March 20–22, 2026, bringing together the state's most celebrated cheesemakers and artisan food and beverage producers. The grand finale Artisan Cheese Tasting and Marketplace is the cheese shop of your dreams—featuring 20 cheesemakers offering more than 100 cheeses to taste and buy; and over 80 vendors, including cheese board accompaniments, wine, beer, chef demos, authors, live music, and more. March 22, 2026, 12:00 PM to 4:00 PM at Grace Pavilion, Sonoma County Fairgrounds, Santa Rosa.

[Tickets for the California Artisan Cheese Festival](#)

Savor the moment—the Marketplace is where the cheese community truly comes together. For one delicious afternoon, Grace Pavilion becomes the biggest cheese celebration in California—a gathering place for devoted turophiles and curious newcomers alike. Guests can taste cheeses made from cow, goat, sheep, and buffalo milk, explore everything from creamy Bries and washed-rind cheeses to raclette, aged classics, ghee, and even frozen desserts like ice cream. Best of all, visitors can meet the makers behind the cheese—from legendary, multi-generational producers to exciting new cheesemakers shaping the future of the craft. It's a celebration of the creativity, science, and alchemy that transforms milk into the extraordinary foods we love.

Turophiles can sample everything from exciting new releases, like Point Reyes Farmstead Cheese Company's California Brie and Beehive Cheese's Bee Chive to fan favorites and rare finds such as Achadinha's flavored cheese curds and Pennyroyal Farm's first-of-spring Laychee.

The Marketplace offers plenty of delicious discoveries, including the perfect accompaniments for building beautiful cheese boards—charcuterie, honey, chocolate, preserves, olive oils, miso and artisan pantry treats designed for pairing. Cheese lovers can hunt for standout selections, earn bragging rights for their favorite finds, and stock up so the cheese party can continue at home. Each attendee receives an insulated tote bag that makes it easy to carry their Marketplace haul, while picnic tables and live music invite guests to linger and enjoy the festive atmosphere. Visitors can also stop by the Beer and Wine Garden and purchase full-sized pours from Sonoma favorites: Old Caz Beer, Gowan's Cider, and Woodenhead Wine, (21+), and refuel with hearty sandwiches and breads and pastries available on site.

Be there at 12:00 PM for the **Proclamation Presentation** celebrating the 20th anniversaries of the California Artisan Cheese Guild and the California Artisan Cheese Festival during the Sunday Marketplace.

The ceremony will feature a State Proclamation signed by Governor Gavin Newsom of California and supported by the Sonoma County Assembly delegation. Guild and Festival founders, board members, and invited officials will join the presentation honoring two decades of leadership in California's artisan cheese community.

"We're deeply honored that the State of California is recognizing the California Artisan Cheese Guild and the Festival with this proclamation," says Luciana Villanueva, President of the California Artisan Cheese Guild. "What began as a small gathering of passionate cheesemakers has grown into a vibrant community that celebrates craftsmanship, agriculture, and the joy of sharing cheese. It's especially meaningful to recognize the founders and the many makers who have helped shape California into one of the world's great cheese regions."

#### [2026 Marketplace and Proclamation Details](#)

#### Don't Miss the **Author's Corner presented by the California Artisan Cheese Guild**

Featuring cheesemaker Tamara Hicks, author of *Feasts on the Farm: Over 60 Seasonal Recipes and Stories*, and Trevor Warmedahl with his newly released book, *Cheese Trekking: How Microbes, Landscape, Livestock, and Human Cultures Shape Terroir*. Books available for purchase.

Cheese fans who want a head start before the doors open at noon can still get tickets for **VIP Bubbles + Bites | Early Entry** that gets you into the Marketplace an hour before the crowd arrives. Guests of Bubbles + Bites will enjoy a glass of Goldeneye bubbly paired with elevated brunch bites. Radio host and food world consultant Clark Wolf will be in conversation with Jill Giacomini Basch and Lynn Giacomini Stray, two of the three sisters who founded Point Reyes Farmstead Cheese Company.

"There are limited tickets available for our seminar and pairing discussions, the Honey, Heritage, and Cultured Classics Tour, and Sunday's VIP Bubbles + Bites, which gets you early entry into the grand finale Artisan Cheese Tasting & Marketplace," says Alyssa Gilbert, Executive Director of the California Artisan Cheese Guild and Festival, "It's going to be an amazing celebration of cheese and community!"

**For event updates and details, and to purchase tickets to the California Artisan Cheese Festival visit, <http://www.artisancheesefestival.com/>**

## The Schedule and Details

### Sunday, March 22: Artisan Cheese Tasting & Marketplace

*Tickets Available!*

**VIP Bubbles + Bites | Early Entry to Artisan Cheese Tasting & Marketplace:** 9:45am at Saralee and Richard's Barn; Early Entry to the Marketplace 11:00 AM - 4:00 PM, \$145 per person

**General Admission:** 12:00 PM - 4:00 PM, \$85 per person, \$30 for children ages 2-12

Location: Sonoma County Fairgrounds and Event Center, 1350 Bennett Valley Road, Santa Rosa.

<https://artisancheesefestival.com/schedule/marketplace/>

*Note: New participants to this year's Marketplace are in **bold font**:*

**Cheesemakers:** Achadinha Cheese Company, Beehive Cheese, CalPoly Creamery, Cowgirl Creamery, Cypress Grove, Fiscalini Farmstead Cheese Company, Fresno State Creamery, **JUST Creamery**, Laura Chenel, Marin French Cheese Co., Mt. Eitan Cheese, **Nalwaya Foods**, Nicasio Valley Cheese Co., Pacific Coast Coalition - Dairy Business Innovation Initiative, Pennyroyal Farm, Point Reyes Farmstead Cheese Co., Spenker Family Farm, Tomales Farmstead Creamery, Valley Ford Cheese & Creamery, Wm. Cofield Cheesemakers

**Meats and charcuterie:** **BAYKT Snacks**, **Bonjerk**, By Three Bears, Fabrique Delices

**Beer, Wine, Cider, and Spirits:** Alley 6 Craft Distillery, **Amalgam Wines**, Ambix Spirits, **Anderson Valley Wines**, Barber Lee Spirits, Black Kite Cellars, G & C Lurton Vineyards, Goat Rock Cider | Nectar Ciders, Goldeneye Winery, Gowan's Heirloom Cider, Griffio Distillery, Heidrun Meadery, Hiveworks Mead, Kokomo Wines, Longboard Vineyards, Matanzas Creek Winery, Monroy Wines, Montagne Russe Wines, Old Caz Beer, **Spicy Vines**, Woodenhead

**Non-alcoholic beverages:** Fabula Tea, **Land + Local**, **Laura's Apples**, Mendocino Lavender

**Craft Food:** Cult Crackers, **Effie's Homemade**, Gold Ridge Organic Farms, **Golden Honeybees**, **Laura's Apples**, **Lucky Dog Hot Sauce**, McEvoy Ranch, **Mendo Grass**, Mendocino Lavender, **Shared Cultures**, Spiced Up, Stella's Table, **The Caviar Co.**, **Tree Folk**

**Confections + Desserts:** Amapola Artisanal Treats, Big Jalm, CocoTutti Chocolates, David Upchurch Chocolatier, **De La Creamery**, Kindred Caramels, Koophaus Apiaries, Sarmentine Organic French Bakery, Sonoma Sauces, Sonoma Syrup Co., Volo Chocolate.

**Merchant:** **Mendocino Lavender**, **Point Reyes Lavender Company**, **SC Woodcrafts**, West Coast VibeZ – Resin Design

**Education and Community:** **Agricultural Institute of Marin**, **Author's Corner presented by California Artisan Cheese Guild**, California Artisan Cheese Guild, California Milk Advisory Board, Cheese Trail, **Chef's Corner presented by AIM**, Farm Fresh To You, Oliver's Market, **Travel + Leisure**, **Yolo Fill Co.**

**Prepared Food:** Sarmentine - Organic French Bakery

See the complete Marketplace Participants list at:

<https://artisancheesefestival.com/marketplace-participants/>

### **20th Annual California Artisan Cheese Festival**

- When: Friday, Saturday and Sunday, March 20-22, 2026
- Where: In and around Sonoma County. The Festival's signature Artisan Cheese Tasting and Marketplace takes place at Grace Pavilion, Sonoma County Fairgrounds, 1350 Bennett Valley Road, Santa Rosa, CA 95404
- Tickets: On sale now at [ArtisanCheeseFestival.com](https://ArtisanCheeseFestival.com).

### **2026 Sponsors:**

**Community Sponsors:** Donald & Maureen Green Foundation, City of Santa Rosa, Visit Santa Rosa **Attending Industry Sponsors:** Dairy Delivery, Gold Ridge Organic Farms **Ambassador Sponsors:** Beehive Cheese, California Milk Advisory Board, Cowgirl Creamery, Culture Magazine, Point Reyes Farmstead Cheese Co., Pure Luxury Transportation, Qualtech American Inc. **Patron Sponsors:** Cypress Grove, Nicasio Valley Cheese Company, Oliver's Market **Bubbles + Bites Sponsor:** Goldeneye Anderson Valley **Beer and Wine Garden Sponsors:** Gowan's Heirloom Cider, Old Caz Beer, Woodenhead

See the complete Sponsors list at: <https://artisancheesefestival.com/sponsors/>

**Premier Hotel Partner:** The Flamingo Resort & Spa is the Premier Hotel Partner of the 2026 California Artisan Cheese Festival.

See the complete Hotels list at: <https://artisancheesefestival.com/hotels/>

### **About California Artisan Cheese Festival**

A 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization, the California Artisan Cheese Festival strives to increase cheese appreciation, educate consumers about artisan cheeses, support the cheesemaking community and its sustainability, and celebrate the creations of California's many farmers and cheesemakers. The festival began in March 2007 as the first-ever, weekend-long celebration and exploration of handcrafted cheeses, foods, wines, and beers from California. In keeping with its dedication to the community, the Artisan Cheese Festival has donated over \$225,000 to nonprofit partners that support local sustainable agriculture, including the California Artisan Cheese Guild. For more information about the California Artisan Cheese Festival, visit <http://www.artisancheesefestival.com/> or follow @caartisancheesefestival on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

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Press Materials: [CACF Visual Assets for Media](#)