



Noreen's Kitchen

Homemade Mozzarella Cheese

Ingredients

Yield: 1 pound of cheese per gallon of milk, approximate

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1 gallon dairy fresh milk, not ultra pasteurized
1/4 cup cool purified water (not tap water)
1 1/2 teaspoons citric acid (additive free)
1/4 cup cool purified water (not tap water)
1/2 tablet cheese rennet (not Junket)
1 teaspoon of salt or to taste

Equipment

Stainless steel stock pot at least 6 quart
Stainless steel slotted spoon
stainless steel colander
Microwave safe bowl
Instant read thermometer

Step by Step Instructions

****NOTE**** Begin with extremely clean tools, utensils and cooking vessel. Wipe down cooking area with a water and bleach solution. Pots and tools should be sterilized with hot water and bleach, however they will need to be thoroughly dried and allowed to sit for at least 15 minutes for the chlorine to dissipate. Chlorine will kill the rennet and cause your cheese to fail every time.

To begin, dissolve the citric acid in 1/4 cup of cool, purified water.

Pour this mixture into the cooking pot.

Add milk to the pot and stir vigorously with slotted spoon for 30 seconds. It is important to get thorough distribution of the citric acid otherwise the cheese will not set a proper curd.

Heat milk on low until it reaches 88 to 90 degrees on an instant read thermometer, stirring often to distribute heat and never leaving to go do something else.

When temperature has almost reached 88 to 90 degrees, fully dissolve 1/2 rennet tablet into 1/4 cup of purified water. Don't do this too early because the rennet will lose its effectiveness after 15 minutes in the water. Do it as close to when you will need it as possible.

When proper temperature is reached, remove pot from burner and place on a towel on your counter or workspace. Gently pour dissolved rennet mixture through the slotted spoon. This will help to better distribute the rennet.

Now using a gentle up and down pumping motion with your spoon, stir for 10 seconds, but no longer.

Place lid on pot and allow to sit for 35 minutes.

After 35 minutes check to see if the milk has set a curd. Your milk should look like a thick custard and begin to pull away from the side. You should also see the yellowish whey or liquid surrounding the mass of milk. If your milk has not set a proper curd, allow it to sit for another 10 minutes.

When mass has become solid you will need to cut the curd.

Cut the curd by using a very long knife. I use a frosting spatula to cut it into 1 inch cubes.

Twist the pot quickly to break up the curd and allow the whey to come between them. Then gently stir around the outside of the mass so as not to break up the curd too much.

Heat the mixture to 105 to 108 degrees then remove from the burner and cover and allow to sit for 30 minutes. Swirl the pan every 10 minutes to distribute the heat properly. This will help the curd to set.

Now it is time to drain the curd.

Place your colander into a larger bowl to catch any liquid from the curd.

Gently lift the curd from the whey and place into the colander.

Allow the curd to drain a bit then gently press, but not too hard, you don't want your curd to be pressed through the colander. Press to allow some of the liquid to release.

Once a good portion of the whey has been released from the mass, it should start to come together.

Place the mass into a microwave safe bowl or large 8 cup measure with a handle.

Place into the microwave for 1 minute. NOTE: If you have a very powerful microwave, put it on half power during this process so you don't scorch the cheese.

Remove from microwave and drain off a bit more whey.

Begin to somewhat knead the mass to distribute the heat, not too much. If you can see that the cheese is starting to knit together then you will know that your cheese is going to be successful. Drain off any liquid that has collected during the kneading process.

Return to microwave for another 30 seconds. Knead again and you should feel the cheese begin to change. Pressing whey out after each trip to the microwave until little whey will come out.

Test your cheese to see if it will stretch. Be careful because it will be hot so sometimes I will use a wooden spatula to assist with pressing the water and stretching the cheese.

Your cheese will be successful once you can stretch it and this is called spinning. spin and stretch your cheese for a few minutes until you notice it take on a nice shiny appearance.

Form your cheese into the desired shape then plunge into an ice water bath for 15 minutes.

Remove from ice bath and dry the surface with a paper towel. Now you are free to enjoy your fresh mozzarella cheese!

You should get approximately 1 pound of cheese for every gallon of milk used.

ENJOY!