



CYPRESS GROVE CHEVRE BACKGROUND AND BIO

Mary Keehn Founder, Owner & Master Cheesemaker



Like many entrepreneurs, Mary Keehn didn't set out to revolutionize a marketplace. Rather, she planted the roots for Cypress Grove Chevre by pursuing a simple desire to provide the freshest, healthiest milk for her children. In the early 1970s, when Mary began raising a small herd of Alpine dairy goats, handcrafted artisanal cheese was not widely available in America, and what there was of it was largely imported from Europe.

Mary's passion for an authentic rural farm lifestyle and her skill at raising goats soon led to an unforeseen opportunity: she had so much surplus goat's milk that she began to explore the art of cheesemaking in her home kitchen. She soon discovered a natural affinity for crafting goat cheeses with subtle, delicate flavors and dreamily smooth textures.

With the encouragement and support of family and friends, in 1983 Mary parlayed her hobby into a full-fledged business with Cypress Grove Chevre. She was part of a pioneering group of American cheesemakers, many of them women, who shared a vision for a new kind of American cheese: handcrafted according to traditional methods and made naturally with the best quality ingredients. Collectively, these artisan-entrepreneurs created an entirely new category of American specialty cheese that today receives consistent acclaim on a national and international stage.

Cypress Grove Chevre has been in the cheesemaking business in its beloved Northern California coastal community of Arcata for more than 25 years and Mary Keehn's enthusiasm for cheesemaking and her passion for inventing exquisite new cheeses has not waned. She leads a talented team of cheesemakers who share her commitment to craft and community, and together their efforts continue to bring national and international awards for Cypress Grove, including 2007 honors from the NASFT for Best Product Line.

To arrange an interview with Master Cheesemaker Mary, please contact [Kris Ellenberg](#), 310-430-1772 or [Kathi Johnson](#), 310-649-4781.

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