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BY ANN JOHNSON-STROMBERG**



**ARCATA CHEESE PRODUCER MAKING THE BEST OUT OF HUMBOLDT FOG** — (excerpts) ...with help from her family in 1983 [Mary Keehn] scraped together enough money to purchase a 150 gallon pasteurizer and opened her own company in McKinleyville and called it Cypress Grove Chevre. At the time, Keehn only knew of one other existing goat cheese producer in the country...

Over the years the company grew slowly but steadily and then suddenly four years ago Cypress Grove Chevre reached critical mass. Cypress Grove has grown 30 percent each year for the past four years, and Keehn says bringing her goods to the International Fancy Foods and Confection Show in San Francisco was a real turning point for her. Now with 37 employees and a few World Cheese Awards under her belt, Keehn is feeling pretty good about her humble beginnings...

In November, Cypress Grove settled into its new home near the bottoms in Arcata on a parcel of land that has been a dairy since the 1800s. When researching the property she found out that in 1915, there was a dairy there by the name of Cypress Grove, and Keehn knew it was meant to be.

In the future, Keehn hopes to convince more local dairy farmers to add goats to their milking string to keep up with the demand for goat cheese. She couldn't say exactly how many pounds of cheese they produce every year, because her cheese is sold by the variety of cheese.

"Let's put it this way," Keehn said, "we've gone from shipping boxes to shipping pallets."

**CYPRESS GROVE CHEVRE**

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