



RNA TEACHERS CHEESE MAKING WORKSHOP

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- 1. When and where are the workshops held?**
The workshops will be held at the Brisbane Showgrounds (600 Gregory Terrace, Bowen Hills) from *Monday 8 to Thursday 11 May 2023*.
- 2. How do the workshops tie in with the school curriculum?**
Nowhere else in Australia offers educators free cheese making workshops combined with student cheese making competitions. This program is a unique, hands-on professional development activity for teachers and is the only course approved by Dairy Food Safety Authority for cheese making in classrooms. These workshops assist primary students at a basic level – discovering how cheese is made, where it comes from and the dairy industry as a whole. Within the Secondary curriculum, the cheese making unit crosses over general science subjects such as Chemistry (Year 10), Biology, Food Studies (Home Economics) and Science 21.
- 3. Who teaches the workshops?**
Internationally renowned dairy expert Russell Smith runs the cheese making workshops. Russell is a qualified cheese maker who has been in the industry for more than 25 years. He is invited to judge at dairy competitions around the world including the World Cheese Championships in the USA and the Royal Queensland Food and Wine Show in Brisbane, run by the RNA.
- 4. Why should two participants from each school attend?**
Due to the complexity of the cheese making process, it is a good idea to have a partner so that note taking and photos can be shared.
- 5. Why are there only eight participants per workshop?**
The workshops are hands-on and intensive. Russell Smith provides a one-on-one tuition for workshop participants.
- 6. Can I register for the Blue Cheese workshop?**
You can only participate in the Blue Cheese workshop if you have previously completed the Camembert workshop.
- 7. If I've completed a workshop previously, can I still take part?**
Teachers who have previously participated and would like a refresher course can register as an observer.
- 8. What time do the workshops start?**
Workshop participants are to arrive at the venue at 8am.
- 9. How long are the workshops?**
Each workshop runs for approximately six hours with an hour of cheese making theory which relates to the different styles of cheese being made (camembert and blue). This includes information on the starter culture used and the chemistry of the processes involved and anticipated outcomes. This is followed by a practical, hands-on cheese making session on the maturation process that takes place over the following six to seven weeks.



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- 10. Do I need to bring anything with me to the workshops?**
No, all you need is yourself and a notebook. You are able to take photos of the process to assist you with your teaching back in the classroom. We will provide you with everything else.
- 11. How much class time do I set aside in my teaching program to make cheese?**
Be prepared to set aside at least between 3 to 4 hours teaching time.
- 12. Do my students have to compete in the Royal Queensland Show (Ekka) Student Made Cheese competition?**
All schools accepted into the workshops are required to enter the Student Made Cheese competition. The competition is a chance for your students to put their newly developed skills to the test and compete against other students and more importantly compare themselves against 'real world' industry standards. After the judging of the cheese is completed and the results are announced, the judges conduct tutorials with the students. This process is invaluable to both the teachers and the students as they are striving to achieve an industry benchmark.
- 13. Are the workshops free to attend?**
Yes, the workshops are free to participate in. Due to high demand for the workshops, we have schools on a wait list each year. We ask that accepted schools confirm their acceptance by *31 March 2023*. Any cancellations after this time will incur the school a \$300 administrative fee per participant.
- 14. How much will it cost my school to make cheese?**
An approximate maximum one-off expenditure of \$425 on non-consumables and an annual expenditure of around \$245 on consumables depending on student numbers. You will find a list of equipment you need to purchase to make cheese on the competition website.
- 15. Are documents required?**
Participants are required to fill out a Food Safety Plan throughout the workshop process, have your students fill out the required pages and submit it to the RNA by the requested date.
- 16. Does the school need to have a commercial kitchen for the students to make cheese?**
It is not necessary. You must be able to refrigerate the cheese at a constant temperature of 7-8°C. The easiest way to maintain the maturation temperature of your cheeses is to connect an external thermostat (cost: \$20-\$80) to a fridge which can then be set at 12-13°C for the initial maturation which takes around 9-12 days. These are readily available at brewing supply shops and online.