

First all for those that don't know me, I am Horace Bixby. A couple of years ago I had a cheese making instruction company that has since ceased to exist. The name of the company was Bix The Cheese Guy.

In order to make this demonstration run smoother I had to make some tools and short cuts to shorten the process time and make it more efficient. As a result I have created several gadgets.

In order to make this demonstration orderly, I will go through the general steps of making cheese and present my gadgets along the way.

## Step 1

After deciding what cheese you want to make and obtaining the recipe you will use you must select a vessel in which to make the cheese. If using 2 gallons or less milk I recommend using the 2 pot method. If doubling the recipe or using over 2 gallons of milk I recommend using a vat(I use a food warmer purchased from [webstaurant.com](http://webstaurant.com)). The cost of the vat alone was around \$89.00. I also purchase a 4 gallon insert tray. I normally add 3/4 gallons of water under the insert for good heat distribution. I believe glycol might be even better. I use two thermometers when I heat the milk. The first thermometer is inserted into the milk under the lid. Or in the case of the vat into the thermowell in the lid. The 2nd thermometer monitors the water in the outer pot of the 2 pot system or under the insert of the vat

I simultaneously place cheese cloth/muslin and draining bags in another pot with 2 gallons of water and a lid. When this comes to boil, I allow it to simmer for at least 15 minutes to sterilize the cloths.

I heat up the 2 pot system while monitoring my thermometers. When the inner pot(milk) approaches my prescribed recipe temperature I make certain the outer pot temperature is only 5-10 degrees higher than the milk temperature. On the vat I plug the vat into power the turn the temperature knob until I hear the thermostat kick in. I keep a close eye on the water temperature under the insert. When milk temperature is around 5 degrees below the temperature called for in the recipe I will most often pull the insert out of the vat and rotate 90 degrees to rest across the vat. Very often the milk will coast close to recipe prescribed temperature. I do occasional stirring using my curd knife(cake icing spreader which is available at kitchen supply stores).

## Step 2

I follow recipe instructions for adding cultures, Calcium Chloride and rennet. When it is time to add the rennet you might want to check the pH to see if it is where you want it. I brought 2 sample pH meters. One is high end and very accurate while the other is still very accurate but more modestly priced.

Add the rennet per recipe then wait for clean break. After 45 minutes or what is called for in the recipe check for clean break using the curd knife.

### Step 3

If there is a clean break the recipe will call for cutting the curd. You can cut the curd with the curd knife or with a curd cutter like the one I brought. If using the curd Knife make vertical 1/2 inch cuts parallel then do same horizontally. Next hold curd knife at a low angle and make more cuts in 2 axes.

If you have a curd cutter like mine you only need to make vertical then horizontal parallel passes.

Many recipes call for removal of whey from curd. This can be facilitated with a semi-perforated ladel for the 2 pot system. For the vat I use a semi-perforated pot.

When ready to remove the curds place a ss pasta colander in one side of clean sink. Open the lid of sterilized cloths then remove a draining bag. Spray the ss pasta colander with Star San solution. Next place draining bag in ss colander. drape top of bag around sides of colander.

### Step 4

Use a ss spoon, perforated or not to move the curds to molds place on large food grade cutting board. Cheese cloth or muslin is placed in mold first with ends draped over sides of mold.

**Note:** colander may be moved and placed over large 6.5+ gallon clean sanitary bucket like ones used in home brewing.

When filling the molds you may use a meat pounder such as what I have brought for tamping down the cheese. when mold is filled place tamper near an edge the pull up on cheese cloth. Do this all away around the mold. By lifting the mold carefully you can check your progress and adjust accordingly.

### Step 5

Next place mold in cheese press with weight prescribed in the recipe. After pressing and flipping according to directions cheese can be removed from press and placed on mats or on ss drying rack in a tray which I will show. Cheese can be covered then placed in a cheese cave(temperature controlled refrigerator. Or can be placed on a mat in a food grade vented container.

### Step 6

Mold can be removed and controlled by periodically rubbing down exterior of cheese with a dedicated sponge and a near saturate vinegar/brine solution. Cream wax may be applied to clean cheese using synthetic bbq brush(good for easy cleaning). Cream wax is good for pre-hard waxing to prevent pin holes in hard wax from bleeding through. A

new product mold inhibitor is available for purchase from the cheesemaker.com. He carries cream as does the beverage people.com online.