

## FFF Feta Cheese

Our Feta cheese is a combination of Margaret Morris's recipe and Fiasco Farms' technique. It took me 4 years to get just what Marcia likes in a feta – one that holds up in the brine and is firm but crumbles. It's not hard, it does take some time but, it's worth it. We have had Feta keep in the brine for up to 8 months.

### Ingredients:

- 1.5 gallons of milk (raw or pasteurized – not ultra-pasteurized)
- ¼ teaspoon Mesophilic DVI culture (MA011, MA100, MA 110) or 1/2 cup buttermilk
- 1/8 teaspoon lipase (optional – really need it for cow's milk)
- ½ teaspoon calcium chloride (for goat's milk and pasteurized cow's milk)
- ½ teaspoon single strength rennet
- Kosher salt

### Equipment:

- Stainless steel pot that holds 1.5 gallons
- Stainless steel slotted ladle/spoon or whisk
- Measuring cups & spoons
- Thermometer
- Cheese cloth
- Square or round food grade “mold” with draining holes
- Cutting/flipping boards
- Draining/drying container with a raised mat
- 6 quart glass or plastic container for brining and storage  
(we use a restaurant plastic container with a large mouth – holds 2 batches)

### Procedure:

Sterilize all of your equipment (ladle/spoon/whisk, measuring cups & spoons, and a saucer) in your cheese pot – boil for 5 – 10 minutes. Sterilize your thermometer in a bleach solution.

Remove equipment from cheese pot. Pour water into a stopped up sink. Add 1.5 gallons milk to the pot. Set the pot into the sink, begin stirring and checking the temperature. Heat the milk to 85 degrees and remove. Add culture, (add lipase if using) let sit 3 – 5 minutes and then stir top to bottom 20 strokes. Cover the pot and let ripen for 45 minutes.

After 45 minutes – add ½ teaspoon calcium chloride diluted in ¼ cup water and stir 4-5 strokes, add ½ teaspoon rennet diluted in ¼ cup water and stir 20 strokes. Cover the pot for 30-45 minutes. Sterilize your mold and draining container.

Test for a clean break and then cut curds into ½ inch cubes. Let rest for 5 minutes. Gently stir the cubes for 20 minutes at 86 degrees. For a firmer texture cook the curds to 90 degrees. ( I do my “cooking” in a sink of hot water).

Allow the curds to settle to the bottom of the pot for 5 -10 minutes before draining. Then drain off the whey and spoon/ladle into a raised mold for draining. Drain for 6 – 8 hours flipping 2-3 times. Cut into chunks and dry on a raised cheese mat for 1-2 days. Salt the top of the cheese with Kosher salt, then turn and salt again – use cheese cloth to cover and drain as needed.

Prepare brine: Boil ½ to ¾ cup (8 oz) Kosher salt in ½ to ¾ gallon of water (2 – 3 quarts), cool completely. Add cooled brine and dried feta to a container that you can fit a saucer on top to keep the cheese completely submerged. You can use the feta as and when you choose. We store it in the brine up to 8 months.