

Jasper Hill Farm's Winnimere Once Again Named Best American Cheese

A terroir-driven, Vermont-made cheese wins the 2026 American Cheese Society Competition.

LOUISVILLE, KY, KY, UNITED STATES, July 10, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Jasper Hill Farm](#) has been recognized for another Best of Show win at the [American Cheese Society](#) competition. Winners were announced on Wednesday evening during the ACS's Annual Conference. Several other Jasper Hill Farm offerings were also recognized for Best in Category wins, along with a record number of other awards for Vermont-made, artisan cheeses. Two of Jasper Hill Farm's cheeses, Winnimere and Willoughby, were among the Top 10 scorers of over 1,600 entries from all over North America.



Winnimere by Jasper Hill Farm, ACS 2026 Best of Show Winner

Winnimere, the winning cheese, is a raw milk soft-ripened cheese made from Jasper Hill Farm's own herd. The cheese is only made in fall and winter when the cows are eating dry summer hay and their milk is richest in butterfat. Young wheels are wrapped with a strip of locally harvested spruce bark for additional structure and a woodsy aroma note. During cave ripening, the cheese is washed with a salt brine, which helps to develop a rosy natural rind and characteristic meaty, smoky flavors. Winnimere is best served by peeling back a portion of the top rind and spooning the spreadable interior onto rye bread alongside a farmhouse ale or, appropriately, a fine Kentucky Bourbon.

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*Mateo Kehler, Head
Cheesemaker*

Jasper Hill Farm's co-founder and head cheesemaker,

Mateo Kehler, remarks, “Cheese is a powerful force for good. Our cheeses create a sense of identity and connection to place. They're designed to sustain a community within a landscape

over generations. This approach requires total commitment to a philosophy of production that values quality over quantity, but it allows us to reach for something beyond the ordinary, for the sake of something real, something special.”

Jasper Hill Farm has won ACS Best of Show four times in previous competitions (2006, 2013, 2018, 2022) and has made a Runner-up Best of Show or Best of Show cheese ripened/entered by a collaborator on six occasions (2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2022, 2025). Winnimere earned Best of Show once prior in 2013.

After more than two decades of crafting raw milk cheese from pastured cows, Jasper Hill Farm is a pioneer of the New American Artisan Cheese Movement, which emerged as a response to the corrosive effects of commodity market forces on rural communities. Vermont is a hotbed of this value-added production model, evidenced by the fact that all fifteen cheesemakers who entered the competition nabbed a medal for a total of 54 ribbons—about 12% of the total awards (for a state representing only .1% of the North American Population). By focusing on quality over quantity, Vermont cheesemakers have managed to keep family farms afloat throughout decades of market volatility and in doing so, have bolstered the state’s reputation for craftsmanship and bucolic charm. More from the [Vermont Cheese Council](#) can be found here.

It’s notable that Winnimere, this year’s Best in Show, is made with the independent farm’s own raw milk. Raw milk cheesemaking is a specialized feat, requiring a dedicated milk source and extremely high standards of quality throughout the process. This ultimate attention to detail can yield exceptional results made possible, in part, by the natural flora preserved in the milk. Jasper Hill Farm is proud to have cultivated a positive working relationship with regulators and policymakers by demonstrating that raw milk cheese can be made safely, especially when the latest scientific understanding is integrated with traditional methods that have been continuously developed for thousands of years.

About a third of Jasper Hill Farm’s cheeses are made from the raw milk of their own herd in a dedicated creamery. Another third of their collection is made in a creamery within The Vermont Food Venture Center from the pasteurized milk of neighboring farms, primarily three pasture-based, 50 cow dairies. These partners are paid a premium for their milk, currently around double the commodity rate, which creates a pathway for these family-scale farms to endure into the next generation. The rest of the collection is made by farmer-owned Cabot Cooperative Creamery for cave-ripening with the Cellars at Jasper Hill. This unprecedented collaboration has paved the way for Jasper Hill’s measured growth and positive impact on their rural economy. At least one cheese from each of these three segments was recognized with a Gold Medal in their respective classes.

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