Cheese Riot Wins Food Innovation Award for Bringing Hospitality-Inspired Food Experiences into the Home



DONCASTER, UNITED KINGDOM, September 1, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Yorkshire-based Cheese Riot has been named the Innovative Food Product winner at the Business Awards UK 2026 Food Industry Awards, marking the latest milestone for a business that has grown from a new venture into an award-winning food brand in under two years.

Founded by hospitality professional Hayley Rage, Cheese Riot takes a different approach to artisan cheese. Rather than simply supplying products, they create curated food and drink experiences that bring together independent producers, storytelling, tasting guidance, carefully matched drinks and music.

Cheese Riot's monthly cheese and drink pairing boxes are built around themes and designed as an evening to enjoy rather than a conventional food delivery. Alongside the products themselves, they introduce customers to the people and places behind the cheese and drinks, with tasting notes, producer stories and curated playlists forming part of each box.

The concept draws heavily on Rage's more than 20 years of experience in hospitality, spanning hotels, restaurants, pubs and hospitality learning and development. She also holds a BA (Hons) in Hospitality Management.

Cheese Riot began following a significant change in her own career. After taking redundancy while on maternity leave, Rage chose to establish the business rather than return to employment, applying her hospitality experience to an idea centred on making artisan food more approachable and enjoyable.

At the heart of that approach is a belief that premium food does not need to feel intimidating or exclusive. Customers are guided through subjects including the maker, milk, provenance, seasonality and flavour of different cheeses, as well as the reasoning behind selected drink pairings, helping them explore artisan products with greater confidence without requiring existing specialist knowledge.





They also use each experience to introduce customers to independent cheesemakers, breweries, wineries and cider producers from Britain and Europe. This collaborative model gives smaller food and drink businesses another route to new audiences while ensuring the makers behind the products remain part of the story.

“We're not building another subscription box. We're building a platform that champions independent producers and helps people rediscover the joy of gathering around great food. Every Cheese Riot experience is about bringing people together while telling the stories of the incredible makers behind every cheese, beer, wine and cider we share,” said Hayley Rage, founder of Cheese Riot.

Alongside their monthly pairing boxes, Cheese Riot also provides tastings and experiences for weddings, events and corporate customers, appears at markets and produces celebration boxes.

Sustainability and social impact also form part of the way the business operates. Cheese Riot says they use recyclable, reusable and compostable packaging wherever possible, including recyclable cardboard and chilled wool liners, and have committed to working towards net zero through the SME Climate Hub pledge. A proportion of sales is also donated to the UN World

Food Programme.

Their Business Awards UK recognition comes amid further momentum in 2026. Cheese Riot has since been shortlisted in both the Food & Drink Business and New Business categories at the National Small Business Awards 2026, as well as for the Growth Through Investment Award at the Sheffield Business Awards 2026.

The Innovative Food Product award win reflects a concept built around the idea that the experience surrounding food can be as important as the product itself. For Cheese Riot, that means combining hospitality with discovery, bringing independent makers into the experience and creating occasions that encourage people to gather around food rather than simply consume it.

With the Business Awards UK win adding to a growing list of recognition in 2026, Cheese Riot is clearly striking a chord. Combining good food, good company and the stories of independent producers, they have already come a long way in a short time, and we can’t wait to see what comes next.

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