

Feta Cheese



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Feta Know-How (Recipe)

- 1 gallon whole milk
- ½ teaspoon calcium chloride solution
- 1 packet Know-How Foods mild lipase powder (approx. 1/8 tsp.)
- 1 packet Know-How Foods Feta Culture (approx. ¼ tsp.)
- ½ tablet rennet dissolved in small amount of distilled water
- Pickling brine: six cups of water, ½ t. calcium chloride solution, 3 ounces (about ½ cup) cheese salt



Instructions

1. Prepare to heat your milk. Pour it into a sanitized pot, 6 quarts or larger. Place it over low heat. Make sure you've dissolved the lipase powder in a few tablespoons of distilled water, and then add the lipase powder and calcium chloride solution to the milk. Gently stir and bring it up to 90° F.
 - See Cheesemaking Skill Sheet #1.
2. Sprinkle the culture over milk surface and let it soak in for 1 or 2 minutes. Gently but thoroughly stir culture into milk.
3. Make sure you've dissolved the rennet in a few tablespoons of distilled water. Add it to the milk and mix it in thoroughly, for about 1 minute. Now let it sit undisturbed for at least 15 minutes.
4. When you get a clean break, cut the curd.
 - See Cheesemaking Skill Sheet #2 & 3
5. Continue to maintain a temperature of 90°F. First, let the curds heal for 5 min. after cutting. Then begin to gently stir the curds every few minutes for about 30 min. Stir with a slotted spoon or a well-scrubbed bare hand. (The purpose is to keep the curds from matting together too much and to distribute the heat evenly throughout.) Allow the curds to settle for 10 min.

6. Line your two baskets with a single layer of cheesecloth and place them on a large tray or cookie sheet to catch the whey. Using a slotted spoon or mesh strainer, scoop the curds out of the whey into the two baskets. The whey can be saved for making ricotta or other uses.
7. After a couple of minutes, drain the whey off the tray. Place one basket on top of the other and put back on the tray to catch the whey. Cover loosely with cheesecloth to keep it clean. Press for 30 min. (that is, allow the weight of the cheese to press itself). Remove the top basket, turn the cheese over in each of the baskets and switch baskets, placing bottom basket on the top this time. Press 30 min. Repeat this sequence a few more times, allowing an hour or more between subsequent switches. You can remove the lining of cheesecloth whenever you like. Its purpose is just to make it easier to remove and flip the disks. Leave the baskets stacked overnight, covered loosely with cheesecloth for protection. Press for about 24 hrs. total.
8. The next day, remove the cheese disks from the baskets and cut them into large, 1 ½" - 2" blocks and sprinkle them liberally with cheese salt on all sides.
9. Spread out the blocks of cheese in a sanitized container that has a lid, for example, a large Tupperware. Leave the covered container at room temperature for two or three days. This step is crucial. It allows the flavor to develop, but more importantly, it allows the blocks to harden and dry out further. They will continue to release whey. Without this step, the cheese will not hold up in the brine (the next step) and will turn to mush!
10. Prepare your pickling brine: before the 2 days are up, heat or boil six cups of water. Add ½ t. calcium chloride solution and 3 oz. (about ½ cup) cheese salt. Mix well and chill.
11. After the 2-3 days of hardening, carefully place the blocks into a sanitized quart jar (or two). Then fill each jar with the pickling brine. Place a lid on and store in your refrigerator up to 1 year. Let it age at least a week or two to allow the brine to penetrate and the flavor to develop further. The temperature for aging can be anywhere from your regular refrigerator up to 55°F.
12. The cheese blocks should be dense enough to sink and stay underneath the brine. However, if they float and are exposed to air in the jar, they may mold. If this happens, you can just cut the mold off and still eat the rest of the cheese.
13. When you want to enjoy some of your homemade feta, simply pluck out a block, pat it dry and crumble with a fork. Delicious!