

FINGER LAKES DEXTER CREAMERY



One of the important trends occurring with artisan cheese is a return to heritage cows, among them are Dexter, Kerry, and Milking Devon breeds. These animals, many of which are in danger of extinction, were often triple-purpose animals—used for dairy, meat, and draft purposes. Since 1999, Rose Marie Belforti and Timothy Wallbridge have raised registered purebred Irish Dexter cattle. While small in stature, the Dexter is great on pasture, making them ideal for grass-fed cheese or meat operations. Their milk is thick, creamy, and rich in butterfat—ideal qualities for making excellent cheese.

Rose Marie and Tim designed a low-tech, hands-on milking and cheese-making creamery. Using little equipment, they hand-milk three cows to make **Wild Man Kefir Cheese**. Although widely known and consumed in other countries, kefir cheese is not found in the United States. They decided on kefir cheese because it meshes so well with the Dexter cows. The cheese is made from kefir culture derived from organic and naturally



Established: 2006

Owners and cheese-makers: Rose Marie Belforti and Timothy Wallbridge

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Web site: www.fingerlakesdextercreamery.com or www.kefircheese.com

Visitors: By appointment

Types: Farmstead, seasonal, raw Irish Dexter cow's milk

Varieties of cheese:

- Wild Man Kefir Cheese. Aged two months; soft, rich, tangy

Where to find: Selected regional and national retailers

occurring kefir “grains,” a mixture of a living lactic acid bacterium and yeasts. According to Rose Marie, kefir grains propagate naturally when immersed in milk, making them an ideal sustainable natural resource.

