



Photo courtesy of Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin

Julie and Jennifer Orchard co-own Royal Guernsey Creamery.

Sisters Make Better Butter From Their Guernsey/Holstein Herd

In a state well known for its cheese, a couple of sisters are making a name for themselves in the niche market of artisanal butter. Julie and Jennifer Orchard co-own Royal Guernsey Creamery, making butter with some milk from 150 cows on their Columbus, Wis., farm.

Jennifer says that becoming a licensed buttermaker was a bit of a challenge in Wisconsin. With a career in biotechnology, she wanted to return to the farm, and she and her sister decided butter was a good value-added option. After consulting with the Center for Dairy Research, the quickest path

was to get licensed as a cheesemaker and then as a buttermaker.

"They're similar as food safety is of the utmost importance and just understanding the equipment," Jennifer says, who continues to make cheese to keep up her license. Finding someone who could oversee her apprenticeship to earn her butter-making license took a couple of years.

The sisters purchased equipment and, in 2023, started making butter at a dairy plant in the area to save the cost of building a facility on the farm. About 30 percent of the dairy herd's cows are Guernseys (70 percent are Holsteins). Beta-carotene isn't absorbed by Guernseys, which is the reason for the deep golden color of their butter.

"We temper the cream differently with the slower European process that helps with spreadability. We don't add any water back, so our fat content is at least 83 percent (compared to the required 80.1 percent)," Jennifer says.

"We feed and care for the cows," Julie adds, noting that only their farm's milk is used in the butter. She does daily chores, oversees cattle health and marketing for the business and helps make the butter.

They haul the milk to the plant, separate the cream and pasteurize it on Tuesday night. The cream tempers to be slow churned into 400 lbs. of butter on Thursday and packaged on Friday.

The 8 oz. sticks are hand-weighed and shaped round before being wrapped in gold foil.

"Foil is the gold standard in packaging to

not pick up off flavors from the freezer," Jennifer says. They freeze all their butter before shipping and recommend customers freeze it until they're ready to use it to maintain the flavor and quality.

In 2023, Royal Guernsey Creamery butter earned grand champion at the Wisconsin State Fair. Through their website and social media, they ship all over the U.S., with especially strong sales in California, Washington, Florida and Texas. Foodies and people with connections to Wisconsin and Guernsey cattle are especially interested in the artisanal butter.

Besides regular salted butter, their Signature butter (with roasted garlic, cracked black pepper and parsley) is very popular. There are also sweet cinnamon and unsalted butter options; all sell for \$7.99/8 oz. They also sell cheese and gift boxes.

"Our butter boxes are our No. 1 seller," Julie says. "We also ship holiday boxes."

Royal Guernsey butter can be found in several Wisconsin stores, and the sisters plan to open the Butter Barn, their own storefront, to sell their products directly from the farm this fall.

"It's nice to reach the consumer directly," Julie says. "We've had lots of community support."

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Chili rolls have a spicy ground beef mix paired with a sweet, frosted cinnamon roll.



Entrepreneurial Teen Creates Chili Rolls

By Dee Goerge, Contributing Editor

When two foods taste good when eaten together, why not just bake them together? That was Alexa Carter's idea when brainstorming a new recipe for a competition with the Nebraska Youth Beef Leadership Symposium (NYBLS). Her chili roll recipe blended a favorite Nebraska combo of chili and a cinnamon roll. It won her team first place and initiated a business for the 17-year-old.

Now 19 and a sophomore at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL), Carter makes chili rolls part-time for her business, Rising Rolls Baking Company. The name reflects what she makes and her hometown of Rising City, Neb., where Carter grew up on a farm with row crops and a cow/calf operation. As a 4-Her, she also owns a small herd of Simmental cows.

Carter credits one of the judges, Tiffany Heng-Moss, dean of UNL's College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources, with encouraging her by asking, "How do I get this on campus?" after she proposed marketing the rolls as a concession during her presentation.

Carter connected with the school's Engler Agribusiness Entrepreneurship Program, which provides a support team and resources for using campus facilities such as the food laboratory in the Innovation Campus. That's where Carter makes chili rolls on most Fridays to fill orders and sell at personal and UNL-sponsored tailgate

parties before football games.

"It's very balanced. The dough is neutral, and the meat isn't too spicy," Carter says of her chili rolls.

She makes the dough using an old recipe from a family cookbook. She rolls it out, butters it and sprinkles it with brown sugar and cinnamon before adding the savory ingredients.

"The seasoning for the chili is the secret part. I strain the meat well so I'm not adding excess liquid," she says, noting that she adds finely chopped and steamed onions and peppers to the ground beef mixture. After the rolls are baked, they are topped with a cream cheese frosting.

The savory/sweet rolls have been a hit with UNL students and others. As a niche market, Carter has sold them for \$5 each but is working on pricing, experimenting with making frozen rolls, and learning other aspects of running a business.

She's majoring in agriculture communications and minoring in the Engler Agribusiness Entrepreneurship Program, both of which will be useful in whatever entrepreneurial business she pursues.

"It's been such a blessing to have everything on campus," Carter says.

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Olfert uses the Pro 100 to seed canola on his farm. Other customers have seeded roadways and ditches after construction and spread seeds as cover crops in corn fields.

Former Dairy Farmer Takes Business Skyward

After realizing their adult children weren't interested in continuing their dairy enterprise on their Southern Manitoba farm, Milt and Tash Olfert sold their cows and quota.

After the sale, lacking firm plans, Olfert began looking for something to do, eventually toying with the idea of agricultural drones.

His brother was the Alberta dealer for XAG drones and encouraged Olfert to take on the company's Manitoba sector.

The result became Olfert's Golden Plains Ag Drones, the exclusive XAG Pro 100 drone dealer.

While Canada's regulations don't allow drone herbicide, pesticide or insecticide spraying, farmers can use them to seed crops, photograph livestock, analyze soil, measure land and blow moisture from orchard fruit.

Olfert uses the Pro 100 to seed canola on his farm. Other customers have seeded roadways and ditches after construction and spread seeds as cover crops in corn fields.

"Many in the farming community are still finding out what they can use them for and what works for them," Olfert says. "Most want to see how it works before jumping in and buying, but we've made some sales, and people are happy with them."

The Chinese drone manufacturer XAG will soon showcase a Pro 150 model with a small winch for lifting and transporting fruit baskets in orchards.

"I think this might be a great option for the cherry farming industry," Olfert says. "Testing has shown it works well in rice fields, so it should transfer nicely to orchards."

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