

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP  
**CHEESE  
CONTEST**

MARCH 5-7, 2024



**2024  
EXPERT  
JUDGES**



# 2024 EXPERT JUDGES



**JILL ALLEN**  
Tillamook  
TILLAMOOK, OREGON

Jill has been evaluating dairy products for 24 years at Tillamook. She ensures all products represent the brand vision with premium taste and ingredients. She is responsible for RD Sensory Sciences aging program and specialty cheese creations.



**GREGORY ANDERSON**  
Kroger Company  
MONROE, WISCONSIN

Greg is the Dairy Sourcing Leader for Kroger Company. He has over 50 years of experience in the cheese industry that includes cheese manufacturing, quality control, cheese conversion and packaging, retail sales, and cheese procurement.



**GABRIELE ARLOTTI**  
Cheeseltaly  
EMILIA-ROMAGNA, ITALY

Gabriele, a journalist and agronomist, lives in the Emilian Apennines. He graduated a taster from the University of Bologna. Dr. Arlotti is a judge in the International Awards, and he also created Cheeseltaly, the Italian team of cheese-makers.



**IR. MAARTEN BAKKER**  
Royal FrieslandCampina  
EDE, NETHERLANDS

Maarten has over 25 years of experience in Dutch type cheese as a technologist and product developer for Royal FrieslandCampina. He is a two time winner of the National Dutch Cheese tasting contest, a yearly competition with over 500 judges.



**MARC BATES**  
Bates Consulting LLC  
CANNON BEACH, OREGON

Marc has over 55 years career experience in the cheese, dairy, and food industries. He managed the WSU Creamery for 27 years, and has spent 23 years as an independent consultant with Bates Consulting LLC.



**KJ BURRINGTON**  
ADPI  
MADISON, WISCONSIN

KJ has over 30 years of experience in the dairy and food industry as a food scientist. She has been judging dairy ingredients for 15 years, and has been judging cultured products for 5 years.



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**MIRJANA  
CURIC-BAWDEN, PHD**

Novonesis  
MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

Dr. Curic-Bawden, PhD is a Senior Principal Scientist at Novonesis. She has more than 35 years of experience in the development & application of thermophilic, mesophilic cultures, and probiotics in fermented dairy products.



**DOMINIQUE DELUGEAU**  
Saputo Cheese USA  
MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

Dominique has 37 years of experience in the Cheese Industry. He is Ex-Chairman of the American Cheese Society, the Cheese Importers Association of America, and the International Dairy Deli Bakery Association.



**DR. NANA FARKYE**  
Cal Poly - Prof. Emeritus  
SAN LUIS OBISPO, CALIFORNIA

Dr. Farkye is a professor emeritus and dairy foods consultant with interests in dairy processing, cheese technology, and cultured dairy products. He has judged at the ACS cheese contest and the U.S and World Championship Cheese Contests.



**JESSICA  
FERNÁNDEZ LOPEZ**  
Lactography  
MEXICO CITY, MEXICO

Jessica is President of the Mexican Coalition of Cheese, and founder of Mexican Mongers. Jessica works as a cheese quality consultant, educator, and sensory evaluator. She has trained as a cheese-maker in México, Europe, and the US.



**ADRIAN FOWLER**  
Fowlers Forest Dairies Ltd  
DEVON, UNITED KINGDOM

Adrian's industry experience has lasted for over 40 years in manufacturing, grading, judging and engineering. Although now retired from physically making cheese, he plays a very active role within advising, sales, and engineering all over the world.



**DR. MUCIO FURTADO**  
IFF  
MINAS GERAIS, BRAZIL

Dr. Furtado has worked for over 50 years in the cheese industry of Latin America. He has experience with hard cheeses, hard and semi-hard cheeses, round-eye cheeses, and cheeses ripened with green and white moulds, as well as with smear.

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## **CHAD GALER**

Dairy Management, Inc.  
ROSEMONT, ILLINOIS

Chad is working for DMI where he is supporting research programs at major universities to drive dairy innovation on behalf of US dairy farmers.

He also coordinates the Collegiate Dairy Product Evaluation Contest to foster the future dairy workforce.



## **CRAIG GILE**

Cabot Creamery Cooperative  
WAITSFIELD, VERMONT

Craig has been working as a cheese professional at Cabot Creamery Cooperative for the past 21 years.

He has extensive experience evaluating, developing, and selling dairy products.



## **ENDA HOWLEY**

Ornuu  
DUBLIN, IRELAND

Enda has over thirty years of experience working with Ornuu in a variety of roles through Europe. He has extensive cheese grading and judging experience of cheese with many factories and sites throughout Ireland, the UK, and Europe.



## **JOHN JAEGGI**

Center for Dairy Research  
BROOKLYN, WISCONSIN

John, a third-generation cheesemaker, coordinates activities for the Center for Dairy Research Cheese Industry and Applications Group.

In addition, John is the Coordinator of the Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker Program.



## **LUIS JIMÉNEZ-MAROTO**

Center for Dairy Research  
MADISON, WISCONSIN

Luis is an Asst. Coordinator in the Cheese Group at the Center for Dairy Research. He has over a decade of experience in the dairy industry, which includes sensory evaluation, product development, formulation, and research.



## **LARS JOHANNES-NIELSEN**

Danish Dairy Board  
ODENSE, DENMARK

Lars' experience includes being Exhibition Manager and Contest Chief Judge at International Food Contest, Assessment Manager at LURPAK-control, Assessment Manager at Danish PGI cheese controls, Judge at World Cheese Awards, and Judge at Swiss Cheese Award.

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**ANDY JOHNSON**  
Dairy Connection, Inc.  
MADISON, WISCONSIN

Andy has been involved in the cheese industry for nearly 20 years, working as a cheesemaker and dairy researcher. He is currently a technical specialist working to apply his knowledge to help cheesemakers make better cheese.



**AILEEN KACVINSKY**  
Schuman Cheese  
MADISON, WISCONSIN

Aileen has over 35 years of experience in the industry as a technical advisor for cheese making facilities, including American, Italian, and Specialty Cheeses. She has been judging cheese contests for the last 10+ years.



**PROF. SAMIR KALIT PHD**  
University of Zagreb  
ZAGREB, CROATIA

Prof. Kalit, PhD is a professor at the University of Zagreb. He cooperates with the dairy industry helping them with troubleshooting. He has judged dairy products at many contests including in Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Denmark, Germany, and USA.



**DR. KERRY KAYLEGIAN**  
Penn State University  
STATE COLLEGE, PENNSYLVANIA

Dr. Kaylegian is an Associate Research Professor at Penn State. She provides technical support, delivers training programs, and conducts research on the safety and quality of dairy products, both domestically and internationally.



**DIETER KOCH-HARTKE**  
DMK Dairies  
NRW, GERMANY

As a Milk Technologist, Dieter has over 30 years of experience in the production and quality of cheese and dairy products. He regularly leads evaluating contests as well, in other continental competitions.



**KYLE KOLL**  
Sargento Foods, Inc.  
PLYMOUTH, WISCONSIN

Kyle is a Senior Supplier Quality Manager—Corporate Cheese Grader. He holds Wisconsin Grading Licenses in American and Swiss cheese, and he has been a part of the Sargento Family grading cheese for over 13 years.



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## **DREW KORDUS**

Great Lakes Cheese  
KIEL, WISCONSIN

Drew is the Food Safety and Quality Assurance Manager at Great Lakes Cheese in Plymouth, Wisconsin. He has a demonstrated 18 year history of working in the food production industry.



## **LAURA LAEHN**

Masters Gallery Foods  
PLYMOUTH, WISCONSIN

Laura has over 15 years of experience in the Cheese Industry. She carries all three Wisconsin Cheese Licenses. Her expertise in grading and evaluation has led her to judge many World, US, and State cheese contests over the years.



## **DR. SUSAN LARSON**

Center for Dairy Research  
MADISON, WISCONSIN

Susan works with dairy ingredients at the Center for Dairy Research. She has been judging dairy ingredients for over 15 years. Susan became interested in judging dairy products back in college when she was on the dairy judging team.



## **TERRY LENSMIRE**

Lensmire Dairy Consulting  
MANITOWOC, WISCONSIN

Terry is a Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker with over 50 years working in the cheese industry. This includes working as a Wisconsin licensed cheesemaker and grader, a plant manager, USDA inspector, a CDR short course presenter and as a consultant.



## **DR. ARNALDO LOPEZ-HERNANDEZ**

University of Wisconsin-Madison  
MADISON, WISCONSIN

Dr. Lopez-Hernandez is working for the University of Wisconsin. In addition, he has judged a wide variety of dairy products at contests including the Collegiate Dairy Products Evaluation Contest, World Dairy Expo, and World Championship Cheese Contests.



## **THIERRY MARTIN**

Agropur Canada  
ONTARIO, CANADA

Thierry was born and raised in Switzerland where he got his training and his master's degree in cheese making. Thierry has over 45 years in the cheese making industry in different roles, and has served as judge in different international competitions.

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## **CHRISTOPHE MEGEVAND**

Schuman Cheese Inc.  
FAIRFIELD, NEW JERSEY

Christophe, with over 45 years of experience in the cheese industry, is Schuman Cheese's EVP of Cheese Manufacturing. He has a broad knowledge of European specialty cheeses, and he has judged at state, national, and international cheese contests.



## **LLOYD METZGER**

Valley Queen Cheese Factory  
BRUCE, SOUTH DAKOTA

Lloyd is the VP of Quality and Technical Services at Valley Queen and leads the QA, product development, and process technology teams. He also has 20 years of experience in academia and was a Professor at SDSU and U of MN.



## **DR. TAKAYUKI MIURA**

Nippon Veterinary & Life Sciences University  
HACHIOJI, JAPAN

Dr. Miura has a doctorate of agriculture and specializes in the science of cheese. He has extensive judge history including all Japan Natural Cheese Contests (2017, 2019, 2021, 2023), the final judge in 2021 & 2023 at the World Cheese Awards, and 2018 in Norway.



## **KATE NEUMEIER CLARKE**

Wisconsin Aging & Grading Cheese, Inc.

KAUKAUNA, WISCONSIN

Kate is President & CEO of her family's business, Wisconsin Aging & Grading Cheese, Inc. She has worked in the cheese industry for over 23 years, and she is a 3rd Generation Licensed Cheese Grader #427.



## **PER OLESEN**

St. Clemens Food Products  
BORNHOLM, DENMARK

Per has lived and breathed cheese throughout his life as the director and cheese producer of St. Clemens Food Products, located on the small island Bornholm in the Baltic Sea. He was named World Champion of 1998 World Championship Cheese Contest.

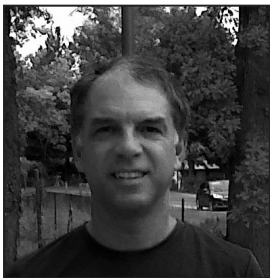


## **GURTH PRETTY**

Lakeview Cheese Galore  
ONTARIO, CANADA

Gurth is owner and Cheesemonger at Lakeview Cheese Galore, as well as President of the jury at the International Cheese Competition by SIAL Canada (2019, 2022, 2023). He also judged at the WCCC, ACS, Canadian Cheese Grand Prix & the Canadian Cheese Awards.

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**MIGUEL ROLO**  
Etapa Improvável  
STATE, PORTUGAL

Miguel began 27 years ago with the production of sheep's milk for producing traditional raw milk cheeses. He is involved in the regulation of European PDO cheeses, and has had the opportunity to work with organizations on several different kinds of European cheese.



**DR. GIUSEPPE ROSTITI**  
Freelance Consultant  
LOMBARDIA, ITALY

Dr. Rostiti has been a master cheese taster since 2006. He is a manager with 20+ years of professional experience with biotechnological ingredients (prebiotics, probiotics, & postbiotics) for agri-food, nutraceutical and pharmaceutical productions.



**DR. FRANCISCO DE ASÍS RUIZ MORALES**  
IFAPA  
ANDALUCÍA, SPAIN

Francisco has been a judge for several Spanish and European competitions. He is the organizer of the "Maestro Quesero" contest in Spain, and the Regional Director of the International Goat Association in Western Europe.



**DAVID SATTERNESS**  
Novonesis - Retired  
SIOUX FALLS, SOUTH DAKOTA

David has over 40 years of cheese grading experience. He began with his Wisconsin Cheese Grader's License in early 1980s. He has been a contest judge at IMPA since 1996, and the US and World Championship Cheese Contests since 2011.



**ROSANNE SLUIJS**  
CONO Kaasmakers  
NOORD HOLLAND, NETHERLANDS

Rosanne is a two time participant in the National Dutch Cheese Competition (2022 & 2023). She was awarded the winner of the Golden Cheese Drill in 2023 & Best Newcomer in 2022. She is the Supply Chain Manager at CONO Kaasmakers (the Netherlands).



**BEN SMITH**  
Hilmar  
MODESTO, CALIFORNIA

Ben is the Product Manager for Hilmar Cheese Company. He has been making cheese professionally for 10 years, holding roles in operations, research and development, and technical services.



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**RUSSELL SMITH**  
Dairy Australia  
NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA

Russell has been judging dairy products in the major competitions in Australia since 1998.

He has been running an Australian judge training program since 2011, and he is the Chief Judge for the Australian Grand Dairy Awards.



**DEAN SOMMER**  
Center for Dairy Research  
MADISON, WISCONSIN

Dean worked at Alto Dairy Cooperative as the Vice President of Technical Services for 18 years. For the last 20 years he has worked at the Center for Dairy Research as a Cheese Technologist.



**CATHY STRANGE**  
Whole Foods Market  
AUSTIN, TEXAS

Since 1990, Cathy has been instrumental in Whole Foods Market's success as a world-renowned cheese and specialty food expert. She has been recognized by the French Order of Agricultural Merit honored with "Coltellino d'oro".



**SURESH SUTARIYA**  
IFF  
KANSAS CITY, KANSAS

Suresh is a food and dairy industry professional and researcher with 18 years of experience. He is serving IFF as a Group Application Manager for culture and enzyme in dairy and plant-based applications.



**JASON TARRANT**  
Talley's Group Limited  
AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND

Jason has 30 years of experience in the New Zealand dairy industry. He has 20+ years cheesemaking and managing operations of medium and large scale, commercial white and blue moulded, cheddar, and feta style facilities. He has been a New Zealand Master Cheese Judge 2021-2024.



**ERNESTO TOALOMBO**  
Colonia Láctica  
PICHINCHA, ECUADOR

Ernesto is a Food Engineer and he has a Master's Degree in Agroindustrial Management. He participated in the jury in competitions in USA, Latin America, and Europe. He directs Colonia Lactica & Yogurtec from Ecuador, and gives conferences, advice, and consultancies.

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**STEFAN TRUTTMANN**  
FROMARTE  
URI, SWITZERLAND

Stefan has been a quality manager at FROMARTE for six years. He spent 6 years at ETH Zurich as a food scientist for protective lactic acid bacteria & whey based cheese culture production, and 4 years at Biedermanns Dairy as project manager for fermented whey products.



**PROF. MILNA TUDOR KALIT, PHD**  
University of Zagreb  
ZAGREB, CROATIA

Prof. Tudor Kalit, PhD is an Associate Professor at the University of Zagreb Faculty of Agriculture. She cooperates with the dairy industry in the field of food safety and assessing sensory quality. She has judged dairy products in Croatia and Germany.



**ERIC VORPAHL**  
Masters Gallery Foods  
PLYMOUTH, WISCONSIN

Eric has a passion for cheese and the cheese industry, having spent 20 years so far in cheese and dairy. He has extensive experience in cheese procurement, dairy risk management, sales, and is a licensed cheese grader.



**RICHARD WEIß**  
Obersteirische Molkerei eGen  
KNITTELFELD, AUSTRIA

Richard has 23 years of experience in product development and cheese production, specializing in red-smear & foil-ripened cheese. He has been a part of the sensorics panel in different championships and has technical experience in food production plants.



**JULIE WINANS**  
Novonesis  
NORTH OGDEN, UTAH

Julie has worked as Technical Account Manager for Novonesis, supporting the dairy industry, for 17 years. She has also been serving as Committee Chair for the past 15 years at the Idaho Milk Processor's regional dairy product contests.



**MATT ZIMBRIC**  
Foremost Farms USA  
WAUNAKEE, WISCONSIN

Matt currently is the Senior Director of Cheese Technology at Foremost Farms USA. He has been working in the dairy industry and tasting cheeses for 25 years. He is a big fan of all cheeses!

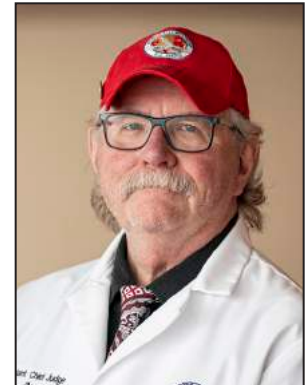
# CONTEST LEADERSHIP



Chief Judge  
**JIM MUELLER**



Assistant Chief Judge  
**TIM CZMOWSKI**



Assistant Chief Judge  
**STAN DIETSCH**



Assistant Chief Judge  
**JOSEF HUBATSCHEK**



Assistant Chief Judge  
**MARIANA  
MARQUES DE ALMEIDA**



Assistant Chief Judge  
**SANDY TONEY**



Director of Logistics  
**RANDY SWENSEN**