



**DO NOT DISASSEMBLE YOUR CHEESE PRESS.  
PLEASE READ THE INSTRUCTIONS BELOW BEFORE USING YOUR CHEESE PRESS.**

**IMPORTANT NOTICE:** A simple misunderstanding of using cheese presses is that one must press the curds with much force to obtain a hard cheese. The cheese press is used to keep the curds whole or stuck together. This is called *knitting*. The dryness (moisture level) or hardness of the cheese is more determined by manipulating the temperature of the curds/whey, the size of the curds while stirring and the milling (size) of the final curd prior to pressing. Using either a Mesophilic or Thermophilic Lactic Starter, one can change the final moisture level inside the cheese. Mesophilic Starters are designed to work in milk which is heated to 86-90f(30-32.2c). After the curd mass is cut and stirred, the curds and whey can be heated to higher temperatures which will make the final cheese dryer and firmer. Thermophilic Starters are designed to work in milk which is heated to 88f(31.1c). After the curd mass is cut, curds and whey are then heated to over 100f(37.7c) sometimes as high as 125f(51.6c) for hard dry cheeses like the Parma cheeses. Finally, if you are making a hard cheese, it is very important that your curds are well drained and already somewhat firm prior to pressing, otherwise trapped moisture in the cheese may ruin your cheese. If you are making a semi-hard cheese, the curds should be a bit soft, but not weeping whey prior to pressing.

Thank you for purchasing my cheese press. This press has been designed to offer you the best quality home cheese press on the market today. You'll notice a circular channel on the base-plate. This will allow whey to expel off the press in one direction, making for a cleaner work area. You still may want to place the press into a basin or onto a plate to catch any excess whey.

Included with your cheese press is a stainless steel spring. This spring will produce approximately 50 lbs. (22.6 kg) of applied pressure when it is turned 5 complete revolutions, but only if there is something to press against. The curds should be well drained for about an hour or more prior to pressing. It is very important that any slack is taken up between the spring and the washer prior to turning. This is important so you will achieve an accurate pressure reading. **YOU CAN USE THIS PRESS WITHOUT THE SPRING. HOWEVER, USING THE SPRING WILL PRODUCE CONTINUAL PRESSURE ON THE CURDS. TO INSURE A QUALITY HARD CHEESE, MAKE SURE YOUR CURDS ARE WELL DRAINED, CUT AND SALTED PROPERLY PRIOR TO PRESSING. USING SOFT CURDS IN THE PRESS MAY RESULT IN CURDS BEING SQUEEZED OUT BETWEEN THE FOLLOWER AND THE HOOP.**

1. Clean the press using warm water before using. You do not need to use cheesecloth with this press, but you can if you so wish to.
2. Sanitize with a little bleach or any other non-scented sanitizer and re-rinse with warm water.
3. Do not put the hoop(s) (white PVC tubes/water grade) in hot water above 140 degrees F (60 Celsius) as this temperature is too hot for this material. Do not steam clean. Do not put the PVC into dishwasher.
4. To use: center the hoop (plastic tube) in the middle of the base-plate. Place all the curds into the hoop spreading the curds out evenly. After placing the small washer inside the center hole in the follower, place the (follower) on top of the curds and press down gently, then firmly to even out the curds. If the curds are somewhat uneven in the hoop prior to pressing, they may end up tilting to one side when you start the pressing using the handle/center screw. Next you will want to place the spring into the center hole in the follower. This will keep the spring in place and protect the follower from wear. Turn the handle counter-clockwise a number of turns and place the support arm onto the side posts. Tighten the wing-nuts (they do not have to be extremely tight, just enough to lock in the support arm).

5. Turn the handle to take up any slack between the top of the spring and the large washer. The spring should not be tightened at this point, just firm in its place. Now you can begin to tighten the press to a specific pressure. Because you will be counting turns, taking up this slack before you tighten will allow you to know exactly how much pressure you are applying to the cheese. You do not want to tighten the center screw too much in the beginning, since this will trap whey inside the cheese. The objective is to use minimal pressure in the first 2-4 hours so whey can easily be expelled from the curd without trapping it. Begin by turning the screw 2 complete turns or revolutions. This is approximately 10-15 lbs. (4.5-6.8 kg). Let the cheese sit at this pressure for a couple of hours. After that time period, turn the screw 1 additional complete turn. This is approximately 25 lbs. (11.3 kg). Let it sit for another hour or two. Count the total turns you have made. For a hard cheese you will want to make 10 complete turns to achieve approximately 50 lbs. (22.6 kg). You will want to press the cheese from the other side. Simply take the cheese out of the hoop and place it back into the hoop with the opposite end now being pressed. If after a period of time in the press you still notice the cheese is looking a bit tilted or uneven, this is due to uneven curd distribution prior to formal pressing. The cheese can easily be repaired by trimming the higher side of the cheese off and redistributing those curds back on top. Then place the cheese back into the hoop and begin pressing again. The end that looked tilted will now be pressed into an even shape.

6. With this your first batch using this press, you will have a baseline to compare to future cheeses. Because homemakers vary their technique, there is a variance in the amount of moisture left in cooked curds. This variance will change the finished texture (dryness-creaminess) of the finished cheese. The length of time and the temperature one cooks the curds will result in a varying degree of finished curd texture and the amount of interior moisture content.

7. Take notes of your curd/whey temperature, amount of time stirring the curds and the size of the finished curds. This will help with producing cheeses with consistent degree of hardness. And you will achieve the texture you want in your cheese, bit it creamy or crumbly or somewhere in-between. I have found a little variance still results in excellent cheese.

8. It is not necessary to use a press when making Camembert or Brie cheese or other soft cheeses.

### **Cheese Press with Stainless Steel Hoop**

If you have the stainless steel cheese press model, it will be important to drain the curds completely, prior to pressing. This will insure the curds do not leak through the tiny holes in the stainless steel hoop. You should use cheese cloth(included) with this press; make sure the entire cloth is inside the hoop so it does not bind up

#### **Trouble-shooting.**

If you experience your cheese beginning to tilt when you press your cheese, keep the following information handy to refer to.

1. Cut your curds smaller (1/2in. 1cm). Smaller curds will more evenly distribute in the hoop (mould).
2. Place the follower onto the curds in the hoop and manually press lightly, then again firmly to set the curds.
3. Do not over-press the curds. It is easy to over-press since there is little resistance when turning the black knob.
4. Press the cheese from the opposite side after a few hours in the press. This helps to make a more even cheese.
5. If you still experience a tilted cheese after a period of pressing, simply take the cheese out of the press and trim the tilted side. Replace those trimmed curds back on top and press again. The curds will then blend into the main cheese for a more uniform shape.

**A Personal Note:** *After using this type of press many times, I no longer count turns. I do a light pressing for an hour or so, turn the cheese around and press again lightly. I then examine the cheese to confirm if the curds are 'knit' together. Once the curds are knit or closed and no further clear liquid(whey) is exiting the base, I then know the pressing is complete.*

*Enjoy making great cheese with your new press.*