Fresh soft Mozzarella using lactic starter culture
to achieve proper acidification (pH)

**Soft fresh Mozzarella:** Thermophile Aroma Type B along with Flora Danica (or Mesophile Aroma Type B). Add Mild Lipase for more flavor. Instead of the above cultures you can also use Mesophilic MM series or MA4001-2 series.

**Inoculation temperature:** 86-90f

**Milk:** whole raw milk or pasteurized non-homogenized milk. For creamier mozzarella add one part heavy cream to 10 parts 2% or whole milk.

**IMPORTANT:** If you do not have a pH meter or pH strips to test the pH, use the stretch test after the curds/whey have been sitting for at least 5-8 hours. Perform the stretch test with a small clump of curd. If the curd does not stretch easily without breaking when stretched a little, the curd is not acidic enough and will need to rest in the whey until it reaches a lower pH (becomes more acidic). If the curd breaks up completely upon stretching, the pH is too low (too acidic). If this happens, you cannot raise the pH of the curd to get the proper stretch. **Making Mozzarella curd is similar to making cheddar curd, in that both cheeses need to reach a low pH. Cheddar curd needs low pH to have that great squeak and age into a tangy cheese while Mozz curd needs a low pH for stretching. You can actually stretch cheddar curd into Mozzarella.**

**Procedure:** Add culture to your warmed milk. Ripen for 45 minutes. Add rennet. Wait for clean break. Cut curds into ½ in.(1cm) cubes. Heal for 5-10 minutes. Gently stir curds in whey, maintain 86-90f temperature for 30 minutes. Allow to rest for another 30 minutes, stirring gently for 30 seconds once every 15 minutes. Take off 60% of the whey. Gently roll the curds over every 15 minutes for the first two hours. Then, allow the entire curd mass to rest for another 4-6 hours or until you get a pH reading of 4.7-5.2. A pH of 5.2 is optimal for stretching. Below 4.9 pH the curd will break up and the texture will be grainy. Above 5.2-5.4 pH the cheese will not stretch.

*Once the pH is reached you can either make Mozzarella immediately or freeze the curds and stretch later.

**Stretching: Do a test stretch with a few curds prior to the entire batch.**

Heat some water to 175-180f. Add salt to the water until it tastes just slightly salty. Place a portion or the entire curd mass into a pre-warmed large bowl. Pour hot water over the curds just enough to cover them. Allow a few minutes to for the curds to absorb the heat. When the curds start to become slightly gooey, they are ready to stretch. Using a wooden spoon, pick up some of the curds and see if they are stretching under their own weight. As you use your wooden spoon to pull up on the curd mass, you will notice the individual curds become one shiny mass. This is called pulling. Do this only long enough to see a shiny smooth surface. Shaping and creating Mozzarella balls can be tricky, but with practice you can easily create nice little Mozz Balls. Some folks braid three strands of mozz into one nice braid. You want the Mozzarella to have a shiny skin. Do not overwork or over stretch your Mozzarella, since this will make them quite firm and even rubbery. Once you have gently formed your Mozz Balls, put them into a bowl or plastic container and cover partly with cool water. Place in the refrigerator and eat within a few days. Or freeze.