A HISTORY OF
THE AMERICAN CHEESE SOCIETY
1983-2023
THE FIRST 40 YEARS

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INTRODUCTION

WE ARE WHERE WE ARE BECAUSE OF WHERE WE HAVE BEEN

This is not the first attempt to recount the remarkable story of the American Cheese Society. Ricki Carroll blazed the trail by documenting the society's first ten years. Christine Hyatt followed with a captivating oral history for the society's 25th anniversary, and, which later included a series of interviews conducted in 2016. This work will honor their legacies while drawing on new sources of information.

Alyce Birchenough, a charter cheesemaker member of the ACS, generously shared her files upon retiring. Her contributions filled many vital gaps in the ACS's early history, reminding us of the rich legacy we continue to build upon.

Ricki and Bob Carroll's New England Cheesemaking Journals also provided crucial information for the formative years of the ACS.

John Greeley, an ACS charter member, has provided invaluable assistance with his records from the late 1980s. He generously offered a review of his archives, which provided valuable insights.

Former ACS President Dan Strongin also provided valuable information about the mid-1990s.

Past society newsletters, especially the early quarterly newsletters and later electronic versions, revealed a wealth of information. Many thanks to Ruth Flore for supplying many missing issues and to Tara Holmes, ACS Executive Director, and her team at Civica Associations.

One significant new source of information is the personal experiences of the living former presidents of ACS, who reflected on their time in office. As a former president myself, I was surprised to see the recurring themes that emerged throughout our presidencies.

During a visit to the ACS office in April 2025, exploring the ACS archives revealed other valuable sources of information.

But, before exploring the history of the ACS, it is important to note that this account does not claim to be a definitive history of the ACS. This narrative has been written based on the information currently available. A significant amount of information, particularly from the early years, remains undiscovered.

More details may be revealed in the future. This history may ultimately represent an initial attempt, followed by a more comprehensive account.

The purpose of this history is to illustrate how the management of the Society has evolved and how the seeds of Advocacy have grown into a significant benefit of membership for many. It does not aim to cover every detail of the ACS business over the years.

A significant challenge in writing this history has been the lack of a cohesive and consistent platform for document storage and record-keeping. Various programs and platforms have been utilized over the years, but they remain unconnected. For example, there has not been a method to search for and access all electronically available board minutes from different years. There is a need for easily accessible historical archives that maintain continuity, even in the face of management, program, and personnel changes.

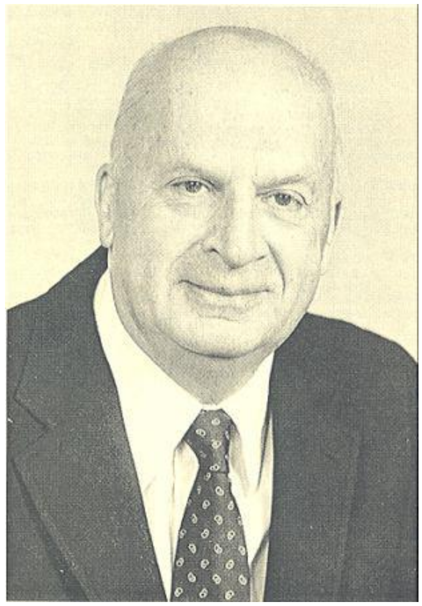
This history provides limited coverage of the annual cheese festivals and competitions. The importance of these events deserves a separate written history, as they are vital to the Society's growth and support for artisanal cheesemakers. The media attention generated by the competitions and the Festivals of Cheese has become a driving force in recognizing emerging stars in specialty cheese—artisan cheesemakers from the U.S. Someone from the Judging and Competition Committee is better suited to write that history. The focus in this history is on the development of ACS management and policies. For example, exploring ACS history in the 1990s reveals how various advocacy policies evolved into significant efforts on behalf of the Society's members.

The first decade of the Society can be summarized as a period of self-management and identity exploration during the fledgling years of ACS. The second decade shifted from self-management to a realization that “Maybe we can’t do this on our own,” leading to a focus on association management and the rise of ACS Advocacy. The third decade introduced a time of structured development, with alliances expanding our reach. The fourth decade emphasized industry education and advocacy, recognizing the ACS's position as a significant service association and a formidable force.

After gathering available historical sources, the question arose of how to organize the information in a meaningful way. The format chosen here is a loose arrangement of the years into decades.

ACS HISTORY PART 1
1983-1993
THE FLEDGING YEARS OF ACS SELF MANAGEMENT

It began with this man –
Dr. Frank Kosikowski



And these four paragraphs:

New Cheese Organization

A new, national grass-roots organization for cheese appreciation and for home and farm cheesemaking, the American Cheese Society, has been suggested by Dr. Frank Kosikowski, Professor of Food Science, Department of Food Science, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York.

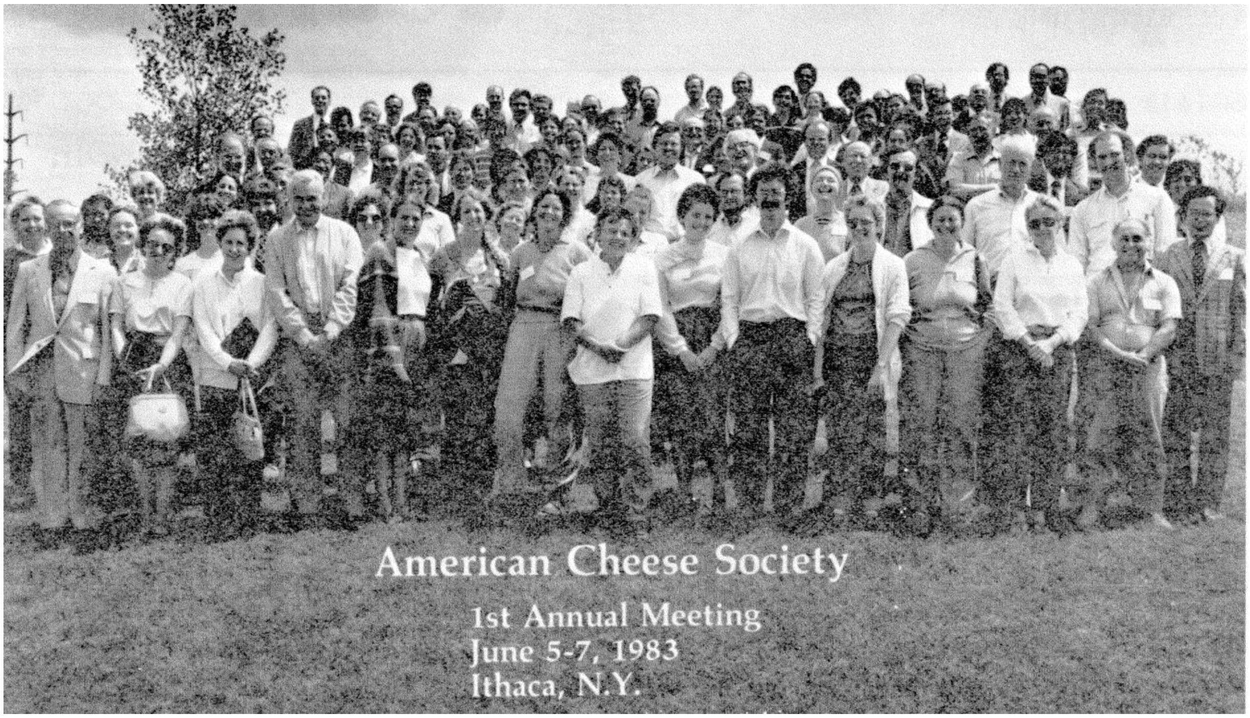
Membership would be open to those interested in natural cheese; its lore and history; making cheese from cow's and goat's milk as a hobby or small enterprise; and in maintaining the quality and traditional values of cheese. Activities of the Society, conducted through local and national social and technical gatherings, would include cheese-tastings and gourmet cooking, demonstrations of cheesemaking and talks on the nutrition, health and economic aspects of cheese. A national journal of the Society is envisioned for interchange of ideas.

Dr. Kosikowski points to the successful evolution of the American Wine Society as fulfilling a need for those interested in wine appreciation and feels the time is ripe for an American Cheese Society.

An organizing committee will meet soon. ~~in the spring~~. Anyone wishing further information should contact Dr. Kosikowski.

And this First Meeting of the American Cheese Society
In Ithaca, New York

June 5, 1983



In 1983, Dr. Frank Kosikowski, a visionary in Dairy and Food Science at Cornell University, founded the American Cheese Society. Dr. Paul Kinstedt, one of his students, fondly recalls how “Kosi," as he was affectionately known, enlisted the help of his students to launch the organization. (Dr. Kinstedt might have remarked that Kosikowski brought his students in “kicking and screaming.”) Kosikowski envisioned a grassroots organization to “encourage cheese appreciation and provide useful information on cheesemaking in a farm, home, and manufacturing plant environment.” (The quote is taken from the introduction to the program pamphlet of the first annual meeting of the ACS in 1983 held at Cornell University.)

This initial meeting led to the establishment of an ACS Constitution and Bylaws. At that time, the society's primary sources of income were membership dues and donations. Notably, in the 1990s and early 2000s, profits from the conference became the society's primary source of income throughout the year. Today, ACS maintains a solid financial standing, thanks to membership dues, the success of its conferences, and prudent investments.

Dr. Kosikowski envisioned a national and international membership open to anyone interested in natural cheese, its quality, and traditional value. The society's initial activities would feature cheese tastings, gourmet cooking demonstrations, cheesemaking tutorials, and a national journal for the exchange of ideas—humble beginnings, indeed.

Throughout my years with the American Cheese Society, I have heard numerous members discuss their interpretations of Dr. Kosikowski's intent in founding the Society. Many believe his primary focus was on artisan cheesemakers. However, in 1983, the initial Mission Statement of ACS was much broader. He wrote, "The purpose of this organization shall be to encourage cheese appreciation and to provide useful information on cheesemaking in a farm and home and manufacturing plant environment. The association shall also work to maintain the quality and traditional value of cheese and related fermented milk products and to encourage their consumption through better education on the safety and nutrition of cheese." Don't get me wrong. Dr. Kosikowski loved small cheesemakers and was dedicated to helping them produce better cheese. But the original Mission Statement says the Society intends to "encourage cheese appreciation". Many people fail to realize that his broader goal in creating the society was to promote the betterment of all cheeses, whether made at home, on a farm, or in a manufacturing plant.

In this history of the Society, past presidents will align themselves in different camps with their individual interpretations of Kosikowski's intent. Dan Strongin and others will argue that the focus should be on small cheesemakers, while Joan Snyder and others will contend that the entire cheese industry should take precedence. It seems to me that

Kosikowski's initial idea actually included developing consumer appreciation as well as helping small and larger producers to make better cheese. He supported a broad, inclusive membership net.

Just a year after the birth of ACS, President Liz Biss wrote on April 24, 1984: "Thank you for your patience. We've gotten off to a rather slow start, but we've got great potential, and with a little help from our members, we can become an excellent and useful organization."

In 1984, Bob Le Compte became president. Beth Feldman served as treasurer. Liz Biss took over as secretary and "Bulletin Editor." The vice president position remained vacant.

Liz Biss wrote the first newsletter/bulletin. In it, she announced the second conference, but the venue was not mentioned at that time.

At the end of the newsletter, Liz comments, "Communication with our members has been a problem, but we hope this is the first step toward correcting that." I mention this because it remained a recurring issue for several years.

After the 1984 meeting, Ricki and Bob Carroll of New England Cheesemaking expressed interest in organizing a cheesemaking competition to honor the contributions of entrepreneurial artisan cheesemakers in the U.S. The first competition took place at the Third Annual ACS Meeting in Bird-In-Hand, PA, in June 1985, with thirty cheesemakers entering a total of 89 cheeses. Due to the surplus of cheese, a modest First Annual Festival of Cheeses followed. At this point, the ACS began to receive national media attention. Cheese shop owner Caleb Williams served as president, succeeded by Bob Le Compte in 1986 and Barbara Lang in 1988.

In 1986, the fourth ACS meeting took place in Rome, New York, The second judging became the "Second Annual Cheese Contest of

Natural Cheeses." John Greeley (the future perennial J&C Chair) remembers this conference well. In a recent note to me, he wrote, “This 4th meeting in Rome was important to me. I drank the Kool-Aid at this meeting- I signed up with ACS for the long haul because I was so moved by the sincerity and need of the cheesemakers to find a way to grow and best practices. I spent hours with Ann Dixon developing the real first Festival of Cheese, settling on the Boston Four Seasons, introducing her to Marc Bates, the Exec Chef, planning the Judging with Bob and Ricki Carroll, planning the logistics and support to get it staged at Boston University; selecting judges, delivering cheese to the Hotel and to BU and donating a white shirt to Bob Carroll when the Boston summer humidity destroyed his. I have vivid memories of Dr. Kosikowski critiquing members' cheese (almost a cheese judging) and driving him around in my Mercedes.

This meeting in Rome, NY, was a turning point for ACS. I made friends with Avice Wilson and Penny Duncan (everyone loved her peppercorn goat milk cheese log). Frank spent hours with the cheesemakers. He really loved them and saw a future for them if they could just correct some flaws.

We even attended the dedication of the rebuilt Erie Cheese-making building - earliest in New York State. Eunice Stamm distributed her book - The History of Cheese Making in NY.”

John’s remark about “drinking the Kool-Aid” resonates with me. Many of us can relate to this passion for moving the society forward. The early ACS movers and shakers were not alone. One can see the same passion and commitment throughout the Society’s forty-year history.

President Bob LeCompte referred to the annual meeting here as a "convention." In the initial years, the ACS gatherings were labeled in the printed pamphlets as Annual Meetings that featured cheese-centric programs. Eventually, they were called conventions. By 1990, they were referred to as “conferences.”

Referring to the meeting at Rome's New York State Cheese Museum in the Erie Canal Village of Rome, Le Compte said, "Our theme this year is 125 years of commercial cheese making, and it is appropriate that this is one of the places it started." Rome housed the first commercial cheese factory in the U.S., which was built in 1862.

The press received invitations to attend the competition and the Festival of Cheeses.

A decision was made to exclude homemade cheeses from future competitions to accommodate the growing number of new artisan cheeses from U.S. cheesemakers.

In the June 16, 1986 edition of the Utica Daily Press, Dr. Kosikowski remarked that the ACS "started out as a consumer-oriented group." As we examine the development of the ACS over the years, we see that the Society's primary focus shifted toward cheesemakers, supported and encouraged by numerous cheese professionals in moving products from farm to fork. In the early 2000s, language was introduced to be more inclusive of the diverse membership at all levels within the cheese industry.

Caleb Williams, a farmer and the first cheesemaker to serve as ACS president, was elected president in 1986. His aim was to promote the idea of "American Handcrafted Cheese," since not all cheesemaker members could meet the requirements for "farmstead." He intended to achieve this goal through a marketing plan.

In around 1986, Richard Kahn of Cheese on Second in New York and a member of the ACS Board of Directors addressed the American Cheese Society. He stated, "Creating a certification system is a necessary step in encouraging great cheesemaking in America." He referred to cheese rating systems similar to those in Europe, such as AOC cheeses in France, DOP cheeses in Italy, and DO cheeses in Spain. The ACS has sponsored a certification program for cheese professionals and one for the sensory evaluation of cheese. Aside from a document on Best Practices for Cheesemakers, to my knowledge, there has not been a certification program for cheesemakers or a program to develop ratings and/or appellations for American cheeses and their production processes.

The 1987 conference in Boston effectively positioned the ACS on both national and international stages, attracting attendees from around the globe. Barbara Lang was named president. However, this highly successful gathering created a dilemma regarding the Society's next steps. Under President Barbara Lang's leadership, a decision was made to pause and regroup in 1988. Instead of hosting a conference that year, the focus shifted to regional cheese tastings across the U.S., including events in New York City, Los Angeles, and a notable tasting in San Francisco, organized in partnership with the San Francisco Professional Food Society. Meetings were held to establish the Society's goals and address the emerging needs of its members.

In February of 1988, the board decided to subscribe to the New England Cheesemakers Journal, published by ACS board members Bob and Ricki Carroll. The journal would report on ACS news and serve as a replacement for an internal ACS newsletter.

Dr. Dick Kleyn succeeded Barbara Lang as president of the ACS after her resignation in July 1988 for personal reasons. Frustration was evident in her resignation letter regarding the task at hand—organizing the early ACS volunteers.

Dick Kleyn of Rutgers University was elected to a subsequent full term the following year.

The 1989 conference was once again held at Rutgers University, where Dr. Kleyn served as a Professor of Food Science. He expressed high hopes for the Society, stating that it "is moving forward and developing new publications that will be beneficial to the membership."

A reinvigorated ACS gathered at the Rutgers Conference. Ricki Carroll credits Ari Weinzweig for a highly successful Festival of Cheeses, which was the highlight of the 1989 conference. Coincidentally, Ari also became the Society's incoming President.

Ari's presidency significantly strengthened the ACS in various ways. With support from the staff at Zingerman's, he created and published the ACS Newsletter in a format that remained in use until it transitioned to an electronic version around 2010. His presidency also emphasized increasing membership. Board member Constantine Karvonides designed a Membership and Information Brochure for an ACS Membership Drive, leading to the printing and distribution of 10,000 copies. Membership outreach targeted a diverse audience including cheesemakers, retailers, chefs, distributors, academics, journalists, and consumers. As a result, membership increased by 20% in just six months!

Under Ari's leadership, ACS established an official New York office staffed by Anna Herman and Clark Wolf. Ari shared this news in the Spring 1990 newsletter: Volume I, No. I. "We now have a central communication point for members, journalists, and others. This marks a significant step forward toward increased professionalism and improved organization."

The 1990 Conference in New York coincided with the conclusion of the NASFT Fancy Food Show in July. The annual judging of "American Farmstead and Specialty Cheese" took place during the conference, with winners announced and celebrated at the Festival of Cheeses. The participation of renowned experts like Patrick Rance, Laura Chenel, and Jean-Claude Le Jaouen enhanced the quality of the 1990 program. Ari Weinzweig noted that Rance's involvement was a unique opportunity for ACS members to benefit from his "love for great cheese and candid opinions." Jean Claude led a Special Conference Technical Session focused on evaluating and making goat cheese. Clark

Wolf moderated a panel on American Originals—a phrase that would gain considerable significance in the years to come!

ACS Staffer Bridget Watkins reported on a program at the Fancy Food Show titled “Retailing American Cheeses.” NASFT and ACS sponsored the program.

The updated newsletter highlighted ACS's leadership role in cheese education for cheesemakers and cheese enthusiasts.

Ari accepted a second term as ACS President, having been elected at the ACS Board meeting during the Boston conference. In his presidential message to the membership, which appeared in the following newsletter, Ari summarized the recent activities of the Society. Featuring its new signature logo, the revamped newsletter would be a bi-monthly publication, serving as the primary communication channel for the Society’s members, now spread across the country. He encouraged contributions to the newsletter from the members, stating, “You don’t have to be the next Hemingway – you just need to have something to say about cheese.”

The ACS office relocated to Greenwich Village in New York City. Anna Herman was appointed as Administrative Director. With Bridget Walkins' assistance, Anna was responsible for supporting Board initiatives.

Ari celebrated the increase in membership, noting, “There are now over 170 paid members, more than double what we had on our lists a year ago.” ACS has set a goal of adding 400 members to the current roster. Peter Mohn, from Craigston Cheese, is responsible for developing a plan.

Ari continued to add his voice to the membership drive he had focused on during his first presidential term. “So, why should you (or anyone else) be involved with the American Cheese Society? I think you should be involved because you, like me, care a lot more about cheese than most people you know. I think you should be involved because if all of us mavericks actually worked together, we could get an awful lot done. I think you should get involved because there's a lot of people out there who are dealing with pretty much the same problems you are. And I think you should be involved precisely because you don't normally do it. "

Steve Jenkins, who was working at Dean and Deluca at the time, sent a newsletter message to cheesemakers highlighting retail perspectives. He noted that cheesemakers rely on cheesemongers to effectively sell their products. He emphasized the importance of labeling and packaging in achieving this goal. The cheeses need to feature appealing labels. "You must have a professional wrap. Your boxes should be designed to fit the cheeses, not the other way around." This may seem like basic information in our world, some 35 years later. However, in 1990, cheeses from small, artisanal cheesemakers often reached stores without any identifying labels or information!

The 1990 Boston conference set a new standard for expectations, and the 1991 conference in San Francisco did not disappoint. First, this conference had a name! It was titled, "American Specialty Cheese—State of the Art"! Mimi Luebberman announced that the California and Wisconsin Milk Boards had become major sponsors. She also mentioned that the conference would feature a panel on sheep's milk cheeses entitled, "Will Sheep Follow Goat?" Jean Claude Bauer, a representative of Papillon Roquefort, remarked, "Twenty years ago, France did not have good dairy sheep either." He challenged American cheesemakers to improve the quality of their sheep's milk cheeses and to work to highlight, not hide, the unique flavor of the sheep's milk. There was also great buzz surrounding the Festival of Cheeses, held at the historic Anchor Steam Brewery! Ari Weinzweig wrote a wrap-up article about the conference, proclaiming, "This was absolutely the most successful and enjoyable American Cheese Society Conference ever."

The 1991 conference at the Meridien Hotel in San Francisco marked the ACS's intention to explore alternative conference locations across the country. Previous conferences took place on the East Coast, making this the first one held on the West Coast. Tradition now encompasses national locations, including the East Coast, the West Coast, and the Midwest.

Fast forward to the summer of 1991. Ari Weinzweig is concluding his second term as president of ACS, celebrating an increase in paid memberships to 300, up from just 60 two years prior. He envisions a future for ACS marked by continued membership growth and hopes that ACS will meet the demand for technical cheesemaking clinics and training programs for retailers and cheesemakers.

Gerd Stern emerged as the new President of ACS. Commenting on the successes of the San Francisco conference, he added, " Ari Weinzweig led us to this juncture during the past two years with effort and great taste. My term has come with a fine momentum."

Ari spearheaded the creation of the American Cheese Society's Cheesemaker Directory/Journal in 1991. Barbara Lang, culinary director at Inglenook-Napa Valley Winery, is credited with compiling and writing the directory. Over the years, consumers requested information from the ACS about where to find these artisanal cheesemakers. The journal was organized by state, featuring specific symbols designating the type of milk used for each cheese. Barbara Lang prefaced the listings with articles on serving and eating American Specialty Cheese. Although the journal was meant to be published yearly, it appears it wasn't published again until 1995 as part of a Member Directory.

Joan Snyder's comments at the 1991 General Meeting highlight an ongoing struggle within the Society between being small and folksy (my description) and becoming too large to focus on small cheesemakers. One might think this issue arose much later, as the Society grew in numbers with a diverse membership, but that's not the case. Joan speaks from the early years, specifically the early 1990s. At the ACS General Meeting in 1991 in San Francisco, Joan remarked, "The ACS could and should cover more bases, and if that means acquiring more national producers at the expense of losing smaller producers, so be it." Ari Weinzweig responded, "The ACS focus is inclusion, not exclusion. We do not need to narrow our focus just to be politically correct."

At the 1991 Board meeting, Regi Hise of the Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board highlighted an ongoing issue with Board members scheduling ACS events without consulting the ACS office. (We had a lot of "Lone Rangers" at the beginning! Speaking as a Board with "one voice" was a theme during my term in 2000.) This highlighted for me that the Board was still a group of individuals, each pursuing their own agendas.

The 1992 conference in Madison, Wisconsin, established a new benchmark for the Festival of Cheeses. Over 2,000 pounds of cheese were displayed and enjoyed by all attendees. Gerd commenced a second term as ACS president.

In Gerd's farewell message as president in the third quarter newsletter of 1993, he expressed concerns that he found troubling. How prescient his thoughts were, as these issues remain relevant even today. He highlighted the controversies surrounding the definitions of terms like "specialty" and "farmstead." (I recall many Board discussions about these definitions well into the 2000s.) He also addressed the virtues and necessary precautions related to the production of raw milk cheeses. His comments began to set the stage for important issues that would come before the ACS in its second decade.

The 1993 conference was held at Shelburne Farms in Vermont. Cheesemaker Joan Snyder of Hollow Road Farm, was elected president of ACS. In the 1993/1994 copy of the ACS newsletter, she wrote, "The current year is clearly one of transition, from a grassroots organization to where every cheesemaker knew each other by name to a professional society which has a growing number of constituencies. Since the founding of the American Cheese Society, our membership has grown by over 400%. " At Joan's first Board of Directors meeting in September 1993, the topics discussed frequently recurred over the years to follow:

1) What is the purpose of ACS? Should we broaden our initial scope from small, specialty cheesemakers to include larger cheesemakers, distributors, retailers, and others?
2) Board members must take responsibility for part of the work on behalf of ACS and participate in committee activities.
3) Should the conference be held in the same location each year, or should it alternate locations?

At the November Board meeting, it was decided:

1) The annual conference should occur in alternate locations -- California, Wisconsin, and Vermont.
2) The board increased to 25 members despite objections from some who believed the number was too large to accomplish any work. (Board size would continue to fluctuate moving forward.)

In 1993, reflecting on the first ten years of the American Cheese Society, Ricki Carroll remarked, "Ten years ago, the American Cheese Society was a vision for the future to create a forum for the exchange of ideas. We've accomplished that goal... and let's remember that every new success in the industry is a success for us all."

How exceptional to conclude the American Cheese Society's first decade with such momentum! My immediate reflection is a question: Did the ACS harness the momentum, or did it actually create it? Of course, the ACS generates momentum. The early years had their highs and lows, for sure. However, the enthusiasm of the pioneering grassroots members laid the foundation for further growth and success.

ACS PART II
1994-2003
MAYBE WE CAN'T DO THIS ON OUR OWN
MOVE TO ASSOCIATION MANAGEMENT

In 1993, ACS sponsored a trip to Northern Italy, co-sponsored by the Consorzio del Formaggio del Parmigiano Reggiano, timed to coincide with CIBUS.

1994 was a challenging time in our ACS history. Joan Snyder was president but had to step aside abruptly in the middle of her term when her barn burned down.

Dan Strongin stepped in as president during a time of upheaval. The Society faced serious budget deficits, yet another recurring ACS theme, as it was $25,000 in debt. Dan underwent brain surgery and organized the conference in Rohnert Park just two months after the operation. By 1995, debts were repaid. Dan credits Regi Hise and Andrea Neu of the Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board for their significant contributions in stabilizing the ACS's finances through sponsorships and their support for the conference in Green Bay. Bill McKenna, Radha Stern, Ricki Carroll, and Dominique Delageau also assisted Dan in eliminating the debt. Dan sent a letter to the membership requesting financial support for the Society.

Dear Fellow Cheese Lover,

I am writing this letter not in my official capacity as a board member, but as a person who strongly believes in the importance of the American Cheese Society in nurturing quality American cheese. I believe religiously that traditional, small-scale agricultural industries must be saved, or the heart of America will be lost. The American Cheese Society is deeply in debt. It is not really any one's fault. It was thought that enough money could be raised from sponsorships to pay for our conference and judging. This was wrong!

We overspent well beyond what we could raise. We aren't a trade association, and have little to offer to businesses other than our good will. Both Shelburne Farms and Anna Herman are owed a great deal of money.

Since the survival of the American Cheese Society is so important to me, I am challenging all members to match my contribution of $100.00. If all of the members gave

only $55.00 the debt would be retired. I don't expect everyone can, or will. That's why I propose $100.00.

If all you can afford is a dollar, then please send it! If you can afford the full $100.00 then I implore you to send that! Please send a check or money order to: The American Cheese Society, . If we do not, we risk losing the organization which means you will lose the network, the newsletter and the conference. In spite of the Society's failings, all of us

have to admit we have benefited from it, if just from the dear friends we
have made, and the great cheese we have eaten.
I am in charge of programs for this year's conference, and have put together a program that leaves me spellbound! I hope we will be able to present it.
The Board is working hard to ensure that a problem like this does not happen again. We cannot depend solely on contributions from sponsors, so we'll depend on our
hard work and entrepreneurial spirit.
Sincerely,
Daniel Strongin
PS: Some of my peers think that I am wasting my time. They say no one will give money for nothing. I hope they are wrong. Friendship, great cheese, and increasing my
knowledge to me are far from nothing!
3/23/94

Dan and his supporters' efforts were successful. In the First Quarter 1995 ACS Newsletter, Treasurer Radha Stern reported: "We have managed to reduce our financial obligations from the past and are on a current basis. How? Through a combination of contributions, receipts from our 1994 California Conference, and paid membership dues. Yay team! Now, the future looks brighter."
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Once ACS was on firmer financial ground, President Strongin began efforts to better align ACS with the needs of smaller cheesemakers. A new Mission Statement and revisions to the By-Laws commenced in earnest. The terms "Specialty," "Farmstead," and "Farmhouse" were clearly defined. "American" was redefined to encompass "Pan American," including North, Central, and South America. Additional structure was incorporated into the By-Laws to clarify the responsibilities of the Board of Directors and Committees.

They emphasized that cheesemakers were the focus of the Society and should hold majority control on the board.

Dan also introduced a first for ACS—an international conference with the Tosita Foundation in Metsovo, Greece, designed to support traditional cheesemaking. The inaugural International Conference on Farmstead and Specialty Cheeses, sponsored by ACS, was set to take place in Metsovo, Greece, in 1996.

At the conference in Madison, ACS and the American Dairy Goat Products Association initiated a new collaboration. In 1997, the goat association's membership was integrated into ACS.

In 1995, the ACS offices relocated to the San Francisco Bay Area. Maurine Kilough assumed the role of the new administrator.

It is interesting to note that the 1995 and 1996 newsletters featured numerous articles on the ACS conferences, as well as advice on pairing cheese with wine, including specific recommendations for which wine to pair with which cheese. Regi Hise wrote an article entitled “What Do People Do with Cheese Anyway?”

Then George Haenlein from the University of Delaware became an influential academic for the Society. His contributions consistently focused on the scientific aspects of cheese and cheesemaking. In the Q3 1996 newsletter, he published a comprehensive two-part analysis of the nutritional value of dairy products made from ewes’ and goats’ milk. Likely a charter member of the Society, George became a beloved and respected figure in the ACS. He authored scholarly articles for the newsletters and frequently served as a technical judge at the annual ACS competitions. He also joined the ACS board as a University Liaison. Cheesemakers gathered around him at the conferences, eager to hear his pearls of wisdom. George significantly enhanced the reputation of the ACS and the newsletter with his academic expertise.

The ACS-sponsored international conference in Metsovo, Greece, occurred from June 14 to 19, 1996. The theme centered on strategies for preserving small farmhouses and specialty cheeses in a multinational corporate world. Why Metsovo? George Haenlein, Academic board member, wrote: “Metsovo and its Tossizza Foundation have made a real difference in that region of Greece, preserving small family farmers and their farmland. Maybe U.S. policymakers could benefit from visiting Metsovo to see how successful it is. Perhaps, then, our nation's family farmers and our green environment could also be preserved better for future generations.

The ACS conference in Hyde Park, New York, was a tremendous success on multiple fronts. In addition to an exceptional program, new members were welcomed into the Society, and a partnership was established between ACS and the Culinary Institute of America (CIA). Thanks to co-chairs Ruth Anne Flore and John Greeley, the conference also achieved significant financial success.

The conference featured a prominent panel on raw milk cheese, focusing specifically on its status in America. Participants came from England, France, Australia, and the United States. Jack Mowbray, an FDA consumer safety officer and alternate delegate to the U.S. Codex Committee on milk and milk products, noted that the FDA is assessing evidence to determine whether to reconsider the 60-day aging period. The subsequent discussions, which included our small U.S. producers, were quite lively. Regi Hise remarked that it reminded him of the spirited debates found at an Italian dinner table. This panel was crucial in paving the way for ACS to join the Cheese of Choice Coalition in 1999.

In his farewell message as ACS president in 1996, Dan Strongin emphasized three key points. First, he stated, “We must never lose focus on education and cheesemaking... Second in importance is our commitment to fiscal responsibility… Third, we must consider the future… We must continue to think small and not forget our constitution.”

Incoming president Stacy Kinsley noted, “ We’re entering a very important time in the history of our organization and industry. With the changing world economy and American specialty cheese’s sustainable market niche, our producers are poised for phenomenal growth.” Stacy’s presidential goals included broadening awareness of lesser-known specialty cheesemakers; building the ACS retailer and food service membership base; maintaining fiscal security; developing ACS functions throughout the country outside of the annual conference; and improving communication among board and committee members throughout the year.

Discussions started during Stacy’s term to establish a Lifetime Achievement Award. (Spoiler alert: It finally happened in 2006!)

“Cybercheese”!!! On May 1, 1997, the ACS website appeared on what was then called the "World Wide Web."(Doesn’t that phrase seem so dated? It makes me chuckle.) It was designed by Daryl and Paul Kelly of Panther Creek Information Services.

In Q2 1997, newsletter editor Regi Hise asked, “Who is the ACS conference for, anyhow?” His remarks responded to a comment from an ACS board member who felt the upcoming conference program was concentrating on retailers at the expense of cheesemakers. (Once again, the recurring theme is that the ACS is losing its primary focus.) Regi’s response is quite fitting: “Over the last decade the ACS conference program has slowly changed to reflect items of interest to all of our members. Much of the program is still directed to cheesemakers but has grown to include topics of interest for all of our members and I think that is appropriate. First of all, without the trade channel, notably retailers, chefs, distributors, and brokers, cheesemakers would have no market for their cheese. These people aren't the enemy; they're our market partners. Their exposure to specialty cheese through ACS has made them much more receptive to our cause and need in getting specialty and farmstead cheeses into the marketplace. Many industry and opinion leaders from the trade attend the ACS conference and they possess a tremendous amount of experience in the various aspects of marketing cheese. They are the most cost effective focus group a cheesemaker could ever encounter. Some of the smartest cheesemakers I've seen spend much of their time at our conference networking with them and asking relevant questions. They help you with information on what is needed to sell products and they are potential customers.

Ten years ago we never would have guessed that this group would become a large member segment of ACS, and most active. It takes a lot of hard work to act as president of ACS, chair the conference, or put out a newsletter. If you look at a list of recent past presidents and conference chairs, you '11 see that the majority of them are retailers, distributors or brokers. If they did work for a cheese company, they were likely not cheesemakers, but cheese marketers.

If you 're a cheesemaker you should not be upset, but thrilled. Just think about what you've accomplished. The people who sell your products have taken on your cause, become active in your organization, and they come in greater numbers every year to your conference to interact. If the entire ACS conference was directed to cheesemakers, the trade would still attend. What cheesemakers would miss out on, though, would be the opportunity to learn from the trade. We believe that our conference programming is well balanced and serves all our members well." This article could be repeated every year!

As a testament to the maturation of American cheese products, Chantal Plasse, an ACS International Liaison, contributed an article to the newsletter entitled "The Art of Affinage."

Dominique Delageau became the next president of ACS in 1997.

During the conference, the ACS Board of Directors met with representatives from the American Dairy Goat Product Association (ADGPA) at the ACS conference in Seattle and solidified an important partnership. ADGPA members believed that ACS and ADGPA shared many benefits and goals, making it reasonable for ADGPA members to join ACS and dissolve their organization.

The ACS Board of Directors approved a proposal from ADGPA to establish a Goat Cheese Producers Subcommittee, which includes ACS members Mary Keehn of Cypress Grove Chevre, Jennifer Bice of Redwood Hills Farm, and Laura Jacobs Welch. The ACS Board was very impressed with the work Laura had done for ADGPA, so they appointed her as the new ACS Administrator and relocated the ACS administrative offices to Laura's home and office in Darien, Wisconsin.

The first quarter of 1998 brought good news regarding raw milk production in the US, framed in compromise language from the ongoing debate at CODEX concerning the use of raw milk versus pasteurized milk for cheese. The proposed wording states that "products covered by this standard should be subject to a combination of control measures, which may include pasteurization, and these should be shown to achieve the appropriate level of public health protection."

However, in April 1998, the controversy surrounding raw milk intensified. The National Cheese Institute (NCI) voted to recommend mandatory pasteurization or an equivalent process for milk used in cheese production.

The raw milk issue clearly galvanized ACS members like never before. An ACS Task Force was established, with Debra Dickerson leading the effort.

The newsletter in October 1999 included this ACS Position Statement:

Statement in Opposition to
Mandatory Pasteurization

The American Cheese Society (ACS) supports the right of America's cheesemakers to maintain
the tradition of specialty cheesemaking, which uses all types of milk to produce safe, healthy
and more flavorful cheeses. ACS opposes mandatory pasteurization, which restricts the economic
potential of American specialty and farmstead cheesemakers, maintaining the rigorous health standards
of the FDA and international requirements. ACS expects to support this Vermont standard and
recommends that it serves as an accepted model for safe domestic (federal and state) and international
(Codex Alimentarius) standards for cheesemaking.

Who We Are

The American Cheese Society is a U.S. non-profit organization dedicated to encouraging the
development and appreciation of American-made specialty cheeses. Its 400 members include

cheesemakers, farmers, marketers, buyers, brokers, distributors, importers, chefs, culinary educators, and journalists.

Goal

Domestic and international cheese standards must not mandate pasteurization”. ACS Advocacy has begun in earnest. (This is possibly the first Position Statement issued by ACS.)

Members of ACS expressed a strong desire for more programming centered around cheesemaking at the conference. In response, the 1998 conference was themed "The Art of Cheesemaking.” In addition to delivering an outstanding program, the conference also proved to be a significant financial success. During the conference, Ruth Anne Flore was elected as the next president of the ACS.

Concerning the challenges in raw milk cheese production, ACS urged both large and small cheesemakers to implement HACCP programs in their facilities. Many smaller ACS cheesemakers resisted this idea. For some, it was a financial concern; for others, it appeared to be a matter of time – “We do not have time to prepare a HACCP plan.” During the conference at Shelburne Farms, a session titled “De-Mystifying HACCP” was held.

In October 1999, Slow Food in Bra, Italy, showcased a selection of American cheeses that Garret Oliver from Brooklyn Brewery and Rob Kaufelt from Murray’s Cheese in New York City transported in their suitcases. The cheeses featured included Shelburne cloth-bound cheddar, Vella Dry Jack, Humboldt Fog, Mont St. Francis, Peluso’s Teleme, Major Farms, and Great Hill Blue. It was a crowning moment of recognition for our pioneering artisan cheesemakers!

In 1999, politics continued to hinder American artisan cheese production, particularly with regard to sheep's milk cheeses. Dr. Lawrence Faillace, President of the Vermont Sheep Breeders Association, reported difficulties with the USDA when farms attempted to import milking sheep from the EU. The USDA cites disease concerns, yet others argue no diseases have been identified. The USDA insists on culling the sheep. They mention intense pressure from both the beef and pharmaceutical industries, yet no one can explain why. Could this be a byproduct of the US trade war with the EU, given that the EU refuses to import US beef? National and international support is growing for the cause – "Save Our Sheep."

In 1999, the American Cheese Society partnered with Oldways, the Cheese Importers' Association, and Whole Foods Market to uphold individuals' rights to purchase unpasteurized (raw milk) cheese. In 2000, this alliance became the Cheese of Choice Coalition (CCC). Members of the ACS Raw Milk Task Force, led by Debra Dickerson, Ruth Anne Flore, Cathy Strange, and Daphne Zepos, recognized the power of this alliance and became part of the Coalition.

During Ruth's two terms as president, she focused on strengthening ACS alliances in the Cheese of Choice Coalition, enhancing the ACS presence at the NASFT shows, and encouraging ACS members to adopt HACCP programs. Ruth introduced a pivotal shift for the Society towards cheese activism. (Frequently heard from Ruth during her terms: "Just do it!"

In her 2000 Q1 newsletter message to the membership, President Ruth Anne Flore asked, "Will your cheese be alive in 2025?" She stated that ACS members are the "darlings in our marketplace. We have star quality—romance, a connection to the land." However, she emphasized, "Sustainability depends on your best practices." Ruth's presidential focus would be on developing these best practices. She firmly believed that every cheese production facility, regardless of size, should at least have a HACCP plan. Additionally, she believed that exerting a positive influence on regulatory boards should complement the proliferation of flavor profiles from our cheese producers.

ACS continued its association with the NASFT by commissioning a double booth for the show in San Francisco, which would feature 40 ACS cheesemakers!

My presidential term (Kathleen Shannon Finn) followed Ruth's in 2000. My years of experience on the ACS Board inspired me to implement significant changes during my tenure as president. We were always a diverse, talented, and well-intentioned group, but we needed some refinement to enhance our professionalism and achieve more. We often held differing opinions, and at times, it was challenging to present a united front. Occasionally, our personalities hindered our ability to reach the Society's goals.

Another challenge was the need for additional staff support. We were growing so quickly that our talented and capable administrator, Laura Jacobs-Welch, could not manage all the work that needed to be done. I recall telling her that no one person possesses all the skills ACS needs at this time.

My challenge was figuring out how to tackle these issues.

Fortunately, Judy Schad from Capriole introduced me to Carver Policy Governance. What truly captured my attention was the governance policy of "speaking with one voice." Oh my! I was hooked. For the first time in ACS history, we scheduled team-building board meetings throughout the year, in addition to our annual conference meeting. The long-term goal was to establish a framework of accountability and transparency, enabling strategic focus on achieving shared goals. At that time, I hoped this policy would provide the ACS

Board of Directors with a framework for taking responsibility for strategically accomplishing the Society's work.

Policy Governance was implemented during our transition from self-management to collaboration with the association management firm Food Service Associates (FSA). Barry King of FSA became our Executive Director. Notably, ACS later reverted to self-management before transitioning back to association management as its needs evolved over the years.

From 2000 to 2001, Membership Chair Jodie Wische successfully reviewed membership definitions and classifications. She secured Whole Foods for multiple unit memberships, initially involving three regions, with an additional five regions planning to join.

Work began to update the bylaws. Term limits would be set for board members.

At the Board Meeting in 2000, the board recognized a new committee, chaired by cheesemaker Allison Hooper, called the Milk Regulatory Committee. This committee was responsible for staying informed about regulatory developments related to milk and for updating cheesemakers on any issues that might arise.

To support the efforts of the Cheese of Choice Coalition, Dr. Catherine Donnelly authored a white paper for the FDA that addressed a study on raw milk cheese. Dr. Donnelly’s paper established new lines of communication with the FDA, significantly enhancing the advocacy work of the Cheese of Choice Coalition.

I would like to express my gratitude to the remarkable women who spearheaded the development of important advocacy policies for our organization: Ruth Anne Flore, Debra Dickerson, Cathy Strange, and Judith Schad. They did not accomplish this alone; many supported their efforts. However, it was their vision that set it in motion.

At the 2001 ACS conference in Louisville, Bill McKenna of Bill McKenna & Associates was elected president.

Bill continued to lead the board toward Policy Governance and established new goals for fundraising and ACS's partnership with NASFT.

ACS Executive Director Barry King reported that ACS now has 709 members, including 209 cheesemakers.

More than 400 members attended the very successful conference in Washington, D.C.

Cathy Strange of Whole Foods was elected president at the 2002 conference.

President Cathy Strange reported that the organization's financial status showed the ACS to be in the best shape it has ever been. She expressed her gratitude to Treasurer Paula Lambert, Barry King, and FSA for their efforts, which elevated the Society to a new level.

Cathy also announced the continuing review of the bylaws and an upcoming vote for membership approval.

Plans are in progress to celebrate ACS's 20th Anniversary, which will be highlighted at the 2003 conference in San Francisco.

Updated bylaws were approved by the membership in 2003.

A historic cheese tasting occurred on April 12, 2003, at the French Culinary Institute in New York City. This event marked the first time in the United States that a tasting showcased only farm-made raw milk cheeses. Slow Food USA and the ACS announced the formation of a new consortium – the American Raw Milk Farmstead Cheese Consortium (AFRMCC). The goals of this consortium were to identify American raw milk farmstead cheeses and establish a support network for their production (technical assistance), as well as for sales and marketing. The collaboration between ACS and Slow Food USA originated from discussions between Judy Schad, Chairperson of the Farmstead Cheese Committee of the American Cheese Society, and Patrick Martins of Slow Food USA.

This year, the Nominating Committee reached out broadly to the general membership to gather nominations for the upcoming open Board positions. The chairperson wrote, "This is an important exercise for you, the membership at large, as the officers of the Society are chosen from the Board of Directors. This is every member's opportunity to express their choice for the ACS governing board."

At the 2003 conference, Cathy Strange was elected to a second term.

Cathy's contributions to ACS created a lasting legacy. She worked tirelessly to garner support for ACS, both within the organization and externally. Under her leadership, Whole Foods became a significant financial backer and champion of essential ACS initiatives. Her prominent position in the industry attracted much-needed attention to the various regulatory issues that ACS needed to address for its members. Whole Foods' support for the Cheese Professional Certification program also stands out, as numerous Whole Foods cheesemongers have achieved certification.

Additionally, she chaired or co-chaired two highly successful conferences. The conference in Washington, D.C. showcased some firsts:

- The first marketplace involving support cheese partners
- The first Competition Award Ceremony as a unique and separate forum
- The first high-visibility conference in Washington, DC, directly within sight of the White House
- New logo design with a complement of support items available for purchasing, including posters
- With Ruth Flore, they instituted a requirement to have a cheese license to enter a product for competition
- Invited the FDA to the conference, the first-ever attendance

- Introduced an alcohol tasting format for the conference (Pappy Van Winkle)
- Recruited judges from around the world (A return to an earlier ACS tradition.)

When Cathy reflected on her time as President, she expressed what many of us felt about the responsibilities of the office: 1) “I didn’t realize the extent of the commitment I was taking on." And 2) the influence of others in accepting this role. In Cathy’s case, Bill McKenna and Ruth Anne Flore were quite persuasive in encouraging her to take on the presidency.

She shared the joy of the relationships she built and was happy to emphasize how ACS worked to include all aspects of the cheese industry.

Cathy had ambitious goals during her two terms as president. They included:

1) Update the way the organization includes all aspects of the cheese industry
2) Fund-raising
3) Change the perception of the organization as only a cheesemaker-focused.

Cathy also worked to include more distributors and retailers to support the mission of the cheesemakers.

Jodie Wische stepped up as the next president, elected at the 2004 conference in Milwaukee.

ACS PART III
2004- 2010
IT'S TIME TO RE-GROUP
A MOVE TO MANAGEMENT CHANGE
ADVOCACY GROWS

In her first message to the ACS membership, Jodie outlined the goals for her term as president. She emphasized the importance of fiscal responsibility, which required ACS to focus on sponsorship, membership, and conference planning. She noted that previous conferences were chaired by one or two individuals—"sacrificial lambs," as she called them. She was pleased to announce that there was now more support from FSA, along with a committee of nine people to organize the conference. (Can you imagine the years when the president also actively participated in planning the conference? I'm sure Dan Strongin and Ruth Flore still bear the scars!)

Once again, the executive director's burden increased due to ACS's growth. Jodie led discussions on the next steps for envisioning ACS support staff.

As Jodie reflected on her term as president, she remarked, "I truly appreciated all the board members I served with – especially those strong-minded women who embraced me and were very active and inspiring. Judy Schad, Cathy Strange, Sue Conley, Kathleen Shannon Finn, Ruth Flore, Allison Hooper, Mary Keehn, Jennifer Bice – love these women! "

In 2005, Allison Hooper of Vermont Butter and Cheese became the first cheesemaker since Joan Snyder of Hollow Road Farm in 1994 to serve as president of the American Cheese Society (ACS). Hurricane Katrina had just devastated New Orleans, resulting in widespread destruction that affected many aspects of the cheese industry. Marci Wilson succeeded Barry King as Executive Director.

Allison recognized the challenge of meeting the diverse expectations of the membership. ACS membership had nearly doubled in the past two years and now included small farmstead cheesemakers alongside larger cheese producers, independent and chain retailers, and an increasing number of chefs, writers, distributors, and brokers—a true Who's Who of the cheese world. She wrote, "As we expanded our reach, we were committed to being thought leaders in the food industry without alienating any members: a tension that never disappears." She asked, "How do we preserve the intimacy and personality of our organization while growing and expanding?"

As a cheesemaker, Allison recognized the importance of self-regulation in aiding members to comply with new food safety requirements. With the growth in cheese distribution points, retailers demanded a high level of vigilance regarding food safety. Self-regulation had been a topic of ongoing discussion for many years and ultimately led to strengthened advocacy efforts before the FDA. (This also emphasized advocacy as a membership benefit.)

While ACS has always been a hub for cheese education, the groundwork was laid in 2005 and 2006 for ACS to establish a certification program similar to those for sommeliers or Certified Culinary Professionals. Steve Ehlers became a board liaison for the new

Cheese Education Committee, which Laurie Greenberg of Dairy Business Innovation Center and Cultural Landscapes, LLC chaired.

Allison was elected to a second term.

In 2006, the ACS Board of Directors established the Lifetime Achievement Award "to honor an individual whose professional accomplishments have made a significant and lasting impact on the American cheese industry and whose life and character have earned the respect and admiration of their professional colleagues." Ignazio Vella was the first recipient of this honor.

ACS membership increased to 1,400 in 2007, with 800 individuals attending the conference in Burlington. Allison was elected to an unprecedented third term. David Gremmels was prepared to step in as president, but he had suffered an injury that had not yet healed. He expressed his gratitude to Allison for taking his place for another year.

In May 2007, a memorial fundraiser was held to establish a scholarship in honor of John Crompton, a beloved specialty distributor. The scholarships aim to enable recipients who share John's passion for specialty cheese to enhance their knowledge and skills by attending ACS-sponsored events. This scholarship was the first of its kind, setting the stage for others to follow.

The Cheese of Choice Coalition made a significant announcement: Rogue Creamery, located in Central Point, Oregon, has been recognized as the first producer of raw milk cheese to export its products to the EU. Previously, the USDA permitted only pasteurized cheeses for export. This initiative was the result of collaboration among the USDA, the US Dairy Export Council, the Oregon Department of Agriculture, the American Cheese Society, the Cheese of Choice Coalition, and Slow Food USA. This change enabled Rogue Creamery to showcase its cheeses at events like the World Cheese Awards, where they received the top honor for the world's best cheese in 2019.

Dan Carter graciously accepted the ACS Lifetime Achievement Award on behalf of the Dairy Business Innovation Center team.

The benefits of membership were a recurring topic of discussion within the society. Historically, the conference was celebrated as the primary advantage of membership. The term "conference-centric" was coined during Allison's tenure to encourage directors to expand benefits for members who could not spare the time or resources to attend. How could the conference content be shared with those who were unable to participate? This question yielded more far-reaching outcomes than initial conversations had anticipated. FSA was not a "cheese-centric" organization that could effectively disseminate this information. This dilemma sparked introspective discussions about the possibility of returning to self-management.

At the same time, regional movements sparked increased activity. State and regional cheese guilds were established to meet the demands for local branding and education. Guild leaders exchanged ideas and collaborated with ACS, enhancing prior efforts to develop certification programs.

As the Cheese Education Committee continued its efforts to develop a cheese professional certification program, Allison noted a newly emerging category of ACS members—cheese educators. These individuals teach consumers and those who work with cheese about every aspect of cheese-making and how to enjoy cheese.

In January 2007, there was a significant increase in the presence of American cheesemakers at the NASFT, highlighted by the debut of the ACS Cheese Pavilion. Instead of being divided into individual booths, the Pavilion made a powerful statement about the growing number of proud American cheesemakers and the quality of their products.

The American Cheese Education Foundation (ACEF) was established to support cheese education through scholarships and research funded by donations, planned giving, and grants.

At the end of Allison's third term in 2008, she noted that ACS had gained momentum and cash flow to hire dedicated staff to implement the members' creative ideas.

David Gremmels of Rogue Creamery was elected president in the summer of 2008 at the Annual Conference in Chicago. The 25th Anniversary of ACS was also celebrated.

The American Cheese Society celebrated its 25th anniversary at the conference in 2008 in Chicago, Illinois. Christine Hyatt created a documentary titled " Looking Back, Looking Forward, " which featured a series of oral interviews with individuals reflecting on the early years of ACS. Paul Kinstedt, Ari Weinzweig, and Ricki Carroll, all charter members of ACS, shared their memories of how Frank Kosikowski organized the Society. The oral histories can be found on Christine Hyatt's YouTube channel. Many thanks to Christine for continuing to share her work. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=74CLGO0iCss

In her oral interview, Allison Hooper, cheesemaker and co-founder of Vermont Butter and Cheese, remembered apologizing for the poor quality of cheeses at the early cheese judgings. She chuckled at how cheesemakers have transitioned from being "chopped liver" to being celebrities. Cindy Major of Vermont Shepherd mentioned that her early cheeses were hard and resembled "hockey pucks." She first attended an ACS conference in 1990 and was awestruck by the shared knowledge. She credits ACS with the subsequent success of her cheeses, which led to a Best of Show win in 2000 at the Vermont conference. One hundred twenty-five people attended the first conference in Ithaca, New York, in 1983. In 2008, at its 25th Anniversary, conference attendance was over eleven hundred!

David Gremmel’s presidential terms saw a commitment to green energy, resulting in newsletters going online, reducing waste at conferences, and increasing recycling awareness on conservation and sequestration. He also managed the move from association management of ACS back to self-management. He credits Cathy Strange and Jodie Wische with creating initiatives leading to ACS reaching a “liberation budget,” enabling the society to make that move financially.

The paragraph above minimizes the diligent process ACS underwent to implement that management change. If you ask anyone on David’s board at that time, they will all mention “Whidbey”.

Let’s take a moment to provide some context. Debi Benedetti, an independent not-for-profit consultant, was brought on to assist the ACS Board of Directors determine whether self-management or third-party management would be best for its future. Debi’s passion for cheese, her appreciation for cheesemakers, and the members’ enthusiasm made her a natural fit to guide ACS through this process. Extensive outreach sessions, including member communications, vision sessions, and other outreach efforts, contributed to this endeavor. As David noted then, “a key element in the process of the Board of Directors’ strategic work was to envision its future in a place that supports a creative, inspiring, and inclusive thought process. “ Everyone agreed that Kurt Dammeier’s place on Whidbey Island in Washington state was the perfect environment to enable the process to begin. “Whidbey” became synonymous with censorship-free exchange of opinions and ideas.

Consensus was reached. The American Cheese Society would return to self-management.

In March 2010, David announced that ACS had hired Nora Weiser as its Executive Director.

David made this announcement in April 2010:

"On April 1, the American Cheese Society celebrated its independence as a self-managed association. The process of self-management began in 2007 and was finally realized throughout the past few months. Your association reached a level of maturity, built safeguards, resources, and organizational structure while establishing strategic industry alliances that gave the board of directors and ACS advisors the tools to work with our former third-party management group, FSA, to achieve what was an aggressive timeline for transition by April 1."

Executive Director, Nora Weiser, wrote in April 2010: " In the end, when the transformation is complete, you'll have an association that provides exactly what you need before you even know you need it."

President David Gremmels had other goals for his second term: to grow the presence of ACS at regional events.

"One of many goals for ACS this year was to have a presence in regional cheese festivals, and particularly to align ourselves with cheesemakers and industry leaders to help increase awareness of American cheese and of ACS. Our thought was to achieve this by building industry alliances. To this end, I was invited to and attended events in France, Canada, California, and Oregon. I participated in educational sessions covering regional cheese issues, tastings, and marketing to consumers. "

Susan Page Sturman and her committee continued to work on the Fromager Certification program. The committee is building a "Body of Knowledge" (BOK) document, which includes the knowledge needed to perform the jobs of a fromager or cheesemonger.

After the ACS successfully participated in the Brewers Association's (BA) SAVOR event in Washington, D.C., it decided to join the Brewers Association again at their Great American Beer Festival (GABF) in Denver, CO, in September 2010.

ACS PART IV
2011-2023
EVER CHANGING AS WE GROW

Christine Hyatt was elected president of ACS during the 2010 Seattle conference. Her goals, informed by feedback from surveys and meetings at the Seattle and Austin conferences, reflect the membership's needs for education, networking, and regional events for both members and consumers.

The 2011 ACS Conference would be the first to take place outside the contiguous United States. Plans were underway for the conference to be held in Montreal, Canada. Members were excited to find out how to transport cheese across the border!

A new conference position was announced – the Official Conference Cheesemonger. Volunteer cheesemongers have always played important roles in the ACS Conference and Competition. Now, one will be recognized each year as the on-site cheesemonger who manages the receipt, storage, and preparation of the thousands of cheeses that are part of the competition and conference.

Christine considered herself a "cheese cheerleader." Her dedication to sustainability, emphasizing support for local and regional artisan cheese, took shape in her signature initiative—the establishment of American Cheese Month (which began as a week) and continues to this day. She hoped to reactivate the Academy of Cheese, founded in 1991 to honor the early supporters of the American Cheese movement.

She also experienced a "baptism by fire," if you will. Days after she assumed the role of president, Estrella Family Creamery issued a recall due to a listeria outbreak. Armed federal marshals confiscated the cheese at the farm. Kate Arding, a dairy scientist and consultant, assisted in compiling the data necessary to address the situation.

In 2010, the By-Laws were updated. The word “Leader” was added to the mission statement.

2010-2011 Board Projects/Goals included:

- Updating valuable resources available to members online.
- Conducting a survey of current inspection trends amongst cheesemakers.
- Developing new educational offerings on food safety.
- Publishing official ACS Position Statements in support of our members.

“We come into the new year from an unsettled place. The past few months have been a whirlwind in the cheese world: inspections, recalls, and creamery closures have rippled through our community, including the most recent closure of Sally Jackson Cheeses.

We are in the throes of change. It is an inevitable state and synonymous with growth and maturation as an industry. Food safety and food policy have been, and will continue to be, something we will grapple with as individuals, businesses, and as an industry. With the passage of the Food Safety and Modernization Act and its recent signing into law, there will be changes in the way all foods are regulated. In addition, the FDA is reviewing the 60-day rule (look for a story on this topic in the New York Times in the coming weeks).” Christine Hyatt/January 2011.

In 2011 and 2012, new initiatives were introduced to meet members’ growing needs.

- Outreach to help educate local inspectors
- Support for cheesemakers' rights to produce raw milk cheese
- Public awareness about artisan, farmstead, and https://civicamanagement.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/

After seven years of painstaking work, Susan Sturman proudly announced that the first Certified Cheese Professional exam would take place at the annual conference in Raleigh, North Carolina. (By February 2012, all seats for the exam were filled!)

Kate Arding, the Chair of the Regulatory & Academic Committee, represented ACS during a public comment session with the FDA concerning the attribution of foodborne illness sources. Her committee is also working on a document that will outline best practices for cheesemaking and emphasize key focus areas in artisan, farmstead, and specialty cheese production.

The Academy of Cheese was re-launched at the conference in Montreal to honor eight inductees:

- Jennifer Bice, owner of Redwood Hill Farm & Creamery in Sebastopol, CA
- Laura Chenel, founder of Laura Chenel's Chevre in Sonoma, CA
- Allison Hooper, co-owner of Vermont Butter and Cheese Creamery in Websterville, VT
- Mary Keehn, founder of Cypress Grove Chevre in Arcata, CA
- Letty and Bob Kilmoyer, founders of Westfield Farm in Hubbardston, MA
- Judy Schad, owner of Capriole Farmstead Goat Cheeses in Greenville, IN
- Anne Topham, owner of Fantome Farm in Ridgeway, WI

Created in 1991, the Academy recognizes early supporters of the American cheese movement.

For the second consecutive year, February featured a “Winter Webinar Series” that supported the Society’s focus on education as a benefit of membership. Three topics were discussed: 1) Safe storage temperatures for cheese and a Virtual Roundtable on retailer best practices, and 3) Preparing a HACCP Plan.

Greg O’Neill was elected ACS president at the 2012 conference in Raleigh.

In his first newsletter message to the membership, Greg applauded a number of firsts at the conference:

1) Raleigh was the first conference in the Southeast region.
2) The first Certified Cheese Professional Exam took place.
3) State and Regional Cheese Guilds gathered at the conference.
4) A strategic alliance with the UK's Specialist Cheesemakers Association was announced.
5) The newly formed ACS Past President's Advisory Council held a meeting. These Past Presidents will serve as ambassadors on critical issues.

Executive Director Nora Weiser noted that the FDA has scheduled a series of 246 small cheesemaker inspections for 2012. Following these inspections, a major focus for ACS this year will be education, which will also play a significant role leading up to the 30th anniversary of ACS in 2013.

In Greg’s notes to me regarding his tenure as president, he wrote, “ During my tenure, the urgent focus needed to be addressing the existential threats to our members and their livelihoods posed by the dark clouds coming from the FDA and other regulatory authorities, who were not engaging with ACS and were making moves to potentially outlaw all raw milk cheese (of any aging profile) and also the use of wood boards to age cheese in general. The ACS board and Regulatory and Academic committee, along with past presidents, activist ACS members, and allied organizations, all worked in concert to help avoid this outcome. It was not a slam dunk, and we took a two-prong strategy, where ACS was officially on the engagement path, while others, not officially ACS, could pursue some hard-hitting political avenues and PR messaging."

A significant amount of time and effort went into trying to get representatives of the FDA to hold in-person meetings with ACS. The first meeting finally occurred at the conference in Madison in 2013. This meeting established a precedent for future meetings between ACS and the FDA. Greg believes that this engagement was beneficial for ACS since some of the FDA's proposed changes were not implemented.

Greg was elected to a second term.

Greg continued to focus the ACS Board of Directors on the following:

1) ACS fiscal management and investment priorities
2) Engagement with regulatory authorities
3) Educational priorities
4) The board's structure and schedule
5) The optimal role of future conference co-chairs in the era of a self-managed organization.

Peggy Smith of Cowgirl Creamery was elected president at the 2014 conference in Sacramento, California.

Peg continued to concentrate on meetings with regulators to shape policy. Supporting regional programs across the U.S. was also a priority. She was pleased to announce Raw Milk Appreciation Day, scheduled for April. She collaborated with the board and her team to formulate a three-year spending plan. This plan facilitated the establishment of a reserve fund for emergencies, which was essential for ACS' survival during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Peg focused on food safety issues, which prompted work on the ACS Best Practices for Cheesemakers.

The Cheese Professional Certification Program continued to enhance supportive services for exam takers. The program empowered educators to prepare cheesemongers for the CCP exam. Additionally, the program initiated the development of a Sensory Evaluation certification program.

In the summer of 2015, Cheesebytes published an issue dedicated to keeping its members updated on regulatory issues. Bob Wills of Cedar Grove Cheese attended a meeting on behalf of ACS and reported on a Regulatory Roundup meeting for the International Dairy Foods Association. Mike Taylor of the FDA announced a shift in focus for the FDA, moving from a one-size-fits-all inspection and enforcement strategy to creating standards that promote safe production and transportation.

Dick Roe of Gourmet Foods International was elected the next president in 2015.

Dick expressed a desire for the ACS to encompass the entire membership, not solely cheesemakers. He envisioned collaborating with Peg Smith, Jeff Jurik, and Nora Weiser to steer the board toward this emphasis.

Addressing regulatory issues remained a key priority. Dick proposed and implemented an important shift in ACS's positioning with regulators. He recognized the benefit of transitioning from an adversarial stance to a more collaborative partnership with policymakers. With support from Jeff Jirik, Bob Wills, Marianne Smukowski, Max McCalman, and ACS staff, Best Practices for Cheesemakers and the Body of Knowledge were further developed. These documents reflected ACS's commitment to the health and safety of the cheese-consuming public and also aligned with the FDA's focus on safe production.

Dick introduced a new level of professionalism to finance and budgeting. He tasked Pat Ford and Jeff Jirik with developing processes to ensure accountability in the budget and review procedures.

Once again, Debi Benedetti was enlisted to help the Board clarify mission statements and core values and utilize new methods to move the Society forward and become a Board with purpose and direction.

Jeff Jirik of Caves of Faribault was elected president of ACS at the 2016 conference in Iowa.

Jeff applauded the work of the presidents and Executive Committees that preceded him. He wrote, "Those Executive teams and the Boards they led did a good job of creating a strategy and vision and then **acting** on that. We were goal-focused and action-oriented – truly a working Board."

In his first message to the membership, Jeff listed his immediate "Presidential To Do List":

1) Continue progress in building ACS advocacy with the FDA
2) Incorporate the FDA's and members' suggestions into an updated ACS Best Practices Guide for Cheesemakers.
3) Create a strategic plan to carry ACS through 2020.
4) Support a record-breaking conference in Denver.

Jeff praised the foundational work with the FDA that came before him. He and his team were preparing for a meeting with the FDA. Supporting Dick Roe's collaborative approach to interacting with the FDA, Jeff and his team decided to incorporate the FDA's suggested edits into the ACS Best Practices Guide to Cheesemaking. At their meeting, FDA representatives expressed their appreciation.

John Antonelli became the next president in 2017.

John Antonelli of Antonelli's Cheese Shop was the first president of ACS to become a Certified Cheese Professional. He also played a key role in the launch of a second ACS certification program in 2018 – T.A.S.T.E. - ACS Certified Cheese Sensory Evaluator.

Before becoming president, John served on the Judging and Competition Committee. He participated in the process that ultimately separated the judging from the conference. This change aimed to enhance the financial situation of ACS, which had declined over the previous two years, and to maintain higher food safety standards at ACS events.

John focused primarily on enhancing the Society's internal operating systems by identifying missing systems, policies, and processes. He also addressed the insufficient HR support in the office. Mary McClatchey from Work Smart Partners was hired to assist the Executive Director and her team. A review of the Employee Handbook was conducted, which led to updates in the ACS Member Code of Conduct, employee performance reviews, and job descriptions.

In addition to addressing HR issues, there were budget concerns. The operating budget was in the red for two years.

A major effort began to focus on analysis. Between 2017-2019, a decision was made to separate the Judging and Competition from the Conference. It was hoped that doing so would reduce cost burdens and increase higher levels of food safety standards at all ACS events.

These major projects were also underway:

- Publication of Cheese & Dairy Products Lexicon
- Alignment of Database project with Website redesign
- Completion of RFP process for Website
- Determining the scope of the Retailers Toolkit and identifying SMEs
- Exploring feasibility of Certified Cheesemaker Exam
- Mobile optimization of all e-mail blasts (except CheeseBytes – slated for Q1 2019 as it impacts new website design and database functionality)
- Launch of the Ambassadors program
- Establish a process for "Fostering Innovation" with the Board serving as innovation advisors. This process will initially focus on the separation of J&C and Conference.

The Regulatory Committee's work persisted, focusing on establishing a member discount for testing programs. Efforts on the Retailers' toolkit templates within the Safe Cheesemaking hub also continued.

In 2018, Cathy Gaffney of Wegman's is the next president of ACS.

Cathy brought a unique perspective to her tenure as president. She grew up on a 700-acre dairy farm in Lima, New York. As an adult, she serves as the Vice President of Specialty Cheese, Deli, and Cheese Caves with the retailer Wegmans. At Cornell University, she majored in agricultural economics. What a fantastic background to lead such a diverse membership that is ACS!

With her background in retail, Cathy hoped to implement the Food Safety Level One Initiative for cheesemakers. Although the program did not reach the industry-wide goal she envisioned, she remains confident that this can still be achieved.

Additionally, she aimed to engage more members in the Society's activities. She conducted a thorough review of the Strategic Plan for ACS, a timely action given the upcoming challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Cathy oversaw a highly successful conference, which would be the last one until 2022.

In 2019 Marianne Smukowski became the next president of ACS.

Marianne was the first academic to hold this position since Dick Kleyn in 1988. Her background in food safety and judging inspired her to run for a position on the ACS board. She regularly served as a technical judge for ACS competitions. Before becoming president, she chaired and played a key role in developing the Best Practices Guide for Cheesemakers. Additionally, she effectively collaborated with the FDA to permit cheese aging on wood boards—a significant victory for cheesemakers!

Shortly after becoming president, Marianne was informed by the ACS Executive Director that she would resign at the end of the year. The board appointed a search committee, which included some members of the executive committee, a former president, and a member of the ACS community at large. After several months of searching, assisted by a consulting firm, the search committee recommended a candidate to the board. The board approved this recommendation, and a new Executive Director was named.

Marianne found this to be a challenging time. As soon as the new executive director was hired, the world was struck by the COVID-19 pandemic. Marianne became the first of the ACS "COVID Presidents." She immediately recognized that ACS was in uncharted territory. The new executive director, although lacking experience in cheese and dairy, was chosen based on her experience with other non-profit organizations. ACS had no guidelines on how the Society should navigate a pandemic.

COVID-19 completely altered the daily operations of ACS. How would the pandemic affect the annual conference? After numerous discussions and Zoom meetings, Marianne announced that the health and safety of the cheese community is the priority and that the in-person 2020 conference in Portland would be canceled. This was the first ACS conference to be canceled since 1988. A virtual meeting was organized to address the pandemic and its impact on the cheese industry. Fortunately for ACS, sponsors did not request refunds. Revenue from conferences, however, provided significant funding for the ACS budget. The 2020 Finance Committee (Jeff Jirik, Jeremy Stephenson, Lynn Stray, Mike Koch, Marianne Smukowski) was tasked with finding a way to ensure ACS's sustainability, anticipating a large financial loss for a year without a conference. Fortunately, when Mike Koch became treasurer, he was able to source a life-saving PPP Loan (Payment Protection Plan) for $95,000.

Marianne calls her term as president "bittersweet." She could not pursue her other goals due to the challenges presented by COVID, but she was determined to keep ACS sustainable and viable throughout the pandemic. In addition to the ACS Above and Beyond Award for her work on the Best Practices Guide for Cheesemakers, Marianne has also received an ACS Lifetime Achievement Award.

Jeremy Stephenson of Farms for City Kids Foundation/Spring Brook Farm was elected president in 2020 following Marianne.

Jeremy stepped into unprecedented territory when he became president. He collaborated with the first new ACS Executive Director in a decade, all while the COVID pandemic was in full swing. The finance committee had recommended, and the board had agreed, that while the ACS had $1.1 million in total assets ($.95m in cash assets mostly as laddered bonds), that no matter what was ahead in terms of revenue loss and related challenges that ACS leadership would make sure that $500,000 was remaining after it was all over. It was understood that without this cash reserve, all the gains made during the years of 'self-governance' without a management company involved could be lost.

With added financial challenges, his plate was full before he even walked in the door! However, recounting his time as president, he described it as a period of great collaboration between the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors.

The members of the Executive Committee, various committees, and board members worked tirelessly, conducting an impressive number of teleconferences compared to previous norms. Non-executive committee members and non-board members also stepped up, contributing their unique skills, including legal expertise, to address these challenges.

In 2021, a virtual conference once again replaced a large in-person event. Although the virtual conference generated some sponsorship revenue, it was certainly much less than what the large conferences contributed.

ACS had not faced financial pressures like these since Dan Strongin's presidency in 1994. Significant cost-cutting was necessary, leading to the non-renewal of the lease on the current office space. The reduction in office staff, which included the executive director, intensified the pressure on the board to engage more deeply in the operational management of ACS.

Beyond the issues brought on by COVID, the recent changes in Executive Directors shed light on some organizational weaknesses, heretofore unnoticed. Jeremy made the following observations, which were echoed by future presidents Lynn Stray and Mike Koch:

- "It became clear that the BOD needed to connect more directly with the committees and take a stronger role, and both direction and support. An effort was made to clarify roles with the committees and their chairs and to bring the committees into the budgeting process. Over the years committees had been operating in 'silos' and communication with the board often ran through the ED rather than directly to the board with reports and on questions of direction.

-
- Creation of a Governance committee to facilitate committee charter review and provide opinions to the BOD. This committee is tasked with projects by the BOD and is not an oversight body as much as an advisory group.
- The chart of accounts was streamlined to allow us to see more clearly where funds go and give the treasurer access to real time numbers in QuickBooks.
- After consulting with former Presidents regarding issues with association management companies, the BOD decided to try this approach again. It decreased staffing costs by about 40% and theoretically provides the ACS with more specific support where needed and flexibility in what it pays for through an annual scope of work review.
- Extraordinary efforts on the part of many yielded some long-overdue positive outcomes in terms of the ACS organizational structure. On the financial side, the 2021 year-end financials showed that ACS operated at a loss of only $5,000 and had maintained net assets at $872,000."

Jeremy would refer to the work done to get ACS through the pandemic and rebuild its management structure as "an all-out wartime survival effort accomplished with tremendous camaraderie on the part of all involved."

The COVID Presidents agreed on the importance of the Governance Committee's work. In a recent note to me, Mike Koch commented, “In my opinion, the Governance Committee was another critical outcome of the COVID years -- perhaps the most important to effective organizational function in the long run.

The lack of this committee at the ACS (generally a standing committee of organizational boards) became "glaring" early on during the transition of presidencies from Marianne to Jeremy. The committee was formed and chartered during Jeremy's term. Its contributions have been invaluable. I think of the Governance Committee as part internal compliance, part organizational memory bank, part coach and cheerleader. Their chartered purpose: "to ensure the effectiveness and consistency of the organization’s governance documents and governance processes. Aligning governance with legal and ethical standards."

This statement of purpose also highlights the "glaring need" we observed: there were no governance documents or processes that we could rely on to stabilize the organization during the crisis that was COVID. Governance committee now oversees the following processes:

- Board and committee development, onboarding, and orientation
- Board and committee evaluation
- Bylaws and policies review
- Ethical standards, including conflict of interest policy
- Succession planning, business continuity, and risk management

Since its inception, the Governance Committee has worked with committee chairs to draft, finalize, and seek board approval for committee charters which define that committee's purpose and responsibilities. In my view, this was a first and important step in bringing what were unintegrated, non-collaborative committees often "running their own show," to an integrated set of board-authorized teams. Importantly, these committee charters defined what each committee is responsible for -- and where these responsibilities end and staff's begin.

The committee charters have proven invaluable in preparing and managing the Civica scope document.”

> To move forward, the board selected Civica Association Management. From 2020 to 2022, Tara Holmes of Civica spearheaded the effort, partnering with the ACS board to rebuild ACS in collaboration with Civica.

Lynn Giacomini Stray followed Jeremy as president in 2021.

Lynn holds the titles of COO and co-CEO alongside her sisters at Point Reyes Farmstead, a 100% woman-owned business. The Giacomini family has prioritized responsible farming for generations, which includes humane animal welfare, water conservation, and land stewardship.

Lynn and the Board acknowledged that ACS could not endure another year without a revenue-generating conference. With COVID becoming more manageable, plans progressed for an in-person conference in Portland, Oregon. Lynn's leadership and strong industry ties rebuilt a robust conference sponsorship program, resulting in a highly financially successful in-person conference.

Lynn was also instrumental in forming the Marketing Communications Committee, which took responsibility for social media, the ACS website, PR, member communications, sponsorship, and more. Previously, the Executive Director handled this work. This move reflected the board's ongoing effort to regain control over the society's business.

Lynn focused on enhancing engagement with committee chairs, who were invited to quarterly Board meetings. This effort fostered a more collaborative relationship between the committees and the board, aligning them with ACS's vision. The committee charters aligned with the ACS Strategic Plan. Previously, the Executive Director had collaborated more closely with the committees rather than the committees engaging directly with the Board.

“Move Forward with Purpose” was the 2021 mantra of strategic planning. After years of crisis management, the board agreed that completing governance and operational modeling must be secured before launching any new strategic initiatives.

Efforts continued to analyze the Board’s strengths and weaknesses. Work began on an updated Strategic Plan that had been delayed for two years. It became clear that the previous plan had placed financial stress on the Society, as it did not account for additional revenue sources and budgets. Strategic goals must align with the organization’s capacity to achieve them.

The Board recognized that the Society was not meeting acceptable standards for diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging for everyone. The Board partnered with the ACE Foundation to participate in DEIB workshops.

Work during a two-day Board retreat produced a new Strategic Plan and four initiatives:

Goal 1 – Respond to Climate Change

Identify the industry's environmental impact by working with academic partners to develop prioritized best practices. Provide members with resources to reduce their environmental footprint and communicate the industry’s contributions to sustainability.

Goal 2 – Diversify Education Programs

Deliver targeted educational content through varied formats and locations.

Goal 3 – Collaborate to Promote the Cheese Industry

Establish strategic partnerships to enhance member value and promote the industry.

Goal 4 – Create a DEIB Framework

Develop a DEIB-centered framework to guide programming, policies, and operations.

Mike Koch of Firefly Farms became the next president in 2022. He co-founded Firefly Farms in 2000. His entrepreneurial skills and experience as a leader in the financial services industry will provide invaluable support in saving the Society during his tenure on the Executive Committee, the ACS board, and his term as president.

Mike had specific goals when he joined the Board in 2019 and when he assumed the presidency in 2022. He aimed to elevate the Board's professionalism and functionality. He felt that the Board had come to rely too heavily on staff over the years and needed to re-engage to assert itself as the dominant voice of the Society once again. He believed that the ACS financial processes required improvement, as he found them confusing and in need of clarity. He was concerned about the concentration of revenue at the conference and thought that other revenue streams needed to be developed. He also believed changes were necessary in committee work and reporting. That is quite an ambitious to-do list! He was fortunate to have the support of the Executive Committee members to achieve these goals.

Mike said, “Those whom I served with – on the executive committee in particular – felt and often remarked that it was as if we were managing a start-up organization, not one that was approaching a 40th anniversary.” Lynn Stray and Jeremy Stephenson would agree!

In May of 2022, the Judging and Competition successfully separated from the Conference.

The “COVID presidents” recognized that addressing the pandemic and its financial repercussions was a collaborative effort involving the Executive Committee, supported by the Board and broader membership. Lynn Stray emphasized the importance of the close relationship between the president and the Vice President during this crisis to ensure continuity of goals across terms. This work spanned multiple presidencies, including those of Marianne Smukowski, Jeremy Stephenson, Lynne Giacomini Stray, Mike Koch, and Larry Hedrich. Michelle Haram also made significant contributions to the effort to save the Society. These individuals led the charge during the pandemic, and their dedication saved the Society from bankruptcy and potential collapse. It has been suggested that the membership may not have been fully aware of the serious nature of the situation. Furthermore, the efforts of the “COVID presidents” reinforced internal procedures and policies that will guide ACS towards a stronger future. The groundwork has been laid for the American Cheese Society to thrive over the next 40 years.

From the outset, every ACS presidency has faced its own unique set of crises and challenges. Some may disagree, but in my opinion, what the COVID presidents navigated was unprecedented in ACS history. Yes, many of our terms were filled with personnel and financial challenges; however, the COVID presidents were responsible for ensuring the Society's survival and rebuilding its foundation.

CONCLUSION

From the outset, concerns have arisen that ACS may become too large and lose its focus on small cheesemakers. However, consider what the Society offers its members today. In the early years, the primary benefit of membership was an exceptional annual conference. One could argue that, despite the Society's tremendous growth, today ACS is capable of serving its cheesemakers and other members not only by helping them produce better cheese but also in other significant ways. ACS supports the industry through regulatory and advocacy platforms, as well as extensive educational opportunities, including accessible webinars and podcasts. These benefits far exceed what individual companies could address alone. It has encouraged all businesses, not just cheesemakers, involved in the “Farm to Fork” process to implement food safety programs, such as having a HACCP plan. Furthermore, ACS has equipped the membership with the tools to do so.

In conclusion, it is natural to ask, “Is there a perfect type of leadership for the Society?” In my opinion, the Society has benefited from leaders with diverse backgrounds, supported by staff, whether self-managed or sourced from an association management company. Each president has brought unique perspectives and talents, contributing a distinct piece to the leadership puzzle. Most have approached the office with plans to help the Society evolve and continue serving its members effectively.

Leadership makes a difference. ACS cannot be managed by just anyone or any association management company. In the early years, many of us stepped up to fill a void. Today, the organization’s complexity requires leadership with diverse skills—sensitivity to the needs of the membership alongside strategic business and managerial expertise. ACS has been fortunate to have leaders in place at precisely the right time with the appropriate capabilities. ACS presidents have included cheesemakers, retailers, wholesalers, brokers, distributors, and academics. This diversity has provided a balanced perspective on what the Society needed at any given moment.

Self-management offers advantages; however, it can be a costly endeavor. Association management provides benefits, but only if the management group understands the Society's unique passions and purpose.

However, the key point is that, regardless of whether it is self-managed or association-managed, the Board must maintain a high level of engagement. The Board cannot allow the Society to be managed on "autopilot" without its oversight and involvement.

ACS Presidents' List

Year	First Name	Last Name	Company
1983-84	Elizabeth (Liz)	Biss	Cheese Shot, Ithaca NY
1984-85	Bob	LeCompte	
1985-86	Bob	LeCompte	
1986-87	Caleb	Williams	Caleb's Cheese
1987-88	Barbara	Lang	Cornell/Culinary Director at Inglenook Winery, CA/Food Writer
1988-89	Dick	Kleyn	Rutgers
1989-90	Dick	Kleyn	Rutgers
1990-91	Ari	Weinzweig	Zingerman's
1991-92	Ari	Weinzweig	Zingerman's
1992-93	Gerd	Stern	Infood/Galilee
1993-94	Joan	Snyder	Hollow Road Farm
1994-95	Dan	Strongin	Andronico's
1995-96	Dan	Strongin	Access to Tradition
1996-97	Stacy	Kinsley	Dan Carter, Inc.
1997-98	Dominique	Delugeau	Saputo
1998-99	Ruth Anne	Flore	Flore, Price & Associates

1999-00	Ruth Anne	Flore	Flore, Price & Associates
2000-01	Kathleen Shannon	Finn	Columbus Distributing
2001-02	Bill	McKenna	Bill McKenna & Associates
2002-03	Cathy	Strange	Whole Foods Market
2003-04	Cathy	Strange	Whole Foods Market
2004-05	Jodie	Wische	Roth Kase USA
2005-06	Allison	Hooper	Vermont Butter & Cheese Company
2006-07	Allison	Hooper	Vermont Butter & Cheese Company
2007-08	Allison	Hooper	Vermont Butter & Cheese Company
2008-09	David	Gremmels	Rogue Creamery
2009-10	David	Gremmels	Rogue Creamery
2010-11	Christine	Hyatt	Cheese Chick
2011-12	Christine	Hyatt	Cheese Chick
2012-13	Greg	O'Neill	Pastoral Artisan Cheese, Bread & Wine
2013-14	Greg	O'Neill	Pastoral Artisan Cheese, Bread & Wine
2014-15	Peg	Smith	Cowgirl Creamery
2015-16	Dick	Roe	Gourmet Foods International
2016-17	Jeff	Jirik	Caves of Faribault
2017-18	John	Antonelli	Antonelli's Cheese Shop
2018-19	Cathy	Gaffney	Wegman's Food Markets
2019-20	Marianne	Smukowski	Wisconsin Center for Dairy Research
2020-21	Jeremy	Stephenson	Farms for City Kids Foundation/Spring Brook Farm
2021-22	Lynn	Stray	Point Reyes Farmstead Cheese Company
2022-23	Mike	Koch	FireFly Farms
2023-24	Larry	Hedrich	LaClare Family Creamery
2024-25	Jessica	Little	Sweet Grass Dairy

BOARDS OF DIRECTORS

Please assume there may be inaccuracies in the Board Lists from the 1980s, and possibly the early 1990s. Information from that period relied on pre-electronic hard copies, which often contained missing information.

1983/1984 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President	Liz Biss
Co-Vice Presidents	Paul Kinstedt/ Ino Higuera
Secretary:	Rebecca Peters-Campbell
Treasurer:	Beth Feldman
Executive Secretary:	Bill Clapp

Bob Carroll
Ann Dixon
Brad Frederick
Chris Johnson
Ron Johnson
Angela Lapaglia
Bob LeCompte
Skip Masters/Cornell University

Barbara Peters-Campbell
Honorary Membership extended to Frank Kosikowski, Ex Officio

1984/1985 Board of Directors

Robert Le Compte, President
Vice President, vacant
Beth Feldman, Treasurer
Liz Biss, Secretary, Bulletin Editor
William Clapp/Shelburne Farms
Phillip Crozier
Ron Johnson/France-America, Inc.
Paul Kinstedt/Cornell University
Larry Lukas/Richter Bros., Inc
Lowell Rheinheimer/North Pack Cheese, Inc.
Caleb Williams/Bingham Farms
Dick Kleyn/Rutgers University
Jack Phillips/Lancaster Co. Swiss Cheese
Richard Thornton/Glen-Crannoc Dairy

<u>1985/1986 Board of Directors</u>

Robert Le Compte, President

Caleb Williams
Phillip Crozier
Dick Kleyn
Larry Lukas
Jack Phillips
Ann Dixon
Pat Miller
Ricki Carroll
Robert Carroll
Laura Chenel
Philip Crozier
Joseph Flanagan
Bernard S. Horton
Richard Kahn
Richard Klein
Robert LeCompte
Larry Lukas
Howard Morris
Jack Phillips

1986/87 Board of Directors

Caleb Williams	President
Ann Dixon	Vice President
Pat Miller	Treasurer
Ricki Carroll	Secretary

Robert Carrol
Laura Chenel
Philip Crozier
Joseph Flanagan
Bernard S. Horton
Richard Kahn
Richard Klein
Robert LeCompte
Larry Lukas
Jack Phillips
Edward Yturri
Frank Kosikowski, Ex Officio

1987/88 Board of Directors

Barbara Lang	President
Ann Dixon	Vice President
Bernard Horton	Treasurer
Ricki Carroll	Secretary

Laura Chenel
Philip Crozier
Robert Le Compte
Joseph Flanagan
Richard Kahn
Constantine Karvonides
Paula Lambert
Larry Lukas
Howard Morris
Jack Phillips
Ari Weinzweig
Charlie White
Edward Yturri
Robert Carrol — Executive Director

Frank Kosikowski, Ex Officio, Founder

1988/89 Board of Directors

Dick Kleyn — President
Richard Kahn — Vice President
Paula Lambert — Treasurer
Bernard Horton — Secretary
Robert Carrol
Ricki Carroll
Laura Chenel
Philip Crozier
Robert Le Compte
Joseph Flanagan

Constantine Karvonides
Barbara Lang
Paula Lambert
Larry Lukas
Howard Morris
Jack Phillips
Ari Weinzweig
Charlie White
Edward Yturri
Frank Kosikowski, Ex Officio,Founder

1989/90 Board of Directors

Ari Weinzweig (President)/Zingerman's
Richard Kahn (Vice President)/Cheese on Second
Paula Lambert (Treasurer)/Mozzarella Company
Bernard Horton (Secretary)/Horton International, Inc.
Ricki Carroll/New England Cheesemaker Supply
Laurel Chenel/Laura Chenel Chevre
John Greeley/John Dewar and Company, Inc.
Constantine Karvonides /International Marketing Council
Barbara Lang/Cornell University
Andrea London/The World of Cheese
Peter Mohn/Craigston Cheese Company
Howard Morris/University of Minnesota
Judith Schad/Capriole, Inc.
Vince Staiger/Tholstrup

Gerd Stern/Infood

1990/1991 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ari Weinzweig (President)/Zingerman's
Gerd Stern (Vice President)/Infood
Peter Mohn (Secretary)/Craigston Cheese Company
Paula Lambert (Treasurer)/Mozzarella Company
Jim Berke/Turtle Creek Dairy
Ricki Carroll/New England Cheesemaker Supply
John Greeley/John Dewar and Company, Inc.
Regi Hise/Simon's Specialty Cheese
Richard Kahn/Cheese on Second
Barbara Lang/Cornell University
Andrea London/The World of Cheese
Judith Schad/Capriole, Inc.
Vince Staiger/Tholstrup

1991/1992 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Gerd Stern (President)/Infood
Peter Mohn (Vice President)/Craigston Cheese Co.
John Greeley (Secretary)/John Dewar and Co., Inc
Pamela Murtaugh(Treasurer)/Murtaugh/Match Associates
Lex Alexander/Wellspring Grocery
Jim Berke/Turtle Creek Dairy
Ricki Carroll/New England Cheesemaker Supply
Karen Evans/Rollingstone Chevre
Regi Hise/Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board
Andrea London/San Francisco Int'l Cheese Imports
Bill Loomis/Loomis Cheese Company
Russ McCall/Atlanta Foods International
Judith Schad/Capriole, Inc.
Joan Snyder/Hollow Road Farm
Vince Staiger/Tholstrup
Radha Stern/J. Boggeri
Ann Topham/Fantome Farms
William Wallace/Oakville Grocery
Ari Weinzweig /Zingerman's

1992/1993 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Gerd Stern (President)/Infood
Joan Snyder(Vice President)Hollow Road Farm
John Greeley (Secretary)/John Dewar and Co., Inc.
Peter Mohn (Treasurer)/Craigston Cheese Co.
Lex Alexander/Whole Foods Market
Jim Berke/Turtle Creek Dairy
Susan Cahn/Coach Dairy Goat Farm
Ricki Carroll/New England Cheesemaker Supply
Karen Evans/Rollingstone Chevre
Nancy Harmon-Jenkins/Author
Regi Hise/Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board
Allison Hooper/Vermont Butter and Cheese
Fermo Jaeckle/Roth Kase USA Ltd.
Steve Jenkins/Dean and DeLuca
Stacy Kinsley-Knowlton/Dan Carter, Inc.
Bill Loomis/Loomis Cheese Company
Russ McCall/Atlanta Foods International
Suzanne Pingree/University of Wisconsin/Madison
Judith Schad/Capriole, Inc.
Chantal Plasse/La Ferme Imports/Androuet
Radha Stern/J. Boggeri
Dan Strongin/Andronicos
Ann Topham/Fantome Farms
William Wallace/Oakville Grocery
Ari Weinzweig /Zingerman's

1993/1994 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Joan Snyder(President), Hollow Road Farms

Peter Mohn (Vice President)/Craigston Cheese Co.
Stacy Kinsley-Knowlton, (Treasurer)/Dan Carter
Radha Stern,(Secretary)/J. Boggeri
Lex Alexander/Whole Foods Market
Dave Brown/Cornell University
Ricki Carroll/New England Cheesemaker Supply
John Greeley/Sheila Marie Imports
David Grotenstein/Fairway Market
Ihsan Gurdahl/Formaggio Kitchen
Regi Hise/Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board
Allison Hooper/Vermont Butter and Cheese
Fermo Jaeckle/Roth Kase USA Ltd.
Steve Jenkins/Dean and DeLuca
Robert Kaufelt/Murray's
Mary Keehn/Cypress Grove
Bill Loomis/Loomis Cheese Company
Russ McCall/Atlanta Foods International
Bill McKenna/ SFIC
Suzanne Pingree/University of Wisconsin/Madison
Chantal Plasse/La Ferme Imports/Androuet
Dan Strongin/Andronicos
Ann Topham/Fantome Farms
Ignazio Vella/Vella Cheese
Gerd Stern (Ex Officio)/Infood
Ari Weinzweig (Ex Officio)/Zingerman

1994/1995 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dan Strongin(President)/Andronicos
Stacy Kinsley-Knowlton(Vice President)/Dan Carter, Inc.
Radha Stern/(Treasurer)J. Boggeri
Ricki Carroll (Secretary)/New England Cheesemaker Supply

Dave Brown/Cornell University
Dominique Delageau/Auricchio Cheese
Lynne Edelson/Avant Garde Foods
John Greeley /John Dewar and Co., Inc.
David Grotenstein/Murray's Cheese
Ihsan Gurdahl/Formaggio Kitchen
Deborah Haws/DKH Marketing
Regi Hise/Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board
Allison Hooper/Vermont Butter and Cheese
Fermo Jaeckle/Roth Kaese
Steve Jenkins
Robert Kaufelt/Murray's Cheese
Mary Keehn/Cypress Grove
Peter Mohn /Grafton Cheese Co.
Chantal Plasse/La Ferme Imports
Ignazio Vella/Vella Cheese
Ari Weinzweig (Ex Officio)/Zingerman's

I995/1996 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dan Strongin(President)/Andronicos
Dominique Delageau(Vice President)Belgioioso Cheese
Stacy Kinsley-Knowlton(President-Elect)/Dan Carter, Inc.
Radha Stern/(Treasurer) J. Boggeri
Ricki Carroll (Secretary)/New England Cheesemaker Supply
Dave Brown/Cornell University
Susan Dolan/Sutton Place
Lynne Edelson/The Specialty Cheese Group
Kathleen Shannon Finn/Columbus Distributing
Ruth Flore/Vermont Butter and Cheese
John Greeley /Sheila Marie Imports
David Grotenstein/Murray's Cheese
Ihsan Gurdahl/Formaggio Kitchen

Deborah Haws/DKH Marketing
Regi Hise/Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board
Fermo Jaeckle/Roth Kaese
Steve Jenkins/Steve Jenkins Associates
Robert Kaufelt/Murray's Cheese
Mary Keehn/Cypress Grove
Andrea London/Draeger's Market
Russ McCall/Atlanta Foods International
Bill McKenna/San Francisco Cheese
Peter Mohn /Grafton Cheese Co.
Chantal Plasse/La Ferme Imports
Ignazio Vella/Vella Cheese
Joan Snyder (Ex Officio) Hollow Road Farms
Gerd Stern (Ex Officio) Galilee Cheese Corporation
Ari Weinzweig(Ex Officio) /Zingerman's
Jonathan White/Egg Farm Dairy
Jacque Williams/The Specialty Cheese Group

1996/1997 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Stacy Kinsley-Knowlton(President)/Dan Carter, Inc.
Ruth Flore(Vice President)/Vermont Butter and Cheese
Dominique Delageau(President Elect), Belgioioso Cheese
Kathleen Shannon Finn (Treasurer), Columbus Distributing

Teresa Battel (Secretary) Horizon Sales
Jeff Bergman/Larry's Markets
Ricki Carroll/New England Cheesemaker Supply
Debra Dickerson/MDH Associates
Lynne Edelson/Specialty Cheese Group
Linda Funk/Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board
Dick Groves/Cheese Reporter
John Greeley /Sheila Marie Imports
Dave Habercorn/Rycoff Sexton
George Haenlein/(University Liaison) Univ. of Delaware
Deborah Haws/DKH Marketing
Regi Hise/Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board
Marcie Horstmeyer/Cappiello Dairy Products
Kenny Jackson/Spice, Inc.
Fermo Jaeckle/Roth Kaese
Steve Jenkins/Steve Jenkins Associates
Robert Kaufelt/Murray's Cheese
Mary Keehn/Cypress Grove
Paige Lamb/The Food Paige
Andrea London/Draeger's Market
Cynthia Major/Major Farm
Bill McKenna/Bill McKenna & Associates
James Mellgren/Kona Kai Farms
Peter Mohn /Grafton Cheese Co.
Chantal Plasse(International Liaison_/La Ferme Imports
Judith Schad/Capriole
Gerd Stern/Galilee Foods
Radha Stern/ CA Cheese and Butter Association
Dan Strongin(Ex Officio)/Access to Traditions
John Taylor/Atlas Pasta and Delicatessen
Ari Weinzweig/Zingerman's
Jonathan White/Egg Farm Dairy

1997/1998 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dominique Delageau(President)Belgioioso Cheese
Ruth Flore(President-Elect)/Vermont Butter and Cheese
Deborah Haws(Vice President)/DKH Marketing
Teresa Battel (Secretary) Horizon Sales
Kathleen Shannon Finn (Treasurer), Columbus Distributing
Jeff Bergman/Larry's Markets
Ricki Carroll/New England Cheesemaker Supply
Debra Dickerson/Neal's Yard Dairy
Lynne Edelson/Specialty Cheese Group
Linda Funk/Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board
Dick Groves/Cheese Reporter
John Greeley /Sheila Marie Imports
George Haenlein/(University Liaison) Univ. of Delaware
Regi Hise/Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board
Kenny Jackson/Spice, Inc.
Fermo Jaeckle/Roth Kaese
Mary Keehn/Cypress Grove
Stacy Kinsley-Knowlton(Ex Officio)/Dan Carter, Inc.

Paige Lamb/The Food Paige
Andrea London/Draeger’s Market
Cynthia Major/Major Farm
Bill McKenna/Bill McKenna & Associates
Russ McCall/Atlanta Food International
Peter Mohn /Grafton Cheese Co.
Judith Schad/Capriole
Gerd Stern/Galilee Foods
Dan Strongin(Ex Officio)/Access to Traditions
Ari Weinzweig/Zingerman’s

1998/1999 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ruth Ann Flore, President /Flore, Price and Associates
Deborah Haws, President Elect/ DKH Marketing
Vice President - Vacant
Kathleen Shannon-Finn, Treasurer/Columbus Distributing
Stacy Kinsley, Secretary/ DCI
Jeff Bergman/Larry's Markets
Ricki Carroll/NE Cheesemaking Supply Co.
Debra Dickerson/Neals Yard London
Linda Funk/WMMB
Dick Groves/The Cheese Reporter
John Greeley/Sheila Marie Imports
George Haenlein/University of Delaware
Debbie Haws/DKH Marketing
Regi Hise/WMMB
Kenny Jackson/ Spice, Inc.
Mary Keehn/Cypress Grove Chevre, Inc.
Paige Lamb/The Food Paige
Russ McCall/Atlanta Food Int'l
Bill McKenna/Bill McKenna & Assoc
Judith Schad/Capriole, Inc.
Diana Solari/ Food Matters
Daphne Zepos/Campton Place Hotel
Ex-Officio Members:
Stacy Kinsley/ Dan Carter, Inc.
Gerd Stem, Infood
Daniel Strongin, Access to Tradition
Ari Weinzweig, Zingerman' s

1999/2000 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ruth Ann Flore, President /Flore, Price and Associates
Kathleen Shannon-Finn, Vice President/Columbus Distributing
Diana Solari, Treasurer /Retailer
Stacy Kinsley, Secretary/Dan Carter, Inc.
Dominiques Delageau/Arthur Schuman
John Eggena/Fromagerie Tournevent
Linda Funk/WMMB
John Greeley/Sheila Marie Imports
David Grotenstein/Food and Image
Dick Groves/The Cheese Reporter
George Haenlein/University of Delaware
Debbie Haws/DKH Marketing
Regi Hise/WMMB
Mary Keehn/Cypress Grove Chevre, Inc.
Bill McKenna/Bill McKenna & Assoc.
Matt Morgan/Zingerman's
Matt Rubiner/ Formaggio Kitchen
Judith Schad/Capriole, Inc.
Gerd Stern/Gerd Stern, etc.
Radha Stern/CA Cheese and Butter
Jodie Wische/Old Chatham Sheepherding
Daphne Zepos/CHEF

2000/2001 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Kathleen Shannon Finn, President/Columbus Distributing
Bill McKenna, Vice President/Bill McKenna &Associates
Stacy M. Kinsley, Secretary/DCI/Salemville Cheese
Malorie McCurdy, Treasurer,/ Cypress Grove Chevre
John Eggena/Fromagerie Tournevent

John Greeley/Sheila Marie Imports Ltd.
David Grotenstein/Food & Image
George Haenlein F. W./University Of Delaware
Regi Hise/Food Comm
Mary Keehn/Cypress Grove Chevre
Paula Lambert/Mozzarella Co.
Regina McDuffee/The Cheeseworks, Ltd.
Matthew Morgan/Zingerman's Delicatessen
Matthew Rubiner/Cheeseboy, Inc.
Judy Schad/Capriole Inc.
Radha Stern/Enthusiast
Cathy Strange/Whole Foods Market
Jodie Wische/Old Chatham Sheepherding Company
Daphne Zepos
Ruth Flore/ Flore, Price, & Associates
Chairman of the Board

2001/2002 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Bill McKenna, President/Bill McKenna & Assoc.
Judy Schad, Vice President/Capriole, Inc.
Daphne Zepos/Secretary
Paula Lambert, Treasurer/Mozzarella Company
Kathleen Shannon Finn,/Chairman of the Board/Columbus Distributing
Debra Dickerson/Neal's Yard Dairy
John Eggena/Fromagerie Tournevent
Nancy Fletcher/California Milk Advisory Board
Ruth Anne Flore/Flore, Price and Associates
John Greeley/Sheila Marie Imports, Ltd.

David Grotenstein/Food and Image
George Haenlein, F. W./University of Delaware
Regi Hise/Foodcomm
Allison Hooper/Vermont Butter & Cheese
Mary Keehn/Cypress Grove Chevre
Regina McDuffee,/ Town & Country Wine and Marketplace
Matthew Morgan,/Morgan and York's Big Ten Party Store
Matt Rubiner/Cheeseboy, Inc.
Radha Stern, Enthusiast
Cathy Strange/Whole Foods Market
Jodie Wische, Old Chatham Sheepherding

2002/2003 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Cathy Strange, President/Whole Foods Market
Judy Schad, Vice President/Capriole, Inc.
Kathleen Shannon Finn, Pro Tempore/ Columbus Distributing
Paula Lambert, Treasurer/Mozzarella Company
Daphne Zepos, Secretary
Bill McKenna, Chairman of the Board/Bill McKenna & Assoc.
Daniel J. Carter/DCI
Sue Conley/Cowgirl Creamery
Debra Dickerson/Neal's Yard Dairy
John Eggena/Fromagcrie Tournevent
Nancy Fletcher/CMAB
Ruth Anne Flore/Flore, Price, Sloane & Assoc.
John Greeley/Sheila Marie Imports, Ltd.
Allison Hooper/Vermont Butter & Cheese
Mary Keehn/Cypress Grove Chevre
Regina McDuffee

Dana Tanyeri/Wis. Milk Marketing Board
Laura Werlin/Author
Jodie Wische/ Roth Kaese USA, Lid

2003/2004 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Cathy Strange, President/Whole Foods Market
Allison Hooper, Vice President/Vermont Butter and Cheese
Mary Keehn, Secretary/Cypress Grove Chevre
Paula Lambert, Treasurer/Mozzarella Company
Bill McKenna, Chairman/Bill McKenna & Assoc.
Kathleen Shannon Finn, Ex Officio/Columbus Distributing
Sue Conley/Cowgirl Creamery
Debra Dickerson/Neal's Yard Dairy/Redwood Hill Farm
John Eggena/Fromagerie Tournevent
Nancy Fletcher/California Milk Advisory Board
Michael Gingrich/Uplands Cheese, Inc.
John Greeley/Sheila Marie Imports, Ltd.
Carole Palmer/Good Toste Marketing Services
Judy Schad/Capriole, Inc.
Dona Tanyeri/Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board
Laura Werlin, Author
Jodie Wische/Roth Kaese USA, Lid.

2004/2005 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jodie Wische, President/Roth Kase USA, Ltd.
Allison Hooper, Vice President/Vermont Butter & Cheese

Carole Palmer, Secretary/Good Taste Marketing Services
Paula Lambert, Treasurer/Mozzarella Company
Cathy Strange, Chairman/Whole Foods Market
Bill McKenna, Ex Officio/Bill McKenna & Assoc.

Jennifer Bice/Redwood Hill Farm
Sue Conley/Cowgirl Creamery Tomales Bay
Foods
John Eggena/Fromagerle Tournevent
Steve Ehlers/Larry's Market
Michael Gingrich/Uplands Cheese, Inc,
John Greeley/Sheila Marie Imports, Ltd.
David Grotensteln/Food and Ima*ge*
Sara Hill/Classic Provisions, Inc.
Joan Kimball/Quebec Ministry of Agriculture,
Fisheries and Food
Thomas Koolman/Provvlsta Specialty Foods, Inc.
Dana Tanycri/Tanyerl Editorial Services
Laura Werlln/ Author/Food Writer

2005/2006 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Allison Hooper, President/Vermont Butter & Cheese
Jennifer Bice, Vice-President/Redwood Hill Farm
Carole Palmer, Secretary/Good Taste Marketing Services
Paula Lambert, Treasurer/Mozzarella Company
Jodie Wlsche, Board Chair/Roth Kase USA, Ltd,
Cathy Strange, Ex-Officio/Whole Foods Market
Kurt Dammeier/Beecher's Handmade Cheese

Steve Ehlers/Larry's Markel
Michael Gingrich/Uplands Cheese, Inc.
David Gremmels/Rogue Creamery
David Grotensteln/Food and Image
Joan Kimball/Quebec Delegation Chicago
Thomas Koolman/Provista Specialty Foods, Inc.
Michelle Martino/The Cheese Works Ltd.
Laura Werlln

2006/2007 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Allison Hooper, President/Vermont Butter & Cheese
Davld Gremmels, Vice President/Rogue Creamery
Carole Palmer, Secretary/Good Taste Marketing Services
Michael Gingrich, Treasurer/Uplands Cheese, Inc.
Jennifer Bice/Redwood Hill Farm
Kurt Dammeier/Beecher's Handmade Cheese
John Eggena/Fromagerie Tournevent
Steve Ehlen/Larry's Market
Laurie Greenberg/Dairy Business Innovation Center/
David Grotensteln/Food and Image
Sara Hill/Carr Valley Cheese

Christine Hyatt/Cheese Chick/DP! Northwest
Joan Kimball/Quebec Ministry of Agriculture,
Fisheries and Food
Michelle Martino/Cabot Cheese, Inc.
Neville McNaughton/CheezSorce, LLC
Tim Smith/The Kroger Company
Laura Werlln/Cookbook Author and Food Writer

2007/2008 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Allison Hooper, President/Vermont Butter & Cheese
Davld Gremmels, Vice President/Rogue Creamery
Carole Palmer, Secretary/Good Taste Marketing Services
Michael Gingrich, Treasurer/Uplands Cheese, Inc.
Jennifer Bice/Redwood Hill Fann
Kurt Dammeier/Beecher's Handmade Cheese
John Eggena/Fromagerie Tournevent
Steve Ehlers/Larry's Market
Laurie Greenberg/Dairy Business Innovation Center/
David Grotensteln/Food and Image
Sara Hill/Carr Valley Cheese
Christine Hyatt/Cheese Chick/DP! Northwest
Joan Kimball/Quebec Ministry of Agriculture,
Fisheries and Food
Michelle Martino/Cabot Cheese, Inc.
Neville McNaughton/CheezSorce, LLC
Tim Smith/The Kroger Company

Laura Werlln/Cookbook Author and Food Writer

2008/2009 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

David Gremmels, President/Rogue Creamery
Christine Hyatt, Vice-President/Cheese Chick
Michael Gingrich, Treasurer/Uplands Cheese, Inc
Carole Palmer, Secretary/Good Taste Marketing Services
Kurt Dammeier/Beecher's Handmade Cheese
Sasha Davies/Formaticum, Steve's Cheese
John Eggena/Fromagerie Tournevent
Steve Ehlers/Larry's Market
Jill Giacomini Basch/Point Reyes Farmstead
Laurie Greenberg/Dairy Business Innovation Center
David Grotensteln/Food and Image
Sara Hill/Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board
Joan Kimball/Quebec Delegation Chicago
Michelle Martino-Overholt/Cabot Creamery
Neville McNaughton/CheczSorce, LLC
Greg O'Neill/Pastoral Artisan Cheese, Bread and Wine
Tim Smith/The Kroger Company
Allison Hooper, Chair/Vermont Butter & Cheese

2009/2010 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

David Gremmels, President/Rogue Creamery
Christine Hyatt, Vice-President/Cheese Chick
Kurt Dammeier, Treasurer/Beecher’s Handmade Cheese
Sasha Davies, Secretary/Cheese By Hand
John Eggena/Fromagerie Tournevent
Steve Ehlers/Larry's Market
Jill Giacomini Basch/Point Reyes Farmstead
Laurie Greenberg/DBIC/Cultural Landscapes
David Grotensteln/Garden of Eden Marketplace
Joan Kimball/Quebec Delegation Chicago
Michelle Martino-Overholt/Cabot Creamery
Neville McNaughton/CheezSorce, LLC
Greg O'Neill/Pastoral Artisan Oicese, Bread and Wine
Tim Smith/The Kroger Company
Allison Hooper, Chair/Vermont Butter & Cheese

Jeff Allen, Executive Director/FSA

2010/2011 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Christine Hyatt, President/Cheese Chick
Greg O'Neill/ Pastoral Artisan Cheese, Bread and Wine
Sasha Davies, Secretary
Kurt Dammeier, Treasurer/Beecher's Handmade Cheese
Tim Smith/Kroger
John Eggena/Fromagerie Tournevent
Dick Roe, Gourmet Foods International
Jill Giacomini-Basch/Point Reyes Farmstead
Neville McNaughton/ CheezSorce, LLC
Marc Druart/University of Vermont
Laurie Greenberg/ DBIC/Cultural Landscapes
Bob Wills/Cedar Grove Cheese
David Grotenstein/Food and Image
Allison Hooper, Chair/Vermont Butter & Cheese
David Gremmels, Chairman/Rogue Creamery
Nora Weiser, Executive Director

2011/2012 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Christine Hyatt, President/Cheese Chick
Greg O'Neill, Vice President/ Pastoral Artisan Cheese, Bread and Wine
Sasha Davies, Secretary
Tim Smith, Treasurer/Kroger
Peg Smith/Cowgirl Creamery
Bob Wills/Cedar Grove Cheese
Pat Ford/Beehive Cheese
Dick Roe/Gourmet Foods International
Jill Giacomini Basch Point Reyes Farmstead

Jeff Jirik/Caves of Faribault
Laurie Greenberg/ DBIC/Cultural Landscapes
Anne Saxelby/Saxelby Cheesemongers
Marc Druart/Vermont Butter & Cheese
Neville Mc Naughton/ CheezSorce, LLC
Kate Arding/DBIC
David Grotenstein/Food and Image
David Gremmels, Chair/Rogue Creamery

Nora Weiser, Executive Director

2012/2013 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Greg O'Neill, President/ Pastoral Artisan Cheese, Bread and Wine
Peg Smith, Vice President/Cowgirl Creamery
Jeff Jirik, Treasurer/Caves of Faribault
Sasha Davies, Secretary
John Antonelli/Antonelli's Cheese Shop
Kate Arding/DBIC
Jill Giacomini Basch/ Point Reyes Farmstead
Alyce Birchenough/Sweet Home Farm
Marc Druart/Roth Kaese
Pat Ford/Beehive Cheese
Dick Roe/ Gourmet Foods International
Anne Saxelby/Saxelby Cheesemongers
Bob Wills/Cedar Grove Cheese

Christine Hyatt, Chairman/Cheese Chick
Nora Weiser, Executive Director

2013/2014 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Greg O'Neill, President/ Pastoral Artisan Cheese, Bread and Wine
Peg Smith, Vice President/Cowgirl Creamery
Sasha Davies, Secretary
Jeff Jirik, Treasurer/Caves of Faribault
Christine Hyatt, Chairman/Cheese Chick
Kate Arding/DBIC
Jill Giacomini Basch/Point Reyes Farmstead
Dick Roe/Gourmet Foods International
Pat Ford/Beehive Cheese
Bob Wills/Cedar Grove Cheese
Alyce Birchenough/Sweet Home Farm
John Antonelli/Antonelli's Cheese Shop
Marc Druart/Roth Kase
Emilio Mignucci/Di Bruno Brothers
Marianne Smukowski/ Wisconsin Center for Dairy Research

Nora Weiser, Executive Director

2014/2015 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Peggy Smith, President/Cowgirl Creamery
Dick Roe, Vice President/Gourmet Foods International
Jeff Jirik, Treasurer /Caves of Faribault
Pat Ford, Secretary/Beehive Cheese
John Antonelli/Antonelli's Cheese Shop
Greg O'Neill, Chairman/ Pastoral Artisan Oicese, Bread and Wine
Kate Arding/Talbot & Arding
Alyce Birchenough/Sweet Home Farm
Dr. Dennis D'Amico/ University of Connecticut
Marc Druart/Roth Kase
Cathy Gaffney/Wegman's
Emilio Mignucci/Di Bruno Brothers
Marianne Smukowski/ Wisconsin Center for Dairy Research
Bob Wills/Cedar Grove Cheese
Michelle Lee

Nora Weiser, Executive Director

2015/2016 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dick Roe, President/Gourmet Foods International
Jeff Jirik, Vice President/Caves of Faribault
John Antonelli, Treasurer/Antonelli's Cheese Shop
Pat Ford, Secretary/Beehive Cheese
Peg Smith, Chair/Cowgirl Creamery
Cathy Gaffney/Wegman's
Dennis D'Amico, Ph.D/ University of Connecticut
Marianne Smukowski/ Wisconsin Center for Dairy Research
Kate Arding/Talbot & Arding
Jeremy Stephenson/ Farms for City Kids Foundation/Spring Brook Farm
Vern Caldwell/Pholia Farm
Sue Sturman, ACS CCP/Academie Mons
Marc Druart/Roth Kase
Emilio Mignucci/Di Bruno Brothers
Bob Wills/Cedar Grove Cheese
Nora Weiser, Executive Director

2016/2017 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jeff Jirik, President/Caves of Faribault
John Antonelli, Vice President/Antonelli's Cheese Shop
Pat Ford, Treasurer/Beehive Cheese
Cathy Gaffney, Secretary/Wegman's
Peg Smith, Chair/Cowgirl Creamery
Dick Roe/ Gourmet Foods International

Alyce Birchenough/Sweet Home Farm
Jeremy Stephenson/ Farms for City Kids Foundation/Spring Brook Farm
Vern Caldwell/Pholia Farm
Marianne Smukowski/ Wisconsin Center for Dairy Research
Dennis D'Amico, Ph.D/ University of Connecticut
Sue Sturman, ACS CCP/Academie Mons
Emilio Mignucci/Di Bruno Brothers
Kate Arding/Talbot & Arding
Nora Weiser, Executive Director

2017/2018 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

John Antonelli, President /Antonelli's Cheese Shop
Cathy Gaffney, Vice President/Wegman's
Marianne Smukowski, Secretary/ Wisconsin Center for Dairy Research
Jeremy Stephenson, Treasurer/ Farms for City Kids Foundation/Spring Brook Farm
Jeff Jirik, Chair/ Caves of Faribault
Alyce Birchenbough/Sweet Home Farm
Vern Caldwell/Wellmont Farms Cheesorizo
Dennis D'Amico, Ph.D/University of Connecticut
Tim Gaddis, ACS CCP/In Demand Cheese
Michele Haram, ACS CCP/Cypress Grove
Max McCalman, ACS CCP/The Wine Room
Kathryn Spann/Prodigal Farm
Lynn Giacomini Stray/Point Reyes Farmstead

Sue Sturman, ACS CCP/Academie Mons

Nora Weiser, Executive Director

2018/2019 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Cathy Gaffney, President/Wegman's
Marianne Smukowski, Vice President/ Wisconsin Center for Dairy Research
Jeremy Stephenson, Treasurer/ Farms for City Kids Foundation/Spring Brook Farm
Lynn Giacomini Stray, Secretary//Point Reyes Farmstead
John Antonelli, Chair/Antonelli's Cheese Shop
Dennis D'Amico, Ph.D/ University of Connecticut
Alyce Birchenough/Sweet Home Farm
Kathryn Spann/ Prodigal Farm
Kerry Kaylegian/BeSpoke Dairy Training
Larry Hedrich/La Clare Family Creamery
Michele Haram, ACS CCP/Cypress Grove
Vern Caldwell/Pholia Farms
Tim Gaddis, ACS CCP/In Demand Cheese
Max McCalman, ACS CCP/The Wine Room

Nora Weiser, Executive Director

2019/2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Marianne Smukowski, President/ Wisconsin Center for Dairy Research
Jeremy Stephenson, Vice President/ Farms for City Kids
Foundation/Spring Brook Farm
Michele Haram, Secretary/ACS CCP/Cypress Grove
Lynn Giacomini Stray, Treasurer/Point Reyes Farmstead
Cathy Gaffney, Chair/Wegman's
Kerry Kaylegian/BeSpoke Dairy Training
Max McCalman, ACS CCP/The Wine Room
Kathryn Spann/Prodigal Farm
Vern Caldwell/Pholia Farms
Larry Hedrich/La Clare Family Creamery
Rachel Perez/FOODMatch
Mike Koch/Firefly Farms

Nora Weiser, Executive Director

2020/2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jeremy Stephenson, President/ Farms for City Kids Foundation/Spring Brook Farm
Lynn Giacomini Stray, Vice President/Point Reyes Farmstead

Mike Koch, Treasurer /Firefly Farms
Michele Haram, Secretary/ACS CCP/Cypress Grove

Vern Caldwell/Pholia Farms

Larry Hedrich/La Clare Family Creamery

Kerry Kaylegian/BeSpoke Dairy Training

Jessica Little/Sweet Grass Dairy
Max McCalman, ACS CCP/The Wine Room
Rachel Perez/FOODMatch
Marianne Smukowski/ Wisconsin Center for Dairy Research
Kathryn Spann/Cyber Security
Daniel Utano/Daniel Utano Consulting
Jane Bauer/ACS CCP

2021/2022 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Lynn Giacomini Stray, President/Point Reyes Farmstead
Mike Koch, Vice President/Firefly Farms
Kari Skibbe, Secretary/Wisconsin Aging & Grading Cheese, Inc.
Larry Hedrich, Treasurer/La Clare Family Creamery
Jeremy Stephenson, Chair/ Farms for City Kids Foundation/Spring Brook Farm
Rachel Perez/FOODMatch

Michele Haram, ACS CCP/Cypress Grove
Jessica Little/Sweet Grass Dairy
Kat Spann/Cyber Security
Daniel Utano/Daniel Utano Consulting
Bill Stephenson/KeHE
Brit Welsh/Beehive Cheese
Julia Powers/The Traveling Cheesemonger
Kerry Kaylegian/BeSpoke Dairy Training
Adam Brock/DPI

Tara Holmes, Executive Director

2022/2023 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mike Koch, President/Firefly Farms
Larry Hedrich, Vice President/La Clare Family Creamery
Britton Welsh, Secretary/Beehive Cheese
Jessica Little, Treasurer/Sweet Grass Dairy
Lynn Giacomini Stray, Chair/Point Reyes Farmstead
Rachel Perez
Julia Powers
Tara Holmes
Erin Clancy
Kori Suleweski
Kat Spann
Adam Brock

Dan Utano
Susan Rigg
Emi Lee
Bill Stephenson
Kerry Kalegian

PAST PRESIDENTS --LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Kathleen Shannon Finn, 2009

Ari Weinzweig, 2014

Cathy Strange, 2015

Peggy Smith, 2017

Marianne Smukowski, 2020

David Gremmels, 2022

Jeremy Stephenson, 2023

MISSION STATEMENTS

1983

The purpose of this organization shall be to encourage cheese appreciation and to provide useful information on cheesemaking in a farm and home and manufacturing plant environment. The association shall also work to maintain the quality and traditional value of cheese and related fermented milk products and to encourage their consumption through better education on the safety and nutrition of cheese.

1999

The purpose of this association shall be:

A. To uphold the highest standards of quality in the making of cheese and related fermented milk products.

B. To uphold the traditions and preserve the history of American cheesemaking.

C. To be an educational resource for American cheesemakers and the public through sharing knowledge and experience on cheesemaking as a hobby or as a commercial enterprise with special attention given to Specialty and Farmhouse cheeses made form all types of milk, including cow's, goat's, and sheep's milk.

D. To encourage consumption through better education on the sensory pleasures of cheese and its healthful and nutritional values.

2003

The Mission and Purpose of the Association shall be:

a. To uphold the highest standards of quality in the making of cheese and related fermented milk products.
b. To uphold the traditions and preserve the history of American cheesemaking.
c. To be an educational resource for American cheesemakers and the public.
d. To encourage consumption through better education on the sensory pleasures of cheese and its healthful and nutritional values.

2010

Section 1. The Mission and Purpose of the Association shall be:

1. To uphold the highest standards of quality in the making of cheese and related fermented milk products.
2. To uphold the traditions and preserve the history of American cheesemaking.

3. To be an educational resource for American cheesemakers and the public.
4. To encourage consumption through better education on the sensory pleasures of cheese and its healthful and nutritional values.

<u>2024</u>

The mission of the Corporation is:

1. To uphold the highest standards of quality in the making of cheese and related fermented milk products;
2. To uphold the traditions and preserve the history of cheesemaking in North and South America;
3. To be an educational resource for American cheesemakers and the public;

4. To encourage cheese consumption through education regarding the sensory pleasures of cheese and its healthful and nutritional values;
5. To foster a culture that values diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging, respect, and empathy for all in our industry and the communities we serve

Original Bylaws – 1983

Adopted by vote of those members present at the Second Plenary Session of the first Annual Meeting, June 7, 1983, as reported by the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee, Lowell E. Rheinheimer.

Constitution

Article 1. The name of this association shall be the American Cheese Society.

Article 2. The purpose of this association shall be to encourage cheese appreciation and to provide useful information on cheesemaking in a farm and home and manufacturing plant environment. The association shall also work to maintain the quality and traditional value of cheese and related fermented milk products and to encourage their consumption through better education on the safety and nutrition of cheese.

Article 3. Membership in this national and Pan-American association shall be open to those interested in natural cheese, its lore and history; in making cheese as a hobby or commercial enterprise and shall consist of all those persons who take an interest in the welfare of the Society and are willing to promote its objectives.

Article 4. The meetings of the Society shall be held annually at such time and place as may be designated by the Society's Board of Directors and special meetings to be convened on the call of the President.

Bylaws

Article 1. The American Cheese Society shall be a non-profit organization consisting of an unlimited number of members. It shall be financed through annual membership dues per individual and through private or public donations offered by persons or institutions.

Article 2.

Section 1. Each Membership will be confirmed by the Society's Secretary who will send to each member a copy of the Constitution and Bylaws and an official card recognizing membership for a given time period.

Section 2. Initial membership fee for the year commencing immediately after the first Annual Meting shall be Eighteen dollars ($18.00) per year. Subsequent annual membership fees shall be set by the Board of Directors. This fee will be payable at the time the application for membership is made.

Section 3. All members shall be entitled to the Society's publications for the membership year.

Section 4. The Society's Board of Directors may revoke the membership of any member by a two-thirds vote of the entire Board.

Section 5. A member of the Board may nominate a person for consideration as an Honorary Member of the Society when such person has contributed outstanding services to the attainment of the Society's goals. The Honorary status may be granted by a unanimous vote of the Board, provided, however, that only one such Honorary membership may be awarded each year. Honorary members may be appointed by the Board to sit on the Board as ex-officio members.

Section 6. In order to encourage individual participation and membership in the Society, there shall be no aggregate or group memberships covering more that one person at a time.

Article 3.

Section 1. A National or International meeting of the members shall be held annually at a time and locations to be determined by the Board of Directors.

Section 2. The objectives of the annual meetings will be to discuss general affairs of the Society, to interchange information pertaining to its purpose and to elect officers.

Section 3. The Secretary will be responsible for giving at least a three month advanced notice of the time and place of the annual meeting to each member of the Society by mail.

Article 4.

Section 1. The general management and direction of the Society shall be the responsibility of a Board of Directors which shall consist of fifteen (15) members. Five Directors shall be selected by a majority ballot during the final plenary session of each annual meeting and will serve for three year terms. Any active and regular member of the Society may be elected to serve on the Board of Directors.

Section 2. The Board of Directors will, in turn, elect by ballot and from its members, a President, a Vice-President (who shall also be the President-Elect for the next term) a Secretary, and a Treasurer. In addition, the Board may appoint an Executive Secretary who may or may not be a Director.

Section 3. A majority of the Board of Directors shall constitute a legal quorum for any decision pertaining to matters not directly addressed by the Society's Bylaws.

Section 4. The President of the Society shall preside at all the mmetings of the members and od the Board of Directors. If the President is absent, the Vice President shall preside. In the event of the absence of both, the Board may appoint a Chairman for the meeting my majority vote. The Secretary of the Society shall act as the conference secretary for the annual meeting. In case of the Secretary's absence during the annual mmeting, the President may appoint a temporary Secretary.

Section 5. The Vice President shall perform the duties of the President in case of absence, disability or removal.

Section 6. The Secretary shall take charge of all the Society's correspondence and keep written records of all the annual meetings, as well as of all the meetings held by the Board of Directors. The Secretary shall also give any notices from the Board to the members and sign with the President or Vice President any contracts or other official documents involving the Society.

Section 7. The Treasurer shall collect the dues of the members and receive all the moneys that may be given to the Society by institutions or private organizations. The Treasurer shall keep a careful and exact account to show all the incomes and expenses as well as any properties acquired by the Society. In addition, the Treasurer shall make a report to the Board of Directors at the request of the President and a detailed account to the members at the annual meeting. All the funds of the Society shall be deposited in a bank account under the Society's name by the Treasurer and shall be paid out only upon counter-signing by both the President and the Treasurer.

Article 5. Changes in the Constitution or Bylaws of the American Cheese Society shall be adopted upon the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members present at an annual meeting. Any member may propose a change to the Constitution or Bylaws and such proposals must be presented to the membership for a vote, provided that such proposals must be submitted to the Board of Directors at least sixty (60) days before the annual meeting and must be submitted in writing. In addition the Board of Directors may make its own proposals for changes.

BY LAWS 1999

Revision to Constitution and bylaws of American Cheese Society
August 15, 1999

Constitution Preamble and Mission Statement

Adopted by vote of those members present at the Second Plenary Session of the first Annual Meeting, June 7, 1983, as reported by the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee, Lowell E. Rheinheimer.

Adopted by vote of those member present at the first annual meeting, June 7, 1983, as reported by Lowell E. Rheinheimer, Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee. Amended by unanimous vote of the members present at the twelfth annual meeting, August 2, 1995 as reported by Daniel Strongin, President of the Society. Amended by unanimous vote of the members present at the sixteenth annual meeting, August 15, 1999, and reported by Stacy Kinsley, Secretary of the Society.

For the purpose of these bylaws the term “Specialty” will refer to cheese and fermented milk products produced with:

1. Care and attention given to the purity, quality, and flavor of the milk.
2. Natural ripening, with emphasis on development of characteristic flavor and texture, without the use of short cuts and techniques employed to increase yield or shelf life at the expense of quality.
3. Respect for the traditions and history of cheesemaking and regardless of the size of production.

For the purpose of these bylaws the term "Farmhouse" and "Farmstead" will refer to cheese and fermented milk products produced with:

1. Milk from herds on the farm where the cheese is produced.
2. Care and attention given to the purity, quality, and flavor of the milk.
3. Production primarily accomplished by hand.
4. Natural ripening, with emphasis on development of characteristic flavor and texture, without the use of short cuts and techniques employed to increase yield or shelf life at the expense of quality.
5. Respect for the traditions and history of cheesemaking and regardless of the size of production.

For the purpose of these bylaws, American means Pan-American including North, Central and South America.

Article 1. The name of this association shall be the American Cheese Society.

Article 2. The purpose of this association shall be:

A. To uphold the highest standards of quality in the making of cheese and related fermented milk products.
B. To uphold the traditions and preserve the history of American cheesemaking.
C. To be an educational resource for American cheesemakers and the public through sharing knowledge and experience on cheesemaking as a hobby or as a commercial enterprise with special attention given to Specialty and Farmhouse cheeses made form all types of milk, including cow's, goat's, and sheep's milk.
D. To encourage consumption through better education on the sensory pleasures of cheese and its healthful and nutritional values.

Article 3. Membership in this society shall be open to anyone interested in cheese, and willing to share their knowledge and experience. Members will uphold the bylaws of the American Cheese Society.

Article 4. The meetings of the Society shall be held annually in the form of a Conference at such time and place as may be designated by the Society's Board of Directors and special meetings to be convened on the call of the President.

Article 5. Amendment Changes in the Constitution or Bylaws of the American Cheese Society shall be adopted upon the affirmative vote of two thirds (2/3) majority of the members voting. All amendments shall be presented to the membership by mail for a vote. When an amendment is proposed it shall be submitted to the Executive Committee for examination and approval as to form and legality. The Executive Committee will submit such proposals to the Board of Directors for approval within sixty (60) days, after which time the administrative office will mail such amendments to the membership for approval within 30 days from the mailing date.

Article 6. On all questions of parliamentary procedure, Robert's Rules of Order shall govern, unless the Board of Directors shall provide otherwise.

Bylaws

Article 1. Structure of the organization - The American Cheese Society shall be a non-profit organization consisting of an unlimited number of members. It shall be financed through annual membership dues, through private or public donations, and through any fundraising activities allowable under the law.

Article 2. Membership - Annual dues will be set by a majority vote of the Board. Upon paying dues the member will receive a letter of confirmation, a copy of the bylaws, one year of newsletters, a listing in the current membership directory and a copy of the directory, and any other privileges as voted by a majority of the Board. All fees will be payable at the time the application for membership is made, and at the anniversary of initial membership each year. The administrator will send a notification letter one month in advance of the date due.

Article 2 Section 1. The Society's Board of Directors may revoke the membership of any member by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the entire board.

Article 2 Section 2. Any board member may nominate one person for consideration as a member of the American Academy of Cheesemakers at the annual board meeting when the nominee has contributed outstanding services to American Specialty and Farmhouse cheese, or the American Cheese Society. No more than two names may be chosen in any given year by a unanimous vote of the board. Honorees will receive a medal and a diploma, and will be listed in the annual directory within the year of their election.

Article 3. Board of Directors The general management and direction of the Society shall be the responsibility of the Board of Directors, which shall consist of 15 to 25 members plus ex-officio members. Directors shall be selected by a majority ballot during the annual meeting and will serve for three-year terms. Any active member of the Society may be elected to serve on the Board of Directors. Board members are required to attend at least 40% of all properly noticed Board meetings and/or not to miss two consecutive Board Meetings, or be subject to removal from office by a majority vote of the Board. All Board members and officers are required to attend the annual Board Meeting, unless they request permission from the President and receive agenda in advance and prepare written statements on view for consideration in voting. Votes at the annual Board Meeting can only be made in person.

Article 3 Section 1. Board meetings and an annual business meeting will be held annually at the Conference. The objective of the annual business meeting will be to discuss general affairs of the Society, and to elect officers. Attendance by all members at the Conference is expected.

Article 3 Section 2. A majority of the board of Directors shall constitute a legal quorum for any decision pertaining to matters not directly addressed by the Society's bylaws.

Article 4. Executive Committee- The Executive Committee shall consist of: The President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Chairman of the Board, and Ex-officio. The President will be elected first, followed by Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. The incoming President shall assume the duties of office of President at the general membership meeting of the society. The outgoing President (Chairman of the Board) will preside over the Board Meeting; the newly elected President will preside over the Annual Membership Meeting, with assistance if necessary from the Chairman of the Board.

Article 4 Section 1. Ex-Officio Board members will be seated on the board for three years following their Presidency, in which time they will be serving the Society as Chairman of the Board for the first year, and Ex-Officio Board members for a two-year term. After the expiration of the Ex-Officio term, the board member must submit (or have submitted) his nomination to the board of directors for a new term as active board of director member.

Article 4 Section 2. The Executive Committee shall be empowered to make decisions affecting the general business of the society, if they report those decisions to the Board and no objection is raised. If a Board member objects in writing to the ACS office within two weeks of the date of notification, then a full vote of the board must take place by paper or electronic methods within two weeks of receiving the objection.

Article 4 Section 2.1. All the funds of the Society shall be deposited in a bank account under the Treasurer's direction, and shall be paid out only upon counter-signing by both the President and the Treasurer. In case of emergency, the Vice President shall also be a signer on the account to act as one of the signatories if the President or Treasurer is incapacitated or unavailable.

Article 5. Officers - the Directors present will elect the officers of the Society at the annual Director's Meeting. The President shall be elected first by a simple majority vote of all votes cast. Election of the Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer shall follow immediately. The elections of officers shall be the first order of business.

Article 5 Section 1. The President – Term 1 year

A. The President will uphold the bylaws of the American Cheese Society and act in the best interest of the members. The President is the member's servant, not their director. The President will preside at all meetings of the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors, call special meetings, appoint chairs of committees with the ratification of the board, direct the activities of all officers and perform other duties pertaining to the office. The President will be an ex-officio member of all committees except the Nominating Committee. The President will have served as a member of the Board of Directors.

1. Biweekly: The President will discuss Society Business with Executive Committee members, Administrator and Vice President. The President will follow through with Committee Chairs on Action Plans.
2. Monthly: The President will communicate with the full Board through presentation of action proposals for comment or vote by fax or mail and with agenda for follow through, (an equivalent of a monthly board meeting). He/She will accept and review action proposals for presentation to Executive Committee for approval or to full Board as part of monthly communication with Board. The President will review newsletter status with the Chairperson, and provide a quarterly editorial for each newsletter.
3. The President will work with the Administrator and Treasurer in providing timely written correspondence to all members of the Board, the general membership, and the general public. (Co-signing of checks with the Treasurer and or other Executive Committee member, providing written business correspondence,

i.e., thank you notes to contributing members, and the public when necessary, etc. [Donations, contributions of work, etc.)]

4. In addition the President will perform the following annual duties:

○ September - Choose Conference chair and Conference Program Chairs for Conference.

○October - Confer with Vice President and Chairman of the Board for conference Chair and Conference Program Chairs for conference in two years for head start in planning.

○December - Write holiday letter to all members, for inclusion in fourth quarter newsletter.

○January -Review annual report with administrator, check on its completion and distribution to the Board. Confer with Conference Chair on announcement of conference location for 1st quarter newsletter. Check on Member Directory Updates.

○March - Continue to work with Conference Committee chair and Committee members to prepare for a successful Conference and Annual meeting.

○ June - a) Check on progress with Nominating Committee for Board members and Officer candidates. b) Finish Board business for review at Annual Meeting including general business, bylaw review, annual report, and preparation for year to date report, written year-end summary. c) Arrange for completion and printing in time for handing out at conference.

d) Work with Vice President to develop action plans for following year for presentation at annual meeting. e) Write agenda for annual meeting for inclusion in "pre-conference newsletter."

○ Follow through with Conference Chair to assure successful meeting.

○ August - Attend annual meeting, chair board meeting, and make closing speech at Conference.

○ September - Continue to check on progress for timely completion of conference follow-up reports.

Article 5 Section 2. Chairman of the Board – Term 1 year
A. The Chairman of the Board's chief responsibility is to serve as an advisor to the President, assist other officers and board members as directed by the President, chair the annual Board Meeting at the Conference, and serve as a member of the Finance Committee. The Chairman of the Board will serve as a liaison with other groups.

Article 5 Section 3. The Vice President – Term 1 year
A. The Vice President will perform the duties of the President in the absence or temporary inability of both to serve. The Vice President will advise the Board regarding parliamentary procedure. In addition, the Vice President will:

1. Attend Board Meetings, serve on the Executive Committee and successfully perform duties of office, communicate with Executive Committee and President by mail, phone or fax as needed.
2. Coordinate the schedule for regional society events working closely with the Public Relations Chair and the President.
3. Coordinate with the Program Chair regarding the location and special needs for the Annual General Meeting.
4. Become familiar with Robert's Rules of Order and keep a copy on hand at Board Meetings and General Business Meetings for reference.
5. Attend to any bylaws changes and print summary of proposed changes for members and coordinate mailing for vote.
6. Attend to an evaluation of the Society's policies to be completed yearly by the end of the first quarter or as needed.
7. In addition, the Vice President will provide the monitoring of all committees; and will assist in following through with Chairperson and facilitating communications.
8. Maintain a calendar of events, in coordination with the Administrator, of events, action plans and due dates, and help the President to follow through in a timely fashion.

Article 5 Section 4. The Secretary – Term 2 years

A. The Secretary will coordinate with the administrative office, the recording of proceedings of the society including all duly authorized business, Board Meetings, and Executive Committee decisions. In the event that the President, Vice President and Chairman are absent or temporarily unable to serve, the Secretary will convene a meeting for the Board of Directors to elect a temporary chair. In addition to the above, the Secretary will:

1. Attend Board meetings serve on the Executive Committee and successfully perform duties of office.
2. Coordinate with administrative service to provide a copy of Board Meeting minutes within two weeks after last Board Meeting, proof and approve it before final distribution to the Board.
3. Act as a support person to other Board Members and Committee Chairs as requested by the President.
4. Prepare a summary for all members of significant actions taken by the Board during the course of the year for publication in each Newsletter.
5. Distribute sign-in sheet at the Annual Meeting as a permanent record of those in attendance.
6. Coordinate activity with Publishing, Education, or other committees to search out sponsorship for printed materials or activities that benefit the membership.

Article 5 Section 5. Treasurer – Term 2 years

A. The Treasurer's greatest responsibility is to keep an accounting of the historical record storage of the Society, and ensure their storage in a secure location. These records include the yearly activity of the Society, both daily and financial records. The Treasurer will have custody and keep account of all money, funds and property of the Society unless otherwise determined by the Board of Directors. The Treasurer will monitor budget expenditures, serve as Chair of the

Finance Committee and pay out funds upon receipt of authorized bills. The Treasurer will oversee the filing of the necessary annual forms with the State Authorities and the Internal Revenue Service. In addition to the above, the Treasurer's will:

1. Attend Board Meetings, serve on the Executive Committee and successfully perform duties of office, communicate with Executive Committee and President by mail, phone or fax bi-weekly or be subject to removal from office.
2. As Chair of the Finance Committee, the Treasurer will establish annual budgets with the President and monitor the budget quarterly.
3. Work closely with the administrator to monitor the fiscal affairs of the ACS, and assist the administrator in preparation and distribution of quarterly reports to the Board consisting of Income and Expense statement and a Budget comparison.
4. Submit annual report for the members at the Conference consisting of an Income and Expense statement with summaries and arrange distribution to members not attending.
5. Submit monthly statement to the Executive Committee.
6. In addition the Treasurer will perform the following annual duties:

○ August - Following the Annual Meeting - Monitor the annual changeover of signatories on the bank accounts by securing signature cards for transfer of signatures when new individuals take office. Two signatures are required for each check, (one of them should be the Treasurer's, and the other should be the President's unless unable to sign, then the third appointed Board Member will sign.)

○September - Request budgets from Committees with budgetary considerations and present those requests in writing to the Finance Committee, making known their financial needs for the coming year.

○October - Meet with the President as soon as possible after the election of officers to prepare the annual budget for review by the Executive Committee, and then submit to the Board for approval.

○ January - February - Review annual income and expense statements and balance sheet, and prepare for mailing to account for tax form preparation.
○ Monthly - Monitor monthly balancing of bank statements and prepare reports for Executive Committee as requested. Oversee depositing of monies with the Administrator as they are recorded in the office. Keep accurate records indicating where the money has come from. Oversee the deposit of membership dues as submitted to administrative office. A monthly copy of the membership records should be sent by the Administrator to the Treasurer to act as a backup.
○June - Prepare annual report for the Annual Directors Meeting Article 5 Section 6. Board Members
A. Board members are elected to serve three (3) year terms. All Board members and Officers are required to attend the annual Board Meetings, unless they request permission from the President and receive agenda in advance and prepare written statements on view for consideration in voting. Board Members must vote on an on-going basis throughout the year by mail or fax, or be subject to removal from office by a majority vote of the Board. Board members must successfully perform duties of office or be subject to removal from office by a majority vote of the Board. In addition, Board members are expected to perform the following:

1. Serve the Society in an active manner and communicate with the President about issues concerning the members in their region.
2. Remember that to serve on the Board is to serve the Members, not to rule them, and to always act in such a way as best represents the American Cheese Society as described in our Constitution and bylaws.

Committees

Committee Chairs need not be Board members, but will be appointed by the President with Approval of the Board for One Year Terms.

Article 6. Committees - Standing and Special (hereafter referred to as Non-Standing Committees (Source Groups) exist for the orderly operation and progress of the Society. Three interactive groups will function as a "solar system" of cheese knowledge and education, and will aid in implementing and supporting the work of the president for the current year. These groups will generate the platform for the future presidents assuring the society as a whole is addressing issues that are of concern and value to the members.

Article 6 Section 1. All members will give input to committees, which relay information to the Board of Directors, and Executive Committee. In addition, all members of the society are encouraged to communicate points of view through any executive committee, board member, and/or the administrative office. In establishing the outside ring of "source groups", a vital link is established with the different segments of our industry.

Article 6 Section 2. Administrative support through the office will be supplied to target members (point members) for their comment on projects or to make the Board of Directors more aware of individual members needs. Communications between the Committee person, and the point person of the groups should be frequent, to allow for implementation of projects and enhance the benefits of the Society to the members. These Non-Standing Committees (*Source Groups*) -will reflect the particular interests and talents of ACS membership including:

1. Farmstead Cheesemakers and Small Specialty Cheesemakers (as defined in the mission statement)
2. Specialty Cheesemakers (as defined in the mission statement)*
3. Retailers
4. Chefs, Restaurateurs, & Caterers
5. Distributors

6. Brokers, consultants, marketers
7. Academia
8. Authors, writers

*#2 could be further divided into cheesemakers producing less than 100,000 lbs. and those producing over 100,000#

Article 6 Section 3. The source groups are not standing committees, which allows for the ebb and flow of different membership segments as they grow or decrease. Key members of each segment would be *appointed to* be contacts or “point” people of these source groups, and their responsibilities would be to the “standing committees” for contributing to the following instances:

1. Contributing to a particular newsletter issue
2. Contributing program suggestions using budgeted speakers to the Conference Committee.
3. Will address specific issues central to making, marketing, and promoting cheeses by recommending included (but not limited to) thoughts on the following topics: Ethics, International Networking, International Educational Experiences, Regulation, Certification, Regional Programs, Apprentice programs, and Marketing.

Article 6 Section 4. *The Standing Committees*, will be empowered by the new addition of the outside ring of members, and will be able to act pro-actively on member suggestions. The following committees will prepare Annual budgets for the Treasurer, due by September 15 of each year: A. Education, B. Regional Marketing, H. Newsletter/Website, I. Membership & Benefits, J. Public Relations, and K. Publishing. The Conference Committee and Judging Committees will prepare and present their budget independently as specified elsewhere in these Bylaws and Appendix I, (Conference Timeline). The following committees will all be made official through the by-laws:

A.	Education K. Publishing	F.	Judging
B.	Regional Marketing	G.	Judging Practices & Categories
C.	Conference	H.	Newsletter/Website
D.	Nominating	I.	Membership & Benefits
E.	Finance	J.	Public Relations

Committees:

A. Education Committee

The Education Committee Chair will work with the President and Executive Committee to report on issues raised and voted during each annual conference of interest to the industry and government. In addition, they will facilitate the use of the website and newsletter as a forum for the ACS to state the general opinion of ACS membership regarding the important questions facing the specialty cheese industry.

• Work with the newsletter and website committees to present factual information about cheesemaking, retailing, and world events as well as regulations and laws that affect the specialty and farmstead cheese industry.

• Work with Newsletter, Website, PR, and Conference Committees to ensure a high level of current information is available through the various forms available to ACS members, e.g. newsletter, website, conferences, press kits and other published material.

• Prepare report for annual meeting as requested.

B. Regional Marketing
Defined as fluid in scope of activity and timeline depending upon each year's involvement. Members of the committee will support the Society in regional events authorized by the Board of Directors, and designed to promote the Society and its members.

C. Conference Chair
The Conference Committee Chair will consist of at least two members living in the local area. Hereafter, they will be referred to as the "Co-Chairs". They will coordinate all activities related to the successful hosting of the conference including but not restricted to funding, negotiation of facilities, the program, and the hiring of an on-site coordinator when/if needed and when financially feasible. In addition the Conference Chair will:
1. Open a local bank account requiring two signatures, those of the Conference Co-Chairs, for paying out expenses related to the conference.
2. Keep accurate accounts with the Treasurer, and will actively monitor budgeted income and expense reports throughout the planning year.
3. All conference expenses will be covered by income generated by donations, fund raising efforts, or conference fees.
4. A seed fund will be generated from the Society operating account for startup preparations.

D. Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee will consist of the ex-officio officers of the Board of Directors. The Chair will be the most recently removed ex-officio. This committee will supply notice for publication in the Spring Newsletter of the need for nominations from the membership. In addition this committee will:

1. Notify the current Board Members in May of pending elections, request any Board members with interest in an office to respond to the Nominating Committee in writing, and to include a list of their contributions to the society and accomplishments.
2. Notify members with interest in an office to respond to the Nominating Committee in writing, and include a list of their contributions to the society and accomplishments.
3. Coordinate with the Administrator to accept the ballots, tally the vote, and report the results to the membership during the Annual Meeting.

E. Finance Committee

This committee, headed by the current year's Treasurer, will coordinate with financial activity of Conference Committee, Regional Marketing Committee and any other's which require financial support from the Society.

F. Judging Committee

The Judging Committee responsibilities will be two-fold: 1) Work with the Conference Committee and the administrative office to ensure a fair and successful Annual Competition and 2) Review Annual Competition Classifications on an annual basis.

1. Coordinate providing information to the Public Relations and Newsletter Committee to aid in developing pre- and post conference press releases.

2. Work closely with the administrative offices and Conference Committee to secure judges, as well as manage the administrative tasks of the Annual Competition.
3. Coordinate volunteers as needed for the Annual Competition with the Conference Committee.
4. Prepare a Post-Competition Report for review by the Board of Directors.

G. Judging Practices and Categories Committee
Evaluate judging category guidelines and record history as a year-to-year process.

H. Newsletter/Website Committee
The Newsletter/Website Committee will collect material for the newsletter, edit the newsletter and coordinate the timely publication and distribution of the newsletter to members. Communicate and assist Website Host/management Company with the updates and content of the site together with the ACS office. In addition to the above, the newsletter chair will:

1. The chair will also communicate with the President as needed.
2. Compare Treasurer's reported year to date revenue and expenses with your figures. Prepare budget for Treasurer as requested.
3. Coordinate additions and qualify Feature Cheeses for Website.
4. Update member bulletins as needed.
5. Coordinate additions to the following Website sections - Tips of the Day, Recipes, Reference, Industry Web links, Conference Update, Newsletter Store, and Newsletter.
6. Check and respond or forward e-mail to appropriate member resources.
7. Review and submit to the Board any suggested additional sections for the Website.

I. Membership & Benefits Committee

The Membership Chair will create a membership committee, and will delegate responsibilities, special projects to encourage new membership, and ongoing analysis of membership demographics. In addition the Membership Chair will:

1. Submit annual plan to Executive Committee for approval within one month after end of Annual Conference.
2. Submit report of committee activities as requested.
3. Give new members option when joining to have their name sent out to other organizations for mailing lists.
4. Write Membership report for the Newsletter as requested.
5. Coordinate with Administrative Service and Publishing Committee the management of the Member Directory, including the on-time publication and distribution of complete and accurate Directory. Coordinate any supplements to the Directory as needed throughout the year.
6. Quarterly - Prepare membership committee interest list. Review Renewals, and contact delinquent members who fail to renew and establish reasons for non-renewals. Prepare a report for Executive Committee.

○September - Review membership brochure, application, renewal notices. Prepare budget for Treasurer.

○Prepare proofs for updated brochure, application, and renewal notice; submit to Broad for approval an assist process of distribution

J. Public Relations Committee

The Public Relations Chair will form a PR committee and conduct business as needed, with approval of the Executive Committee. This committee will develop an annual PR campaign to follow through with educating the public about the Society and quality American cheeses as described in our Mission Statement. This committee will coordinate the updating of press kit contents annually and as needed; identify and approach media. When needed, the committee will also assist with membership and special events by mailing press kits to media and/or non-media contacts. In addition, the PR Chair will:

1. Prepare reports to the Board on progress when requested.
2. Provide a written report to Newsletter Chair of Committee activities.
3. Identify appropriate media outlets and send out press kits as needed.
4. Attend Special Events or Programs as requested.5. Maintain photo library and distribute as necessary

K. Publishing Committee

The Publishing Committee Chair will head the Directory Committee, coordinating efforts with the Membership Committee Chair, and the Administrator. In addition, the Publishing Committee will manage any other publications taken on by the American Cheese Society for the benefit of the general membership or the specialty cheese industry in the US.

1) Chair the Directory Committee. Be responsible for management of the Member Directory.
2) On time publication and distribution of complete and accurate Directory in conjunction with Membership Chair and administrative service in time for Annual Conference.
3) Timely production and publication of supplements to Directory as needed throughout the year.

Appendix I.

Conference Committee Timeline

The Conference Committee has the wonderful opportunity to provide many ACS members with their only individual contact with the Board of Directors and office staff during a year. In order to assure a positive experience for all involved, this timeline is suggested in preparing for each annual conference.

TIMELINE FOR ANNUAL MEETING, FESTIVAL, AND COMPETITION

6-9 months ahead

Program

1. Establish tentative agreement w/host committee site, preliminary financial proposal.
2. Provisions to include: 1 large meeting room, preferably an auditorium with tables to accommodate up to 350 people; 1-2 breakout rooms with setup accommodations (tables and a few chairs).
3. Provisions for equipment to include: overhead projector, slide carousel, speaker system.
4. Develop special events itinerary and locations.
5. Speaker list & tentative program discussed.
6. Request information about travel agencies, air travel accommodations.
7. Locations finalized.
8. Develop budget.

Competition & Festival

1. Location finalized - preliminary financial proposal.
2. List of contact names incl./press contact in the region.
3. Develop potential list of chefs.

6 months ahead

Program

1. Contact speakers.
2. Develop press releases, artwork, based on preliminary program schedule.
3. Finalize arrangements for special events itinerary and locations.
4. Develop Sponsor list, and make initial contact.

Competition & Festival

1. Request to regional cheesemakers requesting cheese, and list of who should get comp tickets, media, food sources, anyone who can lend validity to the event.
2. Develop Event Themes.
3. Selection process for musicians for Festival.

5 months ahead

Program

1. Confirmation letter to speakers.
2. Flyers & special event tickets developed.
3. Finalize Conference Registration packets, submit to printer
4. Mail letters requesting bio's, photos, & incl./program schedule

Competition & Festival

1. Finalize list of chefs/cheesemakers who will participate.
2. Press releases developed for printing in ACS newsletter and Conference printings with sponsorship information.
3. Review judging forms provide final copy to admin. Office for printing.
4. Develop preliminary list of judge potentials.

3 months ahead

Program

1. Flyers & tickets to printer.

2. Contact speakers for information about travel plans, accommodations choices.
3. Decide on program moderators for panels.
4. Mail final program to press, and ACS newsletter editor for printing.
5. Follow up with sponsors who haven't sent in monies.
6. Mail out sponsorship packets.
7. Secure room for Board meeting
8. Coordinate with Administrative office the mailing of registration packets to members.

Competition & Festival
1. Menu finalized - arrangements made for volunteers.
2. Contact wineries.
3. Contact Cheesemakers w/information about menu.
4. Select musicians for Festival.
5. Judging Chair - Submit final list of judges to conference chair & exec. committee. Coordinate competition arrangements w/conf chair, line up volunteers from committee for specific tasks.

6-8 weeks ahead
Program
1. Finalize program, mail summary of discussion topics to speakers, providing moderator phone #'s. Send list of AV Equipment needs to sponsoring convention site.
2. Send Program schedule to local agricultural publications in region, and other media.
3. Confirmations sent to attendees, with special event and competition confirmations and tickets.

Competition
1. Final press released mailed along with comp tickets.
2. Program and lunch menus finalized.
3. Confirm judging location details to judges with thank you notes.

1 month ahead

Program

1. Speaker confirmations mailed w/flyers, travel, and hotel information, competition and event tickets.
2. Follow-up postcard to members and cheesemakers for competition and registration.
3. Mail final board packet to Board of Directors in preparation for annual meetings.
4. Mail final labels for competition to registrants.
5. Contact volunteers with list of duties.

Competition

1. Contact volunteers w/duties.
2. Arrange for media (local radio & TV coverage of event.)

BY LAWS 2003

BYLAWS
OF
THE AMERICAN CHEESE SOCIETY, INC.
Approved on August 2, 2003

ARTICLE I: NAME, LOCATION AND DEFINITIONS

Section 1. Name

The name of the corporation shall be The American Cheese Society.

Section 2. Location

The administrative offices of the association shall be in such a place as the Board of Directors may designate from time to time.

Section 3. Definitions

Whenever used in these bylaws, the word "Association" shall mean The American Cheese Society.

ARTICLE II: MISSION STATEMENT AND PURPOSE

Section 1. The Mission and Purpose of the Association shall be:

e. To uphold the highest standards of quality in the making of cheese and related fermented milk products.
f. To uphold the traditions and preserve the history of American cheesemaking.

g. To be an educational resource for American cheesemakers and the public.
h. To encourage consumption through better education on the sensory pleasures of cheese and its healthful and nutritional values.

Section 2. Not For Profit

The corporation is organized under and shall operate as a Massachusetts not-for-profit Corporation, and shall have such powers as are now or as may hereafter be granted by the Massachusetts Not For Profit Corporation Act. The purposes of the corporation are to serve as a trade association within the meaning of Section 501(c)(6) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, and as amended. No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to, its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the Corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth herein.

ARTICLE III: MEMBERS

Section 1. Classes of Members

There shall be five primary classes of members: Associate, Individual, Small Business, Corporate/Sponsor and Multi-Unit Business. Individuals from any class of membership may serve on committees and otherwise perform duties in accordance with procedures established by the Board of Directors or these bylaws. Individual, Small Business, Corporate and Multi-Unit Business members may vote at membership meetings, chair committees and may be elected to the Board and shall hold office as provided in Article VII, Section 1. The Board of Directors shall have the absolute discretion to determine the proper membership classification for any member.

Section 2. Associate Member
Individuals whose primary business activities do not involve the production, distribution, sale of or supply to the cheese or fermented milk products industry. The Associate Membership is carried in the name of an individual and bears no voting rights, nor does it allow for the member to hold a seat on the Board of Directors.

Section 3. Individual Member
Individuals whose primary business activities involve the production, distribution, sale of or supply to the cheese or fermented milk products industry. The Individual Membership is carried in the name of an individual and bears full voting rights and eligibility for the individual to hold a seat on the Board of Directors.

Section 4. Small Business Member
Small, entrepreneurial, cheese-related businesses with less than 5 employees shall be eligible

to become a Small Business Member of the Association. A Small Business Membership is a company rather than an individual membership and allows for one vote and the eligibility for one seat on the Board of Directors.

Section 5. Corporate/Society Sponsor Member
Large corporations, or companies that wish to be identified as Society Sponsors, that produce, manufacture, distribute or retail cheese or fermented milk products are eligible to become a Corporate Member/Society Sponsor of the Association. Corporate/Sponsor Membership is a company rather than an individual membership and allows for one vote and the eligibility for one seat on the Board of Directors.

Section 6. Multi-Unit Business Member
Large multi-unit retail corporations, which are typically divided into regions, are eligible to become Multi-Unit Business Members. Each region is eligible to hold the equivalent of a Corporate Membership with each region allowed one vote. The Multi-Unit Business Membership allows for the eligibility to hold one seat on the Board of Directors.

Section 7. Applications
Any person, firm, or corporation meeting the criteria for membership as defined by the Board of Directors may apply for membership by completing an application and forwarding it with the appropriate remittance to the Association's administrative offices.

Section 8. Voting

Each membership category that allows for such shall be entitled to one vote in the election of directors an in other matters of business as may be submitted to vote of the membership. Each Small Business, Corporate/Sponsor, and Multi-Unit Business Member region, if applicable, must designate in writing a representative who shall be empowered to cast its vote.

Section 9. Duration of Membership and Resignation

Membership shall terminate by voluntary withdrawal, non-payment of dues, or as otherwise provided in these bylaws. All rights, privileges, and interests of a member in or to the Association shall cease on the termination of membership.

Section 10.Suspension and Expulsion

Any membership may be suspended or terminated for cause or failure to maintain compliance with eligibility requirements, subject to a reasonable appeals process and by a two-thirds vote of the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE IV: DUES

Section 1. Dues

The amount of annual dues for all classes of membership and the terms of payment of such dues and fees shall be determined from time to time by the Board of Directors.

Section 2. Dues Year

The dues year for each category of membership shall be from the month or anniversary that the membership application and remittance are received at the administrative offices through the following twelve months thereafter.

ARTICLE V: MEETINGS OF THE MEMBERS

Section 1. Time and Place

There shall be an Annual Meeting of the Association at the Annual Conference or at such time and place as the Board of Directors shall determine for the transaction of such business as may properly come before the membership.

Section 2. Special Meetings

Except as otherwise provided by law, special meetings of the members may be called by the president of the Board of Directors, or shall be called by the president upon the written request of 25% of the membership.

Section 3. Notice of Meetings

Written notice stating the place, day and hour of any meeting and the business to be transacted shall be sent to each member entitled to vote at such meeting by notification to the last recorded address of each member at least 15 days prior to the date of the meeting.

Section 4. Quorum

One quarter of the voting members attending any annual or special meeting of the membership shall constitute a quorum.

Section 5. Action by the Members
Except as otherwise provided by law or by these bylaws, any action authorized by a majority of the total voting members present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the members.

ARTICLE VI: BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Section 1. Authority and Responsibility
The governing body of the Association shall be the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors shall have supervision, control and direction of the affairs of the Association and shall determine its policies or changes therein within the limits of the bylaws, provided, however, that the fundamental and basic purposes of the Association, as expressed in the Certificate of Incorporation, shall not thereby be amended or changed. The Board of Directors shall actively prosecute its purposes, shall have discretion in the disbursement of its funds and shall not permit any part of the net earnings or capital of the Association to inure to the benefit of any private individual. The Board may adopt such rules and regulations for the conduct of its business as shall be deemed advisable and may, in the execution of the powers granted, delegate authority to committees or individual directors, or appoint such agents as it may consider necessary.

Section 2. Number

There shall be no less than eleven and no more than eighteen members of the Board of Directors, including the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Chairman of the Board.

Section 3. Election and Term of Office

The Board of Directors shall be elected from the Individual, Small Business, Corporate/Sponsor and Multi-Unit Business members. Directors shall be elected for a term of three years, or until their successors are duly elected and qualified, except in the case of their earlier death, resignation or removal from office. A director may be elected to a second three-year term but may not be elected to a third consecutive three-year term. A director may be re-elected to the Board after a lapse of one year following completion of two consecutive full three-year terms in office. An Ex Officio director shall remain on the Board of Directors for a term of three years, including the year he or she serves as the Chairman. An Ex Officio member, at the end of the three year term shall be eligible for re-election to the Board of Directors, provided that the new term does not surpass three consecutive terms. No more than one representative of any firm, corporation, or organization as defined by the membership guidelines of these bylaws shall serve on the Board of Directors at any one time.

Section 4. Nomination and Election Procedures

The Board of Directors positions are filled through an annual election by the members conducted by ballot. There shall be no less than two candidates for a potentially vacant position. The slate of nominees for the ballot shall be determined by the Nominating Committee. The ballot shall be provided to members not less than eight weeks prior to the annual membership meeting. Only ballots received at Headquarters two weeks prior to the annual meeting shall be counted. In the event of a tie, a majority vote of the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Chairman of the Board will determine the winner through secret ballot.

Section 5. Absences

All members of the Board of Directors are expected to attend each scheduled board meeting. Any Director unable to attend a meeting shall, in a letter addressed to the Executive Director, state his or her reasons for absence. If a Board member is absent from any two of the three annual meetings for reasons which the Board determines to be insufficient, his or her resignation shall be deemed to have been tendered and accepted.

Section 6. Vacancies

The Executive Committee shall recommend to the Board individuals to fill any vacancy, however occurring, on the Board of Directors. Such appointments shall be confirmed by a majority vote of all Directors then serving in office at any regular meeting of the Board, or at a special meeting of the Board called for that purpose. A director appointed to fill a vacancy shall serve until the next annual election of officers and directors, at which time the Nominating Committee shall recommend candidates to be placed on the ballot to fill the unexpired term of the vacated seat.

Section 7. Resignation or Removal

Any director may resign at any time by giving written notice to the President. Such resignations shall take effect at the time specified in such notice and the acceptance of such resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective. Any director may be removed by a majority vote of the full Board of Directors, with or without cause, whenever, in its judgment, the best interest of the Association would be served thereby.

Section 8. Compensation

Directors shall not receive any compensation for their services as a Director, but the Board may by resolution authorize reimbursement of expenses incurred in the performance of their duties. Such authorization may prescribe procedures for approval and payment of such expenses. Nothing herein shall preclude a director from serving the Association in any other capacity and receiving compensation for such services.

ARTICLE VII: MEETINGS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1. Regular Meetings

The Board of Directors shall hold three (3) meetings each year including one held in conjunction with the annual conference and at such other times as the President may deem desirable. The time and place of the meetings shall be determined by board resolution or, in the absence thereof, by the President of the Association.

Section 2. Special Meetings

Special meetings of the Board of Directors may be called by the President or Vice President, or shall be called by the Secretary at the request in writing of any six (6) voting Directors then serving in office.

Section 3. Action Without a Meeting

Action may be taken without a meeting if a consent in writing, setting forth the action so taken, shall be signed by all of the voting Directors then serving in office. Actions taken must be reported at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Directors and included in the minutes of that meeting.

Section 4. Telephone Meetings

Members of the Board or of any committee may participate in a Board meeting through use of conference telephone or similar communication equipment, so long as all members participating in such meeting can hear one another. Participation in a meeting pursuant to this provision constitutes presence in person at such meeting.

Section 5. Notice of Meetings

Written notice of the time and place of the annual meeting of the Board of Directors, together with a written agenda stating all matters upon which action is proposed to be taken, shall be sent to each director, at least eight days, but no more than thirty days, prior to the date of such meeting. Notice of special meetings to discuss matters requiring prompt action shall be sent to each Director by mail, telephone, or other electronic communications systems, not less than forty-eight hours prior to the date of such meeting.

Section 6. Quorum

Unless provided for differently elsewhere in these bylaws, a majority of the entire Board of Directors then serving in office shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the Board of Directors. In the absence of a quorum, a majority of the Directors present may, without giving notice other than announcement at the meeting, adjourn the meeting from time to time until a quorum is obtained. A meeting at which a quorum is initially present may continue to transact business notwithstanding the withdrawal of Directors if any action taken is approved by at least a majority of the required quorum for such a meeting.

Section 7. Voting
At any meeting of the Directors, every voting Director present in person shall be entitled to one
vote and, except as otherwise provided by law or these bylaws, the act of a majority of the
Directors present in person at any meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the
Board.

ARTICLE VIII. OFFICERS' DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Section 1. Officers
The officers of the Association shall be a President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer.
In addition to these, the Board of Directors may, by resolution, elect or appoint additional
officers or engage agents and administrative officers and determine their terms of office and
compensation, if any, as it may deem advisable.

Section 2. Election and Term of Office
The Executive Committee shall select nominees for officers from among Directors currently
serving on the board who have a minimum of one year service on the board. The nominees will
be confirmed by a majority vote of the Board of Directors. The officers of the Association shall
be confirmed at the annual meeting of the members. An officer shall serve a one-year term and

shall hold office until the next annual meeting of the members or until his or her successor shall have been elected, except in the case of death, resignation, or removal as provided for in these bylaws. Officers may be re-elected until his or her board term expires.

Section 3. Resignation or Removal

Any officer may resign by giving written notice of his or her resignation to the Board or the president of the Association. Such resignation shall take effect at the time specified in such notice and the acceptance of such resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective. Any officer may be removed, with or without cause, at any time at any Board meeting at which a quorum is present by a vote of two-thirds of the number of Directors then serving in office.

Section 4. Vacancies

In the event of a vacancy occurring in the office of President, Vice President, Secretary or Treasurer the Executive Committee shall recommend to the Board of Directors a current Board member to fill the vacancy. Such appointments shall be confirmed by a majority vote of the remaining Board.

Section 5. President

The President shall be the principal elected officer of the Association and shall have general supervision and control over the business and affairs of the Association, subject to the direction of the Board of Directors, and shall serve as an ex-officio member with the right to vote on all committees. The President shall call and preside at all meetings of the Association, the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee. The President shall represent the Association before the public and allied industries. The President may sign, with the Vice President or other proper officers of the Association, any instruments which the Board of Directors may authorize to be executed; and in general shall perform such other duties as are incident to the office of President or which may be assigned from time to time by the Board of Directors.

Section 6. Vice President

The Vice President shall generally assist the president and shall have such other powers and perform such other duties as may be assigned from time to time by the President or the Board of Directors. In the absence of the President, or in the event of the President's inability or refusal to act, the Vice President shall exercise the powers and perform the duties of the President.

Section 7. Secretary

The Secretary shall keep, or cause to be kept, the minutes of all Association meetings, and shall see that the minutes are distributed promptly to all members of the Board of Directors. He or she shall see that all notices are duly given in accordance with these bylaws and as required by law. He or she shall have charge of the books, records and papers of the Corporation relating to its organization as a corporation and shall see that all reports and other documents required by law are properly kept or filed. In general, he or she shall perform all duties incident to the office of Secretary and such other duties as may from time to time be assigned by the President or by the Board of Directors.

Section 8. Treasurer

The Treasurer shall act under the supervision of the Board and shall have charge and custody of, and be responsible for, all the funds of the Corporation and shall keep or cause to be kept, and shall be responsible for the keeping of accurate and adequate records of the assets, liabilities, and transactions of the Corporation. In general, he or she shall perform all duties incident to the office of Treasurer and such other duties as may from time to time be assigned by the President or by the Board of Directors.

Section 9. Executive Director

The administration and management of the day-to-day operations of the Association shall be performed by a salaried staff head approved by, and directly responsible to, the Board of Directors, with the title of Executive Director. He or she shall be the executive and operating officer of the Association, with responsibility for the management and direction of all operations, programs, activities and affairs of the Association functioning within the framework of policies and procedures generally determined by the Board of Directors. If directed, the Executive Director shall assume responsibility for the coordination of the Association's budget, expenditures, funds and records, and shall perform such other duties as may assigned from time to time by the President or by the Board of Directors.

Section 10.Bonding and Indemnification

Any person entrusted with the handling of funds or property of the Association, shall, at the discretion of the Board of Directors, furnish, at the expense of the Association, a fidelity bond approved by the Board, in such amount as the Board shall prescribe.

ARTICLE IX: COMMITTEES

Section 1. Establishment of Committees

Standing and ad hoc committees not having and exercising the authority of the Board of Directors in the management of the Association may be designated by the President or by a resolution adopted by a majority of the directors. To achieve the objectives of the Association, the Board of Directors may at its discretion establish organization units to serve the special interests of its membership. The board may also appoint a Task Force and/or other honorary groups. The terms of appointment and expectations of service of any advisory or honorary group shall be determined by the Board of Directors.

Section 2. Membership

Unless otherwise provided by these bylaws, the President of the Board of Directors shall, with the approval of the Board of Directors, appoint the chair of each committee. Each chair will serve for a period of one year, beginning August 1, with the option of reappointment by the succeeding President. Normally, the Chair of each committee shall appoint the other committee members in consultation with the President and other appropriate Directors and/or staff. Each committee shall consist of at least three members. Unless otherwise provided for in these bylaws, any committee designated by the Board of Directors may include as full voting members of such committees, Directors or Officers of the Association. Each committee shall have power to the extent delegated to it by the Board of Directors. Each committee shall keep minutes of proceedings and report to the Board of Directors.

Section 3. Executive Committee

There shall be an Executive Committee, which shall consist of the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Chairman of the Board of the Association. The President shall serve as Chair, unless a different person is designated by resolution of the Board. The Executive Committee shall, during intervals between meetings of the Board, exercise all the powers of the Board in the management of the business and affairs of the Association, except as otherwise provided by law, these bylaws or by resolution of the Board. The presence of a majority of the members of the Executive Committee present at a meeting of the Committee at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the Committee. In the event of a tie vote on any issue requiring a vote by the Executive Committee shall be referred to the Board of Directors for resolution. The Committee shall keep records of its proceedings and transactions and minutes of the Executive Committee shall be distributed to all members of the Board of Directors. All actions by the Committee shall be reported to the Board at its next meeting and shall be subject to approval by the Board.

Section 4. Finance Committee

The Finance Committee shall consist of the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Executive Director and at least one other Board member appointed by the President. The Treasurer shall serve as Chair unless a different person is designated Chair by resolution of the Board. The Executive Director shall assist in the annual preparation of a budget detailing the projected revenues and expenditures for the Association for the coming fiscal year and submit it to the Finance Committee for review at its annual meeting. The committee will review the projected budget and revise as necessary, and shall submit final budget recommendations to the Board of Directors at its first meeting of the new fiscal year.

Section 5. Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee shall consist of three voting members appointed by the President and ratified by the Board of Directors at its first meeting following the Annual Conference. The Executive Director shall serve on the committee as a non-voting member. Not less than four (4) months prior to each annual membership meeting, the Nominating Committee shall select two candidates for each vacant or potentially vacant elected position.

Section 6. Committee Meetings

Unless otherwise provided for in these bylaws, a majority of the members then serving on a Committee constitutes a quorum for the meeting of the Committee and the vote of a simple majority of those present at a meeting at which a quorum is present constitutes an action of the Committee. Each Committee shall determine and schedule the number of regular meetings it will hold each year.

Section 7. Resignation and Removal

Any committee chair may resign by giving written notice to the President of the Association. Such resignation shall take effect at the time specified in such notice and the acceptance of such resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective. Any committee chair may be removed by a two-thirds vote of all Directors then serving in office.

Section 8. Vacancies

Vacancies in the chairmanship of any committee may be filled by appointment made in the same manner as provided in the case of original appointment.

ARTICLE X: MISCELLANEOUS

Section 1. Mail Vote

Voting by the membership on any matter, including amendments to the Bylaws may be conducted by mail, at the discretion of the Board of Directors. The matter requiring the vote shall be submitted to the members in writing and shall be determined according to a majority of the votes received within four weeks after submission to the members.

Section 2. Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the association shall be from January 1 to December 31, or may be fixed from time to time by the Board of Directors. An audit of the books and records shall be made annually by a Certified Public Accountant approved by the Board of Directors and a copy of the audit shall be available in the administrative office for inspection by any member.

Section 3. Conduct of Meetings

All meetings of the Association shall be conducted in accordance with procedures outlined in “Robert’s Rules of Order” unless otherwise determined by a majority vote of the voting members present at a meeting.

Section 4. Indemnification

The Association may, to the fullest extent now or hereafter permitted by law, indemnify any person made, or threatened to be made, a party to any action or proceeding by reason of the fact that he or she was a director, officer, employee or agent of the corporation, against judgments, fines, amounts paid in settlement and reasonable expenses, including attorney's fees.

Section 5. Insurance

The Association shall purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any person who is or was a director, officer, employee or agent of the Association, or is or was serving at the request of the Association as a director, officer, employee or agent of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise against any liability asserted against and incurred by him or her in any such capacity, or arising out of his or her status as such.

ARTICLE XI: AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS

Upon proposal by the Board of Directors, these bylaws may be altered, amended or repealed in whole or in part (a) by a majority vote of the members of the Association who are entitled to vote and who are present and voting at any duly called meeting of the membership provided that copy of any amendments proposed for consideration shall be mailed at least 30 days before the date of such meeting; or (b) by approval of the members through mail voted in accordance with the provisions of Article X, Section 1.

ARTICLE XII: LIMITATION OF LIABILITIES

Section 1. Limitation of Authority

Nothing herein shall constitute members of the Association as partners for any purpose. No member, officer, agent or employee of this Association shall be liable for the acts or failure to act on the part of any other member, officer, agent or employee of the Association. Nor shall any member, officer, agent or employee be liable for his or her acts or failure to act under these Bylaws, with the exception of acts or omission to act arising out of his or her willful misfeasance.

Section 2. Legal Compliance

It has always been and is now the fixed and unalterable policy of the Association to comply at all times with all federal, state and local statutes, ordinances, rules and regulation pertaining to the Association, including but not limited to anti-trust laws. No member, director or officer of the Association shall do, omit to do, or have the power to do any action the effect of which constitutes a violation by the Association of any anti-trust law.

ARTICLE XIII: DISSOLUTION OF THE ASSOCIATION

The Association shall use its funds only to accomplish the objectives and purposes specified in these bylaws, and no part of said funds shall inure, or be distributed, to the members of the Association. On dissolution of the Association, any funds remaining shall be distributed to one or more regularly organized and qualified charitable, education, scientific or philanthropic organization to be selected by the Board of Directors.

BY-LAWS 2010

Bylaws of the American Cheese Society, Inc.

Approved by the Membership on August 7, 2010

ARTICLE I: NAME, LOCATION AND DEFINITIONS

Section 1. Name

The name of the corporation shall be The American Cheese Society.

Section 2. Location

The administrative offices of the association shall be in such a place as the Board of Directors may designate from time to time.

Section 3. Definitions

Whenever used in these bylaws, the word “Association” shall mean The American Cheese Society.

ARTICLE II: MISSION STATEMENT AND PURPOSE

Section 1. The Mission and Purpose of the Association shall be:

1. To uphold the highest standards of quality in the making of cheese and related fermented milk products.
2. To uphold the traditions and preserve the history of American cheesemaking.
3. To be an educational resource for American cheesemakers and the public.
4. To encourage consumption through better education on the sensory pleasures of cheese and its healthful and nutritional values.

Section 2. Not For Profit

The corporation is organized under and shall operate as a Massachusetts not-for-profit Corporation, and shall have such powers as are now or as may hereafter be granted by the Massachusetts Not For Profit Corporation Act. The purposes of the corporation are to serve as a trade association within the meaning of Section 501(c)(6) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, and as amended. No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to, its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the Corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth herein.

ARTICLE III: MEMBERS

Section 1. Classes of Members

There shall be two levels of membership – Professional and Non-Professional and three primary classes of members: Producer [Professional], Trade Affiliate [Professional] and Associate[Non-Professional]. Individuals from any of the Producer, Trade Affiliate classes and Associate (Student and Enthusiast) classes of membership may serve on committees and otherwise perform duties in accordance with procedures established by the Board of Directors or these bylaws. Members from the Producer and Trade Affiliate categories may vote at membership meetings, chair committees and may be elected to the Board and shall hold office as provided in Article VII, Section 1. The Board of Directors, or its designee, shall have the absolute discretion to determine the proper membership classification for any member.

Section 2. Producer Member

The Producer membership is for cheesemakers only—individuals and companies involved in the production of cheese and dairy products. This member class is structured into three tiers: Individual, Small Business and Corporate (Article III, Section 5-7)

Section 3. Trade Affiliate Member

The Trade Affiliate membership is for individuals and companies involved in the distribution and marketing of cheese and/or cheese-related products—retailers, foodservice/restaurateurs, distributors, suppliers, writers/PR, educators, affineurs and technical members. This member class is structured in three tiers: Individual, Small Business and Corporate (Article III, Section 5-7)

Section 4. Associate Member (Student and Enthusiast)

The Associate membership is for the cheese enthusiast and those consumers or students who want to gain and/or increase their knowledge about the world of specialty cheese. The Associate membership is carried in the name of the individual and bears no voting rights, nor does it allow for the member to hold a seat on the Board of Directors.

Section 5. Individual Tier (Professional level only)

The Individual Tier is available at the Producer and Trade Affiliate Class. Under this tier, the membership is carried in the name of an individual and bears full voting rights and eligibility for the individual to hold a seat on the Board of Directors.

Section 6. Small Business Tier (Professional level only)

Small, entrepreneurial, cheese-related businesses shall be eligible to become a Small Business Member in the Professional levels of the Association. A Small Business Membership is a company rather than an individual membership and allows for up to three people, one vote and the eligibility for one seat on the Board of Directors.

Section 7. Corporate Tier (Professional level only)

Large corporations, or companies that produce, manufacture, distribute or retail cheese or fermented milk products are eligible to become a

Corporate Members of the Association. Corporate membership is a company rather than an individual membership and allows up to five people to be listed on the membership, one vote and the eligibility for not greater than one seat on the Board of Directors.

Section 8. Applications

Any person, firm, or corporation meeting the criteria for membership as defined by the Board of Directors may apply for membership by completing an application and forwarding it with the appropriate remittance to the Association's administrative offices.

Section 9. Voting

Each membership category that allows for such shall be entitled to one vote in the election of Directors and in other matters of business as may be submitted to vote of the membership. Each Small Business and Corporate, if applicable, must designate in writing a representative who shall be empowered to cast its vote.

Section 10. Duration of Membership and Resignation

Membership shall terminate by voluntary withdrawal, non-payment of dues, or as otherwise provided in these bylaws. All rights, privileges, and interests of a member in or to the Association shall cease on the termination of membership.

Section 11. Suspension and Expulsion

Any membership may be suspended or terminated for cause or failure to maintain compliance with eligibility requirements, subject to a reasonable appeals process and by a two-thirds vote of the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE IV: DUES

Section 1. Dues

The amount of annual dues for all classes of membership and the terms of payment of such dues and fees shall be determined from time to time by the Board of Directors.

Section 2. Dues Year

The dues of the members of this association shall be on a per annum basis and shall be payable annually upon receipt of notice thereof.

ARTICLE V: MEETINGS OF THE MEMBERS

Section 1. Time and Place

There shall be an Annual Meeting of the Association at the Annual Conference or at such time and place as the Board of Directors shall determine for the transaction of such business as may properly come before the membership.

Section 2. Special Meetings

Except as otherwise provided by law, special meetings of the members may be called by the president of the Board of Directors, or shall be called by the president upon the written request of 25% of the membership.

Section 3. Notice of Meetings

Written notice stating the place, day and hour of any meeting and the business to be transacted shall be sent to each member entitled to vote at such meeting by notification to the last recorded address of each member at least 15 days prior to the date of the meeting.

Section 4. Quorum

One quarter of the voting members attending any annual or special meeting of the membership shall constitute a quorum.

Section 5. Action by the Members

Except as otherwise provided by law or by these bylaws, any action authorized by a majority of the total voting members present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the members.

ARTICLE VI: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1. Authority and Responsibility

The governing body of the Association shall be the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors shall have supervision, control and direction of the affairs of the Association and shall determine its policies or changes therein within the limits of the bylaws, provided, however, that the fundamental and basic purposes of the Association, as expressed in the Certificate of Incorporation, shall not thereby be amended or changed. The Board of Directors shall actively prosecute its purposes, shall have discretion in the disbursement of its funds and shall not permit any part of the net earnings or capital of the Association to inure to the benefit of any private individual. The Board may adopt such rules and regulations for the conduct of its business as shall be deemed advisable and may, in the execution of the powers granted, delegate authority to committees or individual directors, or appoint such agents as it may consider necessary.

Section 2. Number

There shall be no less than eleven and no more than eighteen members of the Board of Directors, including the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and Chairman of the Board.

Section 3. Election and Term of Office

The Board of Directors shall be elected from the Producer and Trade Affiliate categories. Directors shall be elected for a term of three years, or until their successors are duly elected and qualified, except in the case of their earlier death, resignation or removal from office. A Director may be elected to a second three-year term but may not be elected to a third consecutive three-year term. A Director may be re-elected to the Board after a lapse of one year following completion of two consecutive full three-year terms in office. An Ex Officio Director shall remain on the Board of Directors for a term of three years, including the year he or she serves as the Chairman. An Ex Officio member, at the end of the three year term shall be eligible for re-election to the Board of Directors, provided that the new term does not surpass three consecutive terms. No more than one representative of any firm, corporation, or organization as defined by the membership guidelines of these bylaws shall serve on the Board of Directors at any one time.

Section 4. Nomination and Election Procedures

The Board of Directors positions are filled through an annual election by the members conducted by ballot. If there is a vacancy, the ballot shall be provided to members approximately six to eight weeks prior to the annual meeting. A Board member may serve his or her second term, following a performance evaluation conducted with the Executive Committee. The slate of nominees for the ballot shall be determined by the Nominating Committee. There is no provision for floor nominations. Only ballots received at Headquarters prior to the annual meeting shall be counted. In the event of a tie, a majority vote of the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Chairman of the Board will determine the winner through secret ballot.

Section 5. Absences

All members of the Board of Directors are expected to attend each scheduled Board meeting. Any Director unable to attend a meeting shall, in a letter addressed to the Executive Director, state his or her reasons for absence. If a Board member is absent from any two of the three annual meetings for reasons which the Board determines to be insufficient, his or her resignation shall be deemed to have been tendered and accepted.

Section 6. Vacancies

The Executive Committee shall recommend to the Board individuals to fill any vacancy, however occurring, on the Board of Directors. Such appointments shall be confirmed by a majority vote of all Directors then serving in office at any regular meeting of the Board, or at a special meeting of the Board called for that purpose. A Director appointed to fill a vacancy shall serve until the next annual election of Officers and Directors, at which time the Nominating Committee shall recommend candidates to be placed on the ballot to fill the unexpired term of the vacated seat.

Section 7. Resignation or Removal

Any Director may resign at any time by giving written notice to the President. Such resignations shall take effect at the time specified in such notice and the acceptance of such resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective. Any Director may be removed by a majority vote of the voting members of the Board of Directors, with or without cause, whenever, in its judgment, the best interest of the Association would be served thereby.

Section 8. Compensation

Directors shall not receive any compensation for their services as a Director, but the Board may by resolution authorize reimbursement of expenses incurred in the performance of their duties. Such authorization may prescribe procedures for approval and payment of such expenses. Nothing herein shall preclude a Director from serving the Association in any other capacity and receiving compensation for such services, in accordance with the Association’s conflict of interest and other applicable policies.

ARTICLE VII: MEETINGS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1. Regular Meetings

The Board of Directors shall hold three (3) meetings each year including one held in conjunction with the annual conference and at such other times as the President may deem desirable. The time and place of the meetings shall be determined by board resolution or, in the absence thereof, by the President of the Association.

Section 2. Special Meetings

Special meetings of the Board of Directors may be called by the President or Vice President, or shall be called by the Secretary at the request in writing of any six (6) voting Directors then serving in office.

Section 3. Action Without a Meeting

Action may be taken without a meeting if a consent in writing, setting forth the action so taken, shall be signed by all of the voting Directors then serving in office. Actions taken must be reported at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Directors and included in the minutes of that meeting.

Section 4. Telephone Meetings

Members of the Board or of any committee may participate in a Board meeting through use of conference telephone or similar communication equipment, so long as all members participating in such meeting can hear one another. Participation in a meeting pursuant to this provision constitutes presence in person at such meeting.

Section 5. Notice of Meetings

Written notice of the time and place of the annual meeting of the Board of Directors, together with a written agenda stating all matters upon which action is proposed to be taken, shall be sent to each director, at least eight days, but no more than thirty days, prior to the date of such meeting. Notice of special meetings to discuss matters requiring prompt action shall be sent to each Director by mail, telephone, or other electronic communications systems, not less than forty-eight hours prior to the date of such meeting.

Section 6. Quorum

Unless provided for differently elsewhere in these bylaws, a majority of the entire Board of Directors then serving in office shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the Board of Directors. In the absence of a quorum, a majority of the Directors present may, without giving notice other than announcement at the meeting, adjourn the meeting from time to time until a quorum is obtained. A meeting at which a quorum is initially present may continue to transact business notwithstanding the withdrawal of Directors if any action taken is approved by at least a majority of the required quorum for such a meeting.

Section 7. Voting

At any meeting of the Directors, every voting Director present in person shall be entitled to one vote and, except as otherwise provided by law or these bylaws, the act of a majority of the Directors present in person at any meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the Board.

ARTICLE VIII. OFFICERS’ DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Section 1. Officers

The Officers of the Association shall be a President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. In addition to these, the Board of Directors may, by resolution, elect or appoint additional Officers or engage agents and administrative Officers and determine their terms of office and compensation, if any, as it may deem advisable.

Section 2. Election and Term of Office

The Executive Committee shall select nominees for Officers from among Directors currently serving on the Board who have a minimum of one year service on the Board. The nominees will be confirmed as the Officers by a majority vote of the Board of Directors at the annual meeting of the members. An Officer shall serve a one-year term and shall hold office until the next annual meeting of the members or until his or her successor shall have been elected, except in the case of death, resignation, or removal as provided for in these bylaws. Officers may be re-elected until his or her Board term expires.

Section 3. Resignation or Removal

Any Officer may resign by giving written notice of his or her resignation to the Board or the President of the Association. Such resignation shall take effect at the time specified in such notice and the acceptance of such resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective. Any Officer may be removed, with or without cause, at any time at any Board meeting at which a quorum is present by a vote of two-thirds of the voting members of the Board of Directors then serving in office.

Section 4. Vacancies

In the event of a vacancy occurring in the office of President, Vice President, Secretary or Treasurer the Executive Committee shall recommend to the Board of Directors a current Board member to fill the vacancy. Such appointments shall be confirmed by a majority vote of the remaining Board.

Section 5. President

The President shall be the principal elected Officer of the Association and shall have general supervision and control over the business and affairs of the Association, subject to the direction of the Board of Directors, and shall serve as an ex-officio member with the right to vote on all committees. The President shall call and preside at all meetings of the Association, the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee. The President shall represent the Association before the public and allied industries. The President may sign, with the Vice President or other proper Officers of the association, any instruments which the Board of Directors may authorize to be executed; and in general, shall perform such other duties as are incident to the office of President or which may be assigned from time to time by the Board of Directors.

Section 6. Vice President

The Vice President shall generally assist the President and shall have such other powers and perform such other duties as may be assigned from time to time by the President or the Board of Directors. In the absence of the President, or in the event of the President's inability or refusal to act, the Vice President shall exercise the powers and perform the duties of the President.

Section 7. Secretary

The Secretary shall keep, or cause to be kept, the minutes of all Association meetings, and shall see that the minutes are distributed promptly to all members of the Board of Directors. He or she shall see that all notices are duly given in accordance with these bylaws and as required by law. He or she shall have charge of the books, records and papers of the Corporation relating to its organization as a corporation and shall see that all reports and other documents required by law are properly kept or filed. In general, he or she shall perform all duties incident to the office of Secretary and such other duties as may from time to time be assigned by the President or by the Board of Directors.

Section 8. Treasurer

The Treasurer shall act under the supervision of the Board and shall oversee the charge and custody of, and be responsible for, all the funds of the Corporation and shall keep or cause to be kept, accurate and adequate records of the assets, liabilities, and transactions of the Corporation. In general, he or she shall perform all duties incident to the office of Treasurer and such other duties as may from time to time be assigned by the President or by the Board of Directors.

Section 9. Executive Director

The administration and management of the day-to-day operations of the Association shall be performed by a salaried staff head approved by, and directly responsible to, the Board of Directors, with the title of Executive Director. He or she shall be the executive and operating Officer of the Association, with responsibility for the management and direction of all operations, programs, activities and affairs of the Association functioning within the framework of policies and procedures generally determined by the Board of Directors. If directed, the Executive Director shall assume responsibility for the coordination of the Association's budget, expenditures, funds and records, and shall perform such other duties as may assigned from time to time by the President or by the Board of Directors. The Executive Director shall be an ex officio, non-voting member of the Board of Directors.

Section 10. Bonding and Indemnification

Any person entrusted with the handling of funds or property of the Association, shall, at the discretion of the Board of Directors, furnish, at the expense of the Association, a fidelity bond approved by the Board, in such amount as the Board shall prescribe.

ARTICLE IX: COMMITTEES

Section 1. Establishment of Committees

Standing and ad hoc committees not having and exercising the authority of the Board of Directors in the management of the Association may be designated by the President or by a resolution adopted by a majority of the Directors. To achieve the objectives of the Association, the Board of Directors may at its discretion establish organizational units to serve the special interests of its membership. The Board may also appoint a Task Force and/or other honorary groups. The terms of appointment and expectations of service of any advisory or honorary group shall be determined by the Board of Directors.

Section 2. Membership

Unless otherwise provided by these bylaws, the President of the Board of Directors shall, with the approval of the Board of Directors, appoint the chair of each committee. Each chair will serve for a period of one year, beginning the last day of the Annual Conference with the option of reappointment by the succeeding President. Normally, the chair of each committee shall appoint the other committee members in consultation with the President and other appropriate Directors and/or staff. Each committee shall consist of at least three members. Unless otherwise provided for in these bylaws, any committee designated by the Board of Directors may include as full voting members of such committees, Directors or Officers of the Association. Each committee shall have power to the extent delegated to it by the Board of Directors. Each committee shall keep minutes of proceedings and report to the Board of Directors.

Section 3. Executive Committee

There shall be an Executive Committee, which shall consist of the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Chairman of the Board of the Association. The President shall serve as Chair, unless a different person is designated by resolution of the Board. The Executive Committee shall, during intervals between meetings of the Board, exercise all the powers of the Board in the management of the business and affairs of the Association, except as otherwise provided by law, these bylaws or by resolution of the Board. The presence of a majority of the members of the Executive Committee present at a meeting of the Committee at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the Committee. In the event of a tie vote on any issue requiring a vote by the Executive Committee shall be referred to the Board of Directors for resolution. The Committee shall keep records of its proceedings and transactions and minutes of the Executive Committee shall be distributed to all members of the Board of Directors. All actions by the Committee shall be reported to the Board at its next meeting and shall be subject to approval by the Board.

Section 4. Finance Committee

The Finance Committee shall consist of the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Executive Director and at least one other Board member appointed by the President. The Treasurer shall serve as Chair unless a different person is designated Chair by resolution of the Board. The Executive Director shall assist in the annual preparation of a budget detailing the projected revenues and expenditures for the Association for the coming fiscal year and submit it to the Finance Committee for review at its annual meeting. The Committee will review the projected budget and revise as necessary, and shall submit final budget recommendations to the Board of Directors at its first meeting of the new fiscal year.

Section 5. Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee shall consist of three voting members appointed by the President and ratified by the Board of Directors at its first meeting following the Annual Conference. The Executive Director shall serve on the Committee as a non-voting member. Approximately four (4) months prior to each annual membership meeting, the Nominating Committee shall select two candidates for each vacant or potentially vacant elected position.

Section 6. Committee Meetings

Unless otherwise provided for in these bylaws, a majority of the members then serving on a Committee constitutes a quorum for the meeting of the Committee and the vote of a simple majority of those present at a meeting at which a quorum is present constitutes an action of the Committee. Each Committee shall determine and schedule the number of regular meetings it will hold each year.

Section 7. Resignation and Removal

Any Committee Chair may resign by giving written notice to the President of the Association. Such resignation shall take effect at the time specified in such notice and the acceptance of such resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective. Any Committee Chair may be removed by a two-thirds vote of all Directors then serving in office.

Section 8. Vacancies

Vacancies in the Chairmanship of any Committee may be filled by appointment made in the same manner as provided in the case of original appointment.

ARTICLE X: MISCELLANEOUS

Section 1. Mail Vote

Voting by the membership on any matter, including amendments to the Bylaws may be conducted electronically, by fax, or by first class mail, at the discretion of the Board of Directors. The matter requiring the vote shall be submitted to the members in writing and shall be determined according to a majority of the votes received within four weeks after submission to the members.

Section 2. Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the association shall be from January 1 to December 31, or may be fixed from time to time by the Board of Directors. An audit of the books and records shall be made annually by a Certified Public Accountant approved by the Board of Directors and a copy of the audit shall be available in the administrative office for inspection by any member.

Section 3. Conduct of Meetings

All meetings of the Association shall be conducted in accordance with procedures outlined in “Robert’s Rules of Order” unless otherwise determined by a majority vote of the voting members present at a meeting.

Section 4. Indemnification

The Association shall to the fullest extent now or hereafter permitted by law, indemnify any person made, or threatened to be made, a party to any action or proceeding by reason of the fact that he or she was a Director, Officer, employee or agent of the corporation, against judgments, fines, amounts paid in settlement and reasonable expenses, including attorney's fees.

Section 5. Insurance

The Association shall purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any person who is or was a Director, Officer, employee or agent of the Association, or is or was serving at the request of the Association as a Director, Officer, employee or agent of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise against any liability asserted against and incurred by him or her in any such capacity, or arising out of his or her status as such, to the extent permitted by law.

ARTICLE XI: AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS

Upon proposal by the Board of Directors, these Bylaws may be altered, amended or repealed in whole or in part (a) by a majority vote of the members of the Association who are entitled to vote and who are present and voting at any duly called meeting of the membership provided that copy or a summary of any amendments proposed for consideration shall be mailed electronically, by fax, or by first class mail at least 30 days before the date of such meeting; or (b) by approval of the members electronically, by fax, or by first class mail voted in accordance with the provisions of Article X, Section 1.

ARTICLE XII: LIMITATION OF LIABILITIES

Section 1. Limitation of Authority

Nothing herein shall constitute members of the Association as partners for any purpose. No member, Officer, Director, agent or employee of this Association shall be liable for the acts or failure to act on the part of any other member, Officer, agent or employee of the Association. Nor shall any member, Officer, agent or employee be liable for his or her acts or failure to act under these Bylaws, with the exception of acts or omission to act arising out of his or her willful misfeasance.

Section 2. Legal Compliance

It has always been and is now the fixed and unalterable policy of the Association to comply at all times with all federal, state and local statutes, ordinances, rules and regulation pertaining to the Association, including but not limited to anti-trust laws. No member, Director or Officer of the Association shall do, omit to do, or have the power to do any action the effect of which constitutes a violation by the Association of any anti-trust law.

BY-LAWS 2024

The bylaws were approved by the ACS Membership in November 2024.

Article I: NAME, LOCATION AND DEFINITIONS

Section 1. NAME

The corporation is The American Cheese Society, Inc.

Section 2. LOCATION

The Board will determine the location of administrative offices.

Section 3. DEFINITIONS

In these bylaws, the word "Corporation" means The American Cheese Society, Inc.

Article II: PURPOSE

Section 1. MISSION

The mission of the Corporation is:

6. To uphold the highest standards of quality in the making of cheese and related fermented milk products;
7. To uphold the traditions and preserve the history of cheesemaking in North and South America;
8. To be an educational resource for American cheesemakers and the public;
9. To encourage cheese consumption through education regarding the sensory pleasures of cheese and its healthful and nutritional values;
10. To foster a culture that values diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging, respect, and empathy for all in our industry and the communities we serve.

Section 2. NOT FOR PROFIT

The Corporation is organized under and shall operate as a Massachusetts not-for-profit corporation, and shall have such powers as are now or may hereafter be granted by the Massachusetts Not for Profit Corporation Act. The Corporation shall serve as a trade association within the meaning of Section 501(c)(6) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, and as amended. No part of the net earnings of the Corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to, its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the Corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth herein.

Article III: MEMBERS

Section 1. CLASSES OF MEMBERS

There are three classes of membership: Producer, Trade Affiliate, and Associate. All classes of membership may serve on committees and otherwise perform duties in accordance with procedures established by these Bylaws and by the Board of Directors (hereinafter, the "Board"). Only members from the Producer and Trade Affiliate classes may vote at membership meetings, chair committees, and may be elected to the Board as provided in Article VII, Section 1. The Board, or its designee, shall have the absolute discretion to determine the proper membership class for any member.

Section 2. PRODUCER MEMBER

The Producer membership is for cheesemakers and companies involved in the production of cheese and dairy products. This member class is structured into three tiers: Individual, Small Business and Corporate (Article III, Section 5-7).

Section 3. TRADE AFFILIATE

The Trade Affiliate membership is for individuals and companies involved in the distribution and marketing of cheese and/or cheese-related products: retailers, foodservice/restaurateurs, distributors, suppliers, writers/PR, educators, affineurs and technical advisors. This member class is structured into three tiers: Individual, Small Business and Corporate (Article III, Section 5-7).

Section 4. ASSOCIATE MEMBER (STUDENT AND ENTHUSIAST)

The Associate membership is for the cheese enthusiast and students who want to gain and/or increase their knowledge about the world of specialty cheese. Associate membership is carried in the name of the individual and bears no voting rights, nor does it allow for the member to hold a seat on the Board or to serve as chair of a committee.

Section 5. INDIVIDUAL TIER:

The Individual Tier is available within the Producer and Trade Affiliate Classes. Under this tier, the membership is carried in the name of an individual and bears full voting rights and eligibility for the individual to hold a seat on the Board.

Section 6. SMALL BUSINESS TIER

The Small Business Tier is available within the Producer and Trade Affiliate Classes, for small, entrepreneurial companies. Under this tier, the membership is carried in the name of a company and allows for up to three people to access member benefits, one vote, and eligibility for one seat on the Board.

Section 7. CORPORATE TIER

The Corporate Tier is available within the Producer and Trade Affiliate Classes, for large corporations. Under this tier, the membership is carried in the name of the corporation and allows for up to five people to access member benefits, one vote, and eligibility for one seat on the Board.

Section 8. APPLICATIONS

Any person, firm or corporation meeting the criteria for membership as defined by the Board may apply to the Corporation's administrative offices.

Section 9. VOTING

Each Small Business and Corporate member must designate in writing a representative who shall be empowered to cast its vote.

Section 10. DURATION OF MEMBERSHIP AND RESIGNATION

Membership shall terminate by voluntary withdrawal, non-payment of dues, or as otherwise provided in these Bylaws. All rights, privileges and interests of a member in or to the Corporation shall cease on the termination of membership.

Section 11. SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

Any membership may be suspended or terminated for cause or failure to maintain compliance with eligibility requirements, by a two-thirds vote of the Board.

Article IV: DUES

Section 1. DUES

The amount of annual dues for all classes and tiers of membership and the terms of payment of such dues shall be determined from time to time by the Board.

Section 2. DUES YEAR

Members of the Corporation shall pay dues annually upon receipt of billing from the Corporation.

Article V: MEETINGS OF THE MEMBERS

Section 1. TIME AND PLACE

The Board shall hold an Annual Meeting for the membership and shall determine the time and place thereof.

Section 2. SPECIAL MEETINGS

Except as otherwise provided by law, special meetings of the members may be called by the President of the Board, or shall be called by the President upon the written request of 25% of the membership.

Section 3. NOTICE OF MEETINGS AND VOTING DEADLINES

Each member entitled to vote under these Bylaws must be notified of the time, place and business to be transacted, in writing sent to the last recorded address of each member, at least 15 days prior to the date of such meeting or deadline for voting.

Section 4. QUORUM

One quarter of the voting members shall constitute a quorum for any election, referendum or membership meeting at which a membership vote is solicited.

Article VI: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1. AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY

The Board governs the Corporation. The Board shall supervise, control and direct the affairs of the Corporation within the limits of the bylaws, provided, however, that the fundamental and basic purposes of the Corporation, as expressed in the Certificate of Incorporation, shall not thereby be amended or changed. The Board shall actively prosecute its purposes, shall have discretion in the disbursement of its funds and shall not permit any part of the net earnings or capital of the Association to inure to the benefit of any private individual or business. The Board may adopt such rules and regulations for the conduct of its business as it deems advisable and may delegate authority to committees of individual directors, or appoint agents as it considers necessary.

Section 2. NUMBER

The Board of Directors, including the President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer of the Board, shall consist of no fewer than eleven and no more than eighteen members.

Section 3. ELECTION AND TERM OF OFFICE

The Board shall be elected from the Producer and Trade Affiliate classes. Directors shall be elected for a term of three years, except in the case of their earlier death, resignation or removal from office. Approximately four months before the conclusion of a Director's first term, the Executive Committee shall conduct a performance evaluation of such director, and may recommend such Director for inclusion on the ballot for a second term. A Director may be elected to a second three-year term, but may not be elected to a third consecutive three-year term. A Director may be elected to the Board after a lapse of at least one year following completion of two consecutive full three year terms in office. No more than one representative of any member firm, corporation or organization may hold a voting position on the Board at once.

Section 4. NOMINATION AND ELECTION PROCEDURES

The Board positions are filled through an annual election by the members, conducted by electronic ballot. If there is a vacancy, the ballot shall be provided to members approximately six to eight weeks prior to the annual meeting. The slate of nominees for the ballot shall be recommended by the Nominating Committee, in accordance with these Bylaws. Nominations outside of the process set forth herein are prohibited. Only ballots received physically or electronically at the location of the administrative offices prior to the announced deadline for receipt thereof shall be counted. In the event of a tie, a majority vote of the Board will determine the winner.

Section 5. ABSENCES

All members of the Board are expected to attend each scheduled Board meeting. Any Director unable to attend a meeting shall, in a letter addressed to the Executive Director, state their reasons for absence. The Board will develop and adhere to an attendance policy.

Section 6. VACANCIES

The Nominating Committee shall recommend to the Board individuals to fill any vacancy on the Board which arises by reason other than the expiration of a director's term in office. Such appointments shall require confirmation by a majority vote of all Directors then serving in office, at any regular meeting of the Board, or at a special meeting of the Board called for that purpose. A Director appointed to fill a vacancy shall serve until the next annual election, at which time the Nominating Committee shall recommend candidates to be placed on the ballot to fill the unexpired term of the vacated seat.

Section 7. RESIGNATION OR REMOVAL

Any Director may resign at any time by giving written notice to the President. Such resignation shall take effect at the time specified in such notice and the acceptance of such resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective. Any Director may be removed by two thirds majority vote of the voting members of the Board, whenever, in its judgment, the best interest of the Corporation would be served thereby.

Section 8. COMPENSATION

The Board may by resolution authorize reimbursement of expenses incurred by Board, Committee and/or Task Force members in the performance of their duties. Such authorization may prescribe procedures for approval and payment of such expenses. Nothing herein shall preclude a Director from serving the Corporation in any other capacity and receiving compensation for such services, in accordance with the Corporation's conflict of interest and other applicable policies.

ARTICLE VII: MEETINGS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1. MEETINGS

The time, format and place of regular meetings of the Board shall be determined by resolution of the Board or, in the absence thereof, by the President. Special meetings of the Board may be called by the President or Vice President thereof, or shall be called by the Secretary at the written request of any six voting Directors then serving in office.

Section 2. ACTION WITHOUT A MEETING

The Board may act without a meeting if a consent in writing, setting forth the action so taken, is provided by all of the voting Directors then serving in office. Actions so taken must be reported at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board and must be included in the minutes of that meeting.

Section 3. TELEPHONIC OR ELECTRONIC MEETINGS

The Board or any Committee or Task Force may meet through use of conference call or electronic meeting application, so long as all members participating in such meeting can hear one another. Participation in a meeting pursuant to this procedure constitutes presence in person at such meeting.

Section 4. NOTICE OF MEETINGS

The Secretary shall provide written or electronic notice to each Director not less than five calendar days prior to any telephonic or electronic meeting of the Board, and not less than thirty calendar days prior to any in-person meeting of the Board, and shall provide by electronic communication the agenda therefore not less than five calendar days prior to any meeting of the Board.

Section 5. QUORUM

Unless provided for differently elsewhere in these Bylaws, a majority of the voting members of the Board then serving in office shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the Board. A meeting at which a quorum is initially present may continue to transact business notwithstanding the withdrawal of Directors if any action taken is approved by at least a majority of the required quorum for such a meeting.

Section 6. VOTING

At any meeting of the Directors, every voting Director present in person shall be entitled to one vote and, except as otherwise provided by law or these bylaws, the act of a majority of the Directors present at any meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the Board.

ARTICLE VIII: OFFICERS' DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Section 1. OFFICERS

The Officers of the Corporation shall be a President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. The Board may, by resolution, elect or appoint additional Officers or engage agents or administrative officers and determine their terms of office and compensation, if any.

Section 2. ELECTION AND TERM OF OFFICE

The Executive Committee shall select nominees for Officers from among Directors then serving on the Board who have a minimum of one year service on the Board. The nominees shall require confirmation by a majority vote of the Board at the annual meeting of the members. An Officer shall serve a one year term and shall hold office until the next annual meeting of the members or until their successor shall have been elected, except in the case of death, resignation or removal as provided for in these bylaws. Officers may be re-elected until their Board term expires.

Section 3. RESIGNATION OR REMOVAL

Any Officer may resign by giving written notice of their resignation to the Board or the President of the Corporation. Such resignation shall take effect at the time specified in such notice and the acceptance of such resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective. An Officer may resign their role as officer without resigning from the Board. Any Officer may be removed, with or without cause, at any time at any Board meeting at which a quorum is present, by a vote of two thirds of the voting members of the Board then serving in office, in which case the Officer shall also be removed from membership on the Board.

Section 4. VACANCIES

In the event of a vacancy occurring in the office of President, Vice President, Secretary or Treasurer, the Executive Committee, not including the departing Officer, shall recommend to the Board a current Board member to fill the vacancy. The recommendation shall require confirmation by a majority vote of the Board at a regular meeting thereof.

Section 5. PRESIDENT

The President shall have general supervision and control over the business and affairs of the Corporation, subject to the direction of the

Board. The President shall serve as an ex officio member with the right to vote on all Committees of the Corporation. The President shall preside at all meetings of the Corporation, the Board and the Executive Committee. The President shall represent the Corporation before the public and allied industries. The President may sign, with the Vice President or other proper Officers of the Corporation, any instruments which the Board may authorize to be executed, and in general shall perform such other duties as are incident to the office of President or which may be assigned from time to time by the Board.

Section 6. VICE PRESIDENT

The Vice President shall generally assist the President and shall have such other powers and perform such other duties as may be assigned from time to time by the President or the Board. In the absence of the President, or in the event of the President's inability or refusal to act, the Vice President shall exercise the powers and perform the duties of the President.

Section 7. SECRETARY

The Secretary shall keep, or cause to be kept, the minutes of all Board meetings, and shall see that the minutes are distributed promptly to all members of the Board. The Secretary shall ensure that all notices are duly given in accordance with these Bylaws and as required by law. The Secretary shall maintain the books, records and papers of the Corporation relating to its organization as a corporation and shall ensure that all reports and other documents required by law are properly kept or filed. In general, the Secretary shall perform all duties incident to the office of Secretary and such other duties as may from time to time be assigned by the President or by the Board.

Section 8. TREASURER

The Treasurer shall act under the supervision of the Board and shall oversee the charge and custody of, and be responsible for, all the funds of the Corporation and shall keep or cause to be kept accurate and adequate records of the assets, liabilities and transactions of the Corporation. In general, the Treasurer shall perform all duties incident to the office of Treasurer and such other duties as may from time to time be assigned by the President or by the Board.

Section 9. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The administration and management of the day-to-day operations of the Corporation shall be performed by an Executive Director approved by and directly responsible to the Board. The Executive Director shall be the executive and operating Officer of the Corporation, with responsibility for the management and direction of all operations, programs, activities and affairs of the Corporation, subject to the policies, priorities and procedures generally determined by the Board. If directed, the Executive Director shall assume responsibility for the coordination of the Corporation's budget, expenditures, funds and records, and shall perform such other duties as assigned by the President or by the Board. The Executive Director shall be an ex officio, non-voting member of the Board.

Section 10. CHAIRPERSON

Following the conclusion of their term as President, a President shall assume the role of Chairperson for the period of one year. If, upon completing their term as President, the Chairperson has served six years on the Board, the Chairperson may serve a seventh year on the

Board as an ex officio, non-voting member. A President who has served fewer than six years on the Board shall retain their voting status on the Board until the conclusion of their elected term and shall hold the responsibilities of Chairperson as identified in these Bylaws and any Charters.

Section 11. BONDING AND INDEMNIFICATION

Any person entrusted with the handling of funds or property of the Corporation shall, at the discretion of the Board, furnish, at the expense of the Corporation, a fidelity bond approved by the Board, in such amount as the Board shall prescribe.

ARTICLE IX: COMMITTEES

Section 1. ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMITTEES

The Board, by resolution adopted by majority vote, may designate standing committees to achieve the objectives of the Corporation. Each standing Committee shall have a charter setting forth its organizational structure, scope of responsibility, terms of appointment and expectations of service, which shall require approval by a majority vote of the Board. The Board may by resolution adopted by majority vote also appoint a Task Force, for performance of duties or oversight of projects having limited duration. The Board shall, in any resolution appointing a Task Force, state the duration and objectives thereof, together with the terms of appointment and expectations of service for members thereupon.

Section 2. MEMBERSHIP

Unless otherwise provided by these Bylaws, the President shall, with the approval of the Board, appoint the chair of each Committee or Task Force. Each committee chair will serve for a period of one year, beginning on the last day of the Annual Conference, with the option of reappointment by the succeeding President. Except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws or in the applicable Committee Charter, the chair of each Committee or Task Force shall appoint the other members of the Committee, in consultation with the President and other appropriate Directors and/or staff. Each Committee shall consist of at least three members, not counting the President in their ex officio capacity. Appointments for committee chairs and members shall be made with consideration given to principles of diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging, and representation of the full breadth of the ACS membership, as well as the cultivation of individuals for leadership succession within the Corporation. Unless otherwise provided in these Bylaws, any Committee or Task Force may include as full voting members of said Committee any Directors of the Corporation. Each Committee or Task Force shall have such authority and responsibility as designated by the Board in its Charter or, in the case of a Task Force, its founding resolution. Each Committee and Task Force shall maintain minutes of proceedings and shall report to the Board.

Section 3. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

There shall be an Executive Committee of the Corporation, consisting of the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Chairperson. The Chairperson shall be a nonvoting member of the Executive Committee. The President shall serve as Chair of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall determine the agenda for Board meetings, ensure the flow of information between and among the Board, Committees and Executive Director as necessary to the oversight of the operation of the Corporation, and shall ensure that the directives of the Board are faithfully executed. The Executive Committee shall also in times of emergency, during intervals between meetings of the Board, exercise all of the powers of the Board in the management of the business and affairs of the Corporation, except as otherwise provided by law, these Bylaws or by resolution of the Board, when so authorized by majority vote of the full board, for so long as the Board shall so authorize. A quorum shall be constituted by the presence of three voting members of the Executive Committee at its meetings. The vote of three members of the Executive Committee present at the meeting of said Committee at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the Committee. In the event of a tie vote on any issue requiring a vote of the Executive Committee, such issue shall be referred to the Board for decision. The Executive Committee shall keep records of its proceedings and transactions, and minutes of the meetings thereof shall be distributed to all members of the Board. All actions by the Executive Committee shall be reported to the Board at its next meeting and shall be subject to approval or revision by the Board.

Section 4. FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Finance Committee shall consist of the President, Treasurer and a third member of the Board of Directors, who shall serve during their tenure in such offices, and at least two other members. The Executive Director shall also serve as a non-voting member of the Finance Committee. The Treasurer shall chair the Finance Committee, and shall fill any vacancies in the Committee. The Treasurer shall prepare a budget annually detailing the projected revenues and expenditures of the Corporation for the coming fiscal year, and shall submit such budget to the Finance Committee for review. The Finance Committee will review the projected budget and revise as necessary, and shall submit final budget recommendations to the Board at the Board's first meeting of the new fiscal year. Subject to the approval of the Board of Directors, the Finance Committee shall maintain an investment policy to manage the Corporation's assets consistent with its mission and strategic plan, and shall monitor investments made in accordance with such policy.

Section 5. GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

This Governance Committee shall ensure the effectiveness of the organization’s governance structure and processes.

Section 6. NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Nominating Committee shall consist of five voting members, together with the Executive Director and any current Chairperson of the Board, who shall be non-voting members. The President shall appoint any current Chairperson of the Board to serve as chair of the Nominating Committee; if there is no current Chairperson of the Board, the President may appoint another current or former Board member as chair of the Nominating Committee. At least four months prior to each annual membership meeting, the Nominating Committee shall issue a call to the Corporation membership, soliciting nominations for consideration by the Nominating Committee for the Board, together with any candidates standing for election for a second term. Thereafter, the Nominating Committee shall select and recommend to the Board two candidates for each vacant or potentially vacant elected position. The Nominating Committee shall also be responsible for reviewing and recommending to the Board nominations for industry awards within the Corporation.

Section 7. COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Unless otherwise provided for in these Bylaws or in the applicable Committee Charter, a majority of the members then serving on a Committee constitutes a quorum for the meeting of that Committee, and the vote of a simple majority of those present at a meeting at which a quorum is present constitutes an action of the Committee. Each Committee shall determine and schedule the number of regular meetings it will hold each year.

Section 8. RESIGNATION AND REMOVAL

Any Committee Chair may resign by giving written notice to the President of the Corporation. Such resignation shall take effect at the time specified in the notice and the acceptance of such resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective. Any Committee Chair may be removed by a two-thirds vote of all Directors then serving.

Section 9. VACANCIES

Vacancies in the position of Chair of any Committee may be filled by appointment by the President with approval of the Board.

ARTICLE X: MISCELLANEOUS

Section 1. VOTING MECHANISMS

Voting by the membership on any matter, including amendments to the Bylaws, may be conducted electronically, or by first class mail, at the discretion of the Board. The matter requiring the vote shall be submitted to the members in writing and shall be determined by a majority of the votes received within four weeks after submission to the members.

Section 2. FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of the Corporation shall be from January 1 to December 31, or as may be recommended by the Finance Committee, subject to approval by majority vote of the Board. An audit of the books and records shall be made annually by a Certified Public Accountant recommended by the Finance Committee, subject to approval by majority vote of the Board. A copy of the audit shall be available in the administrative office for inspection by any member.

Section 3. CONDUCT OF MEETINGS

All meetings of the Corporation and Committees thereof shall be conducted in accordance with procedures outlined in "Robert's Rules of Order" unless otherwise determined by a majority vote of the voting members present at a meeting.

Section 4 - CONFIDENTIALITY

Board and Committee members shall hold in confidence all meeting discussions and business conducted on behalf of the Corporation, except those matters made available in public record, in order to foster open and far-ranging Board discussion and problem-solving.

Section 5. INDEMNIFICATION

The Corporation shall, to the fullest extent now or hereafter permitted by law, indemnify any person made, or threatened to be made, a party to any action or proceeding by reason of the fact that he or she was a Director, Officer, Committee member, employee or agent of the Corporation, or is or was serving at the request of the Corporation as a Director, Officer, employee or agent of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise against judgments, fines, amounts paid in settlement and reasonable expenses, including attorneys' fees.

Section 6. INSURANCE

The Corporation shall purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any person who is or was a Director, Officer, Committee member, employee or agent of the Corporation, or is or was serving at the request of the Corporation as a Director, Officer, employee or agent of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise against any liability asserted against and incurred by them in any such capacity, or arising out of their status as such, to the extent permitted by law.

ARTICLE XI: AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS

Upon proposal by the Board, these Bylaws may be altered, amended or repealed in whole or in part (a) by a majority vote of the members of the Corporation who are entitled to vote and who are duly present at any duly called meeting of the membership provided that a copy or a summary of any amendments proposed for consideration shall be mailed electronically, by fax, or by first class mail at least 30 days before the date of such meeting; or (b) by approval of the members electronically or by first class mail voted in accordance with the provisions of Article X, Section 1.

ARTICLE XII: LIMITATION OF LIABILITIES

Section 1. LIMITATION OF AUTHORITY

Nothing herein shall constitute members of the Corporation as partners for any purpose. No member, Officer, Director, agent, or employee of the Corporation shall be liable for the acts or failure to act on the part of any other member, Officer, Director, agent, or employee of the Corporation, nor shall any member, Officer, Director, agent, or employee of the Corporation be liable for acting or failing to act under these Bylaws, with the exception of acts or omissions to act arising out of willful misfeasance.

Section 2. LEGAL COMPLIANCE

It has always been and is now the fixed and unalterable policy of the Corporation to comply at all times with all federal, state and local statutes, ordinances, rules, and regulations pertaining to the Corporation, including but not limited to anti-trust laws. No member, Officer, Director, agent or employee shall do, omit to do, or have the power to do any action the effect of which constitutes a violation by the Corporation of any anti-trust law