

## **Yukon milk?**

Only one commercial dairy is currently operating in the Yukon with a herd of about sixty goats. Their main production consists of fresh cheese such as feta, chèvre, mozzarella, and ricotta, although they also sell a small amount of goat yoghurt and a little fluid milk. At the summer outdoor market, people are often lined up to ensure they get their weekly cheese.

The Yukon is a prime place for a farmer interested in starting a dairy operation since the Yukon is not part of the dairy supply management system. This means that a dairy in the Yukon can produce and sell both fluid milk as well as milk products such as yoghurt, cheese, butter, or cream to Yukon consumers without purchasing quota. For new entrants to the dairy industry elsewhere in Canada, the high cost of obtaining quota is a major barrier. Here, the major barrier is that there are no bottling or distribution mechanisms in place.

While travelling in Italy this fall to attend the Slow Food conference, we encountered the perfect solution to the bottling and distribution challenge – an automatic milk dispensing machine. The first one we encountered was in a little cabin sitting in front of the community centre.

This dispenser had room on one side for selling value added products like yoghurt, cream, pudding, and butter as well as clean bottles in glass or plastic. The other side was for dispensing milk. The farmer makes more profit by selling directly to the consumer, the consumer can get the freshest milk possible, and the environment benefits since transportation distance is minimized and customers can re-use their own bottles.

Later, at the Salone del Gusto, the large trade show associated with the Slow Food conference, we found a sales distributor displaying a smaller, mobile version consisting of a 300 litre stainless milk tank inside a small trailer. The three jugs on the floor contain detergent, water and a sterilizing agent. After each fill, the machine automatically runs through a cleaning cycle. There is a self-contained generator in the front of the trailer in case the sales location has no access to an outside power source.

For more information about these automatic milk dispensing machines:

<http://www.dfitalia.com/en/> (has English descriptions)

<http://www.cozoserno.it/> (has a video demonstration)

Simone Rudge

