



Grand Prix Cheese Awards for "That Dutchman's Farm"



represents over 13,600 dairy farmers and their website states that the Grand Prix is held with "the goal to make Canadian cheeses better known and appreciated by consumers as well as the food industry and hotel and restaurant professionals. It also aims to support cheese manufacturers in their search for excellence and in the development of new products."

The Grand Prix Gala of Champions was held at Sheraton Montreal Hotel on April 23, 2009. Willem and

Maja van den Hoek were proud to be on hand to accept awards for cheeses made at That Dutchman's Farm, their home and business in Upper Economy.

Willem says that he felt "bemused" by the award ceremony where there was "lots of hype and lots of suits". He says that those in attendance included smallscale cheesemakers, big industry folks, and marketing and media types.

That Dutchman's Farm was a finalist in the Blue Cheese category for their Dragon's Breath Blue. They took home Championship

honours in the Semi-Soft and Firm Cheese categories for their Medium Gouda and Old Growler Gouda.

The judges described the Medium Gouda as smooth and nutty. "Gaining body and sharpness with time, its flavours are as delicious on toast in the morning as with a glass of wine or at the end of a meal. Gouda is excellent by itself, with fruit or raw vegetables, in sandwiches, in stuffed pancakes or in au gratin soups."

Old Growler Gouda was said by the judges to have a hard, brittle texture and its flavour is zesty and sharp.

"Delicious served on toast in the morning, or as part of a platter, with a glass of wine, or to conclude a meal. Enjoy it on its own, with fresh fruits and vegetables, in sandwiches, in pancakes or to prepare au gratin soups."

There were a total of 172 cheeses judged at the event from 41 different cheese makers. Willem says, "It felt great that the smaller operations beat out the big ones." He says it was especially important for That Dutchman's Farm to come out on top of the other Dutch cheesemaker, which they did

with their Medium Gouda.

This isn't the first time That Dutchman's Farm has won awards at the Grand Prix. In 2006, they won first prize for their Mild Gouda and a second place for the Dragon's Breath. In 2004, they won a second place for their Dragon's Breath.

Willem feels it is important to enter the Canadian Cheese Grand Prix and bringing home top honours "gives us a lot of credibility." He says the Grand Prix is held every two to three years and there is no doubt that they will enter again. "Yes, it is fun (to win)!"

By Linda Harrington

Dairy Farmers of Canada have sponsored the Canadian Cheese Grand Prix since 1998. The organization



Cornelia with a few of the farm geese

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Grandson, Hendrikus, visiting the pot bellied pigs.



View of "the Attic" Antiques and Collectibles.