

Tue, 11 Jun 2002

Subject: I Dare Ya.. Phase I

I was thinking about this on the way to work this morning. I want to see how many people are game enough to take me up on my dare. Yes, it ties into Organic Gardening and it wont cost very much moola. I dare you all to make 2 cheeses before Sunday.

You need very little items and you may already have them in your home. You need 2 old T-shirts or T-shirt type material that is clean and no holes, a piece of yarn, a colander, 2 pots that will allow one to sit inside the other, 2 quarts (half gallon /2 liters-ish). 2 lemons or lemon juice concentrate, a bit of dill weed, a bit of chopped garlic and a bit of sea salt and 1/4 cup of white vinegar, a bowl and a thermometer that will register up to 208F.

I want to prove how easy and delicious this is and that most people think it is too difficult or time consuming.

The 1st cheese Lemon Cheese

This is a quick and easy cheese to make and can be used as a cheese spread. Warm 1/2 gallon of milk to 150 degrees F. Stir often to avoid scorching the milk. (nest the 2 pots. Put water in the bottom one, milk in the top one) Add the juice of two lemons to the milk. Stir and allow to set off the stove for 15 minutes.

The warm milk will separate into a stringy curd and a greenish liquid whey. Line a colander with cheesecloth and pour the curds and whey into the colander that is set over a bowl big enough to hold the whey. Save the whey. Tie four corners of the cheesecloth into a knot and hang the bag of curds to drain for an hour or until it stops dripping. I leave it overnight.

Remove the cheese from the cloth and place it in a bowl. Add salt to taste -- usually about 1/4 teaspoon. You may mix in herbs. Fresh dill leaves and a garlic clove are delicious. Place the cheese in a covered container and store in the refrigerator.

This cheese will keep up to a week. It is a moist spreadable cheese with a hint of lemon taste.

After the whey stops draining (not dripping.. but draining in a stream) from the Lemon cheese put it back into the same pot that the lemon cheese was cooked in. You can add up to a gallon more milk to have a higher yield of the next cheese.

The next cheese is Ricotta.

I HATE store bought grody ricotta. This ricotta is a dry ricotta that is awesome over pasta or in homemade ravioli. Heat the milk in the nested pots of double boiler to 208F and then put in 1/4 cup of white vinegar. Stir. Let sit 3 minutes and then dump into a cheesecloth (or t-shirt) lined colander. Roll the cheese in the shirt or REAL cheesecloth until it has no more obvious liquid in it. Put into a bowl and add dill weed and garlic of whatever spices you like as well as a tidge of sea salt. Mix. Use on pasta, in ravioli, in lasagna.