



*For Immediate Release*  
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## **Vermont Cheesemaker honored with John C. Finley Memorial Award;**

*Websterville, VT*—At the festive annual banquet that marks the conclusion of the Vermont Farm Show, the Vermont Dairy Industry Association awarded its prestigious John C. Finley Memorial Award to Allison Hooper, co-founder of Vermont Butter & Cheese Company. Hooper, thrilled with the surprise said, “I share this award with my business partner Bob Reese, and our terrific staff who make and sell exceptional cheese everyday. The unsung heroes, of course, are our 17 goat farmers who produce great milk for us, the St Albans Dairy farmers and HP Hood farmers who produce the outstanding cream and milk from which we make our cheese.”

Recipients of the award are recognized for their outstanding contribution to Vermont Agriculture as achieved through outstanding character and mental vigor exemplified by John C. Finley, educator, deputy commissioner of agriculture and ardent promoter of Vermont Agriculture. For twenty three years, Hooper has developed and

nurtured the dairy goat industry in Vermont on which she and Reese's business depend. She is also recognized for starting the Vermont Cheese Council and for her leadership in branding Vermont as a national leader in the artisan cheese industry. "For us, this is a huge honor. In essence, by bestowing this award on our work, the traditional dairy industry celebrates the growth, diversity, and hoped-for sustainability we bring to Vermont's working rural landscape."

Hooper cites initiatives that her company has taken to help farmers be successful with goats. Folks from University Extension, the Agency of Agriculture and our own intern from France developed business planning models for various sized farms. Our staff "goat nanny" travels from farm to farm advising producers on dairy management, nutrition, and business planning. "

The company hopes to double our purchase of goats' milk in Vermont. "Today we buy milk from 17 farms in Vermont. We would like to help our current farmers grow as well as establishing relationships with new farmers." Hooper said.

In their 23rd year of business, Vermont Butter & Cheese Company is the leading American creamery specializing in the crafting of innovative, all-natural fresh and aged cheese as well as European-style butter products.



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Allison Hooper (left) Vermont Butter & Cheese Co.

Diane Bothfeld (right)



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Vermont Butter & Cheese Co. Goats