

Cast Iron Farm Raw Milk

We produce raw milk at Cast Iron Farm. Raw milk is milk as it comes out of the cow. It has not been heated or pasteurized with the intention of killing bacteria. Pasteurization came into general practice after some uninformed and unethical producers put out raw milk that was sickening and killing many in the 1800's. Here at Cast Iron Farm, we have done a lot of training and research in clean milk practices and we follow strict protocol to ensure that our milk is safe and clean. We believe that milk comes out of the cow as it was intended to be consumed, and we do everything in our power to ensure that it is safe. All that said, raw milk has a very real chance of carrying very real, very harmful bacteria in it, (listeria, campylobacter, e-coli, salmonella, etc.) We would like you to be aware of that risk and to know what lengths we go to produce our milk.

Here are the things we do here at Cast Iron Farm to ensure that our milk is high quality and clean.

1.) We milk healthy cows.

- All of our cows have been vaccinated on a standard vaccination schedule so that they are not carrying and spreading debilitating diseases.
- Our heifer calves are given calfhood vaccinations at six months old, as legally required, to guard against brucellosis.
- If a cow shows a sign of illness of any kind, her milk is removed from the supply until such a time that we know her milk is safe.
- Because we are a small producer with only a few cows, we spend a lot of time with our cows. We know each cow very well, so it is clear to us when a cow is feeling off.
- We do a CMT (California Mastitis Test) regularly on every teat of every cow. This tells us if the cow has any white blood cells in her milk, which could be a sign of mastitis or other inflammation. Milk from cows testing even slightly positive is taken out of the milk supply.

2.) We keep our cows in clean conditions.

- From March through November, our milking cows are kept on a pasture that is rotationally strip grazed. The cows are kept in pairs on a lot that is 30 feet by 75 feet. Each day, they are brought into the milking parlor and returned to a new, clean piece of ground.
- From November to March, the cows are kept in a dry lot in our barn. The cows are brought into the milking parlor for milking each day. While they are in the

parlor, their pens are cleaned and rebedded with fresh straw bedding. During this time of year, the cows go out on pasture an average of 2 times per week, weather permitting.

- The milking cows never stand in muddy pens, ever.
- When the cows are moved each day, they are taken fresh water, ensuring that their water source is clean daily.
- In the barn, the cows drink from small, automatic waterers that are kept clean.
- Our water source (domestic well) is tested yearly for potability to ensure that no contaminants are in the water supply.
- The milking parlor is attached directly to the cows' winter quarters so they don't have to walk through mud and muck before they are about to be milked.

3.) We feed only the best quality feed.

- When on pasture, the cows do not return to the same piece of ground more than 1 time every 31 days, only 9 times in a year.
- The pasture that has been vacated is irrigated to encourage regrowth and to encourage distribution of manure into the soil system.
- Our rotational strip grazing practices ensure that the cows are only eating fast growing green grass before it forms a seed head, which is the grass that contains the most nutrition.
- Our pastures are a mixture of orchard grass, alfalfa, clover and timothy. The clover and alfalfa are legumes that provide much needed, high quality nutrition to the cows and thus the milk, and eventually YOU.
- Being returned to the same pasture only once per month keeps parasite loads low because their hosts are not on the same piece of ground to be reinfected during the next cycle.
- In the winter, we feed a mixture of alfalfa, clover and orchard grass hay. We work very closely with our hay producers and spend time in the field at haying to ensure the hay maintains the most nutrition possible.
- Our hay and straw is stored in our barn loft, which is kept free of pests by our roaming barn cats.
- The grain for the cows is kept in rubber feed containers with a high turn over. No feed sits around for an extended period of time.
- The cows get hay on a free choice basis and are never limited in the feed they can eat.
- Our cows have access to salt, loose dairy minerals and kelp at all times.
- At milking, our cows are given a mixture of alfalfa pellets and rolled barley. The grain in this mixture makes up less than 1% of their total feed. The grains give the

cows much needed energy to produce milk.

- Though not all of the feed our cows eat is organic, they are never fed GM grains.

4.) We don't push our cows beyond their limits.

- Milking cows is hard work, and we are a small operation. We have opted to milk our cows once per day. This allows us to have a life outside of the farm. It also allows the cows to produce at a volume that is sane. They produce at about 70% to 80% of their maximum possible volume. This allows them to keep some of their feed and nutrition for themselves.
- Commercial dairies only allow a cow two months off from milking in a year. During those two months, she is at the end of growing a calf (as a cow must calve to produce milk again, or "freshen"). Though we sometimes follow this schedule if a cow is up for it, we will give a cow a longer rest if they are showing that they need it.

5.) We have a relationship with our cows.

- We don't sell or replace our cows regularly. This allows us to build a relationship with them. They learn to know what we expect of them and they willingly give us their milk. We feel like knowing our cows inside and out helps us produce high quality milk.
- We maintain a closed herd. We keep a bull on our property to service our cows, so they are not exposed to diseases from a rented bull or by technicians that travel around to many different farms carrying potential diseases.
- By keeping our cows healthy, we rarely bring new cows onto the property, limiting our exposure to the diseases extant in outside herds.
- If we do need to bring on a new cow, we only get registered cattle that have a documented management history.
- We keep accurate records on every aspect of our cattle management.
- Our cows are expected to keep producing for 9 or 10 lactations. By contrast, on average, commercial dairy herds usually dispose of a cow after her 2nd lactation, at around 36 months of age.

6.) We work with heritage breeds of cattle to keep them from disappearing forever.

- Our milkers are mainly native bred Milking Shorthorns. They descended from the first, triple purpose cattle brought over to start this country. We are lucky that many genetics are available to us through AI, and we intend to continue working to promote the breed. Milking Shorthorns produce high quality, 4% butterfat milk. They are disappearing because they are not as desirable to a commercial

producer who can get a Holstein to give them 10 gallons per day. Our Milking Shorthorns, give us just the right amount of delicious, creamy milk.

- We also work with Guernsey, Jersey and Brown Swiss cows when possible. Each breed brings their own unique qualities to our milk.
- Our cows and new heifer calves are registered to maintain the genetic lines for the future.

7.) We comply with all of the State of Oregon's guidelines on raw milk.

- In summary, we keep and milk less than three dairy cows, we do not process our milk in any way, we do not offer our milk for sale in a retail setting, we do not advertise and our milk must be picked up on our farm where it is produced.
- Please do not ask us to "process" milk by skimming cream for you. We will not deliver milk off the farm. No exceptions. It's against the law.
- We follow these rules for our safety and for yours. We also like to believe that we are setting a good example for all producers and consumers by showing that this model CAN be done and it can be done CORRECTLY.

8.) We are a member of ORMPPA (Oregon Raw Milk Producers Association).

- ORMPPA is a group that came together to create standards for raw milk and to act as a resource for those producing it. They provide training for producers regularly. We are active in this group and attend regular training. It allows us to meet with and learn from other producers.

9.) We are a member of FTCLDF (Farm to Consumer Legal Defense Fund).

- FTCLDF is an organization fighting on the front ranks to ensure that our right to produce milk and your right to buy milk is not attacked. They are on call 24 hours a day 365 days a year to help guard our rights.
- FTCLDF also has a staff dairy consultant who is available to assist in any technical dairy and cattle questions. This helps us give the best care we can to our cattle.

10.) We keep pigs.

- This might sound like a funny "safety point," but it is important. Before we had pigs, it was really hard to dump (down the drain) milk that wasn't perfect. Now that we keep pigs, it is an easy call. If milk isn't 100% perfect, we can take it out of the supply, and it doesn't go to waste, but it isn't going to make anyone sick either.

11.) We don't regularly hire out our milking.

- Christine is our milker. We have chosen to milk the cows only once per day so

that she can be the person who consistently milks the cows every day. She knows the cows and they know her. She created these safety rules and knows them by the back of her hand. She is passionate about creating clean milk and has a vested interest in following these practices.

- We have a relief milker who milks when Christine is sick or is on vacation. Emma has trained extensively with Christine and is a very conscientious, dedicated milker.

12.) We clean our cows thoroughly for milking.

- We clean the udder of a cow with a clean, damp rag when they come into the parlor. If they have manure or dirt on the udder, it is cleaned until all remnants have been removed.
- A headlamp is worn by the milker so that she can have adequate lighting to clean the cow.
- Each teat is then dipped into a 5% iodine teat dip solution. This is allowed to sit on the teat for 5 seconds before being wiped off by a clean, dry rag.
- The first few squirts of milk are then stripped out onto the ground. We test for any signs of off color or texture in the milk at that time.
- We then do a CMT test on each teat to ensure there is no inflammation in the udder.
- The milker is then hung on the cow after another verification that the udder is clean and dry.

13.) We handle the milk and equipment with great care.

- The bucket of our milker sits in a large tub of ice water. The warm milk goes into the cool bucket and starts the cooling process immediately, halting any possibly bacterial action.
- After the milk has been filtered, the jars are placed into a tub with ice water until they come down in temperature. Our milk is chilled to under 40 degrees within 40 minutes of milking.
- Our milk is poured in our creamery, a space that has been set up solely and only for milk handling.
- All of our milk bottles and bottling equipment is run through a dishwasher that sanitizes by holding them at 165 degrees for 30 minutes.
- The milk is run through a clean, new milk filter before bottling.
- The milk jars are filled quickly, topped and put out for pick up.
- We thoroughly scrub the floor and walls of the milking parlor once per week.
- The floor of the milking parlor is washed down daily.

- We inspect our milking system monthly, and replace the inflations and the milk lines as necessary.
- After milking our milk lines and equipments are cleaned by our clean in place (CIP) system as follows: 1.) We run 3 gallons of tepid water through the lines and bucket. 2.) We run 3 gallons 150 degree soapy water through the lines and bucket. 3.) We run 3 gallons of water treated with a dairy acid or vinegar through the lines and bucket. 4.) We run 3 gallons of dairy sanitizer through the milk lines and bucket. 5.) We run 3 gallons 150 degree rinse water through our milk lines and bucket.
- Our milk buckets are hung upside down in wait for the next milking.
- Our milk claws are hung to drip dry until the next milking.

14.) We test our milk regularly to check that we are doing a good job.

- We send samples of our milk to an independant lab on the first non-holiday Monday of the month. This gives us a chance to double check that we really are doing the job of producing good, clean milk.
- We keep samples of milk from every day for the past month so that if there ever were to be a problem, we have some of the milk available for testing.

15.) Our milking parlor and barn have an open door policy.

- Any day that you come to get milk, you are welcome to look in on the milk parlor or in the cows pen. That gives you a guarantee that you know what the conditions were like on the day your milk was produced.
- You are also welcome in the barn so long as the barn doors are open. Please get help from a farmer if all barn doors are closed up.

16.) We don't allow other species to interact with the cows.

- Though we keep chickens, ducks, turkeys, pigs, sheep, goats, rabbits, alpacas and horses on the farm, the species are all kept separately and no other species is stalled or penned with the cattle.
- The milking cows are the only animals allowed in the parlor, specifically, chickens and pigs are penned well away and are not able to escape out into the milking area.
- We have very secure perimeter fence made of 4 foot no climb fencing with a hot wire on the top. This protects our cattle from outside predators.

17.) We drink the milk too!

- The number one benefit of having milk cows on the property is that we get milk!

The last bottle of milk for the day rarely is filled to the top, so it goes in our own personal fridge and not out for sale. This means that every single day the milk that is being milked and sold to you is also being consumed by our children. Thus, we take our milking very seriously every single day.

18.) We compost all manure waste on the farm.

- Keeping cows allows us to collect and use the manure they produce for the increased fertility of our own garden. Our manure is stacked, and turned as it composts down into a valuable soil amendment in our own garden.

Raw milk is a very beneficial and nutritious food. It is full of living bacteria but can also, in reality, contain harmful pathogens. These pathogens can potentially make healthy people sick, but especially pose a threat to infants, small children, the elderly and the immunocompromised. If you are new to raw milk, please start slowly. Culture your milk into yogurt and ease into drinking the uncultured milk. We have worked hard to set up a system that ensures that our milk is clean and is of very high quality. Please do take the time to read and understand what the risks are and what we do to prevent them. We are open to any comments or complaints from our customers.

Enjoy your milk!

Cast Iron Farm Milk FAQ's

We are glad that you have decided to buy our raw milk. We are committed to producing clean, high-quality milk for you. Here are some FAQ's to help you understand our system.

Milk Subscription We are now selling our milk on a pre-reserved, subscription basis. We ask that our customers make a commitment to buy a pre-determined amount of milk one day each week. For example, you tell us that you want a gallon of milk a week, and you want to get milk on Friday. Each Friday we will milk the cows and put a gallon of milk from **that day** in the milk fridge labelled with your name on it. All of the milk in the fridge is pre-reserved. We do not allow sales of milk that have not been previously reserved. This allows us to know exactly who is getting milk on a specific day and what day each the milk in the fridge was milked. Conversely, with this system, you are never going to drive out to the farm and discover that there is not milk for you in the fridge.

Self Service Jared, Christine, George and the kids all work on the farm full-time, and there will likely be someone around when you come to get your milk. That said, the milk pick up is a self-service, honor system. You do **not** need to check in with a farmer when you get your milk. Feel free to say hello if you would like. However, please respect that this is our home and our place of business, we are not always able to put down what we are doing for a chat.

Jar Size We bottle our milk in ½ gallon glass jars with a plastic lid. Thus, you can buy milk in ½ gallon increments. One jar is a ½ gallon and two jars are 1 gallon, three are 1 ½ gallons, etc.

What is the cost? The State of Oregon does not allow advertising raw milk for sale. They believe that publishing a price on a website is advertising. If you would like to know the cost of our milk, you are welcome to contact us and we can get that information to you.

Payment As our milk is being bought on a subscription basis, we ask for payment only once per month. On your first pick up of the month, your milk will have an invoice on it for your milk for the entire month (remember that some months have 5 weeks, and thus 5 pick ups). You can pay the invoice throughout the month whenever it is convenient for you. We happily take checks made out to "Cast Iron Farm." Cash is also acceptable. If necessary, we can run debit/credit cards, but we prefer not to.

Milk Pick-Up Since we milk the cows every day of the week, we have milk pick-ups available every day. When you sign up for milk, you sign up to get the milk that was

milked the morning of your pickup day. The milk will be in our milk fridge with your name on it. Please note that Oregon law requires that you pick up your raw milk from the farm, so we cannot deliver. The good news is that we are close to town and are a convenient drive for many.

Jar Etiquette Cast Iron Farm owns the milk jars. Currently, we provide these jars for your use free of charge. Please practice good jar etiquette. These jars circulate around our raw milk community. A jar you return this week will have another family's milk in it next week. Likewise, your jar was in another home just last week. We know how handy those half gallon jars can be. However, due to the incidence of food allergies and possible contamination from other fermentation, we ask that you keep the milk jars separate from your own personal stash. Do not store any other food in them and definitely don't use them to make kombucha or sauerkraut. Please wash the jars after you have emptied them. The dishwasher is best. If you lack a dishwasher, please rinse them out well and DO NOT PUT ON THE LID unless all the water has been drained from the jar. Wet jars can sometimes mold on the lid, and the mold is almost impossible to completely remove. Also, try to not forget your empty bottles at home. We realize that this happens occasionally, but please do not make a habit of it. Store your jars away from where pets can get to them (dogs love to chew on the lids). If you break a jar or a lid, please consider donating for its replacement. The jars cost \$3 each. Taking good care of the milk jars helps keep the cost of your milk down.

Transporting Milk We try to keep our customer base in the McMinnville area. We do this for two reasons. 1.) We like to get to know our milk customers and our community. 2.) Raw milk only stays safe if you transport it safely. Bacteria in milk grows incrementally faster as the temperature increases. The growth is slow in fridge temperatures, but as the milk is being transported, it warms slowly, and the bacteria grows more quickly as the milk warms. This contributes to lessening the shelf life of your milk. Pick up your milk as your last errand, and if you live beyond the McMinnville area, or getting your milk is not your last errand, bring a cooler with ice to transport your milk in. Keep your milk out of the sunlight! Milk that has been exposed to the sun can take on a skunky flavor that is not pleasant.

Milk Shelf Life Raw milk is a little bit different than pasteurized milk. Pasteurized milk can last longer on the shelf than raw milk, but it's completely devoid of good bacteria. The shelf life of raw milk depends on your fridge temperature. If it is turned down to be cold (around 34 degrees), the milk should last through the week and as long as two or three weeks. Check your fridge temperature to make sure that it is cold. The cooler the fridge, the longer the milk shelf life. Store your milk in the bottom of the fridge, not in the door. However, when raw milk goes "bad" it is not actually bad. Unless the milk was exposed to an outside bacteria, "bad" raw milk is simply called clabber or buttermilk. It can be used in cooking as you would use yogurt. Honestly, we almost never have milk

go bad, and when it does, we cook with it. However, please do discard any milk that has an unpleasant odor or taste.

Need extras? Call us if you are needing extra milk for a project, and we can usually accommodate.

Goat/Sheep Milk: Though we occasionally milk goats and sheep for our personal cheesemaking projects, we are not legally allowed to sell milk from more than one species.

The cream: Raw, unhomogenized milk has cream on top! It takes about 24 hours for the cream to settle out of the milk. You might see a cream line starting to form in about 12 hours, but the milk is really settled at 24 hours. Our cows usually give about 25% cream, so feel free to skim it to make butter or to put in your coffee. You can also just shake the jar back up and drink your milk whole. Whole milk you find in the grocery store is at 3.25% butterfat. Our cows produce between 4% and 4.5%, so if you do decide to skim the cream, the milk that is left is still analogous to the whole milk you would find in the grocery store.

Plastic Lids: We like using the ½ gallon jars, but the lids are a bit of a problem. The metal lids that usually come on canning jars are coated with a BPA plastic that we don't like touching our milk. Instead, we use plastic lids that are BPA free, but they do occasionally leak. If you tighten your lids before you leave, they tend not to leak, but occasionally they do. If this is a problem, talk to us, as there are a few solutions.

Sterilization: We sterilize all our milking equipment every day, including our milk jars. This is for our safety and for yours. We take great care to ensure our milk is fresh and clean. Please do return clean jars to us, but do know that we will also sterilize them for use in the future.

Thank You: We enjoy milking our cows very much, and we appreciate the opportunity to provide milk for our community. Thank you for supporting our farm and raw milk in Oregon.

OREGON Raw Milk Laws

Summary:

Raw goat or sheep milk sales are legal on the farm and in retail stores. No permit is necessary for farmers with no more than nine producing goats and nine producing sheep who sell the milk on the farm directly to the consumer. Raw cow milk sales are illegal except for on-farm sales where the farmer has no more than three producing cows on the premises. The state prohibits advertising for on-farm sales.

Farmers producing raw goat or sheep milk can sell in retail stores if they obtain a producer-distributor license and have their own bottling plant on site. Licensees can sell goat or sheep milk products such as butter, cream, yogurt, and cheese as well. There is one licensed goat milk farmer in the state at the present time.

Oregon Statutes

TITLE 49 FOOD AND OTHER COMMODITIES

Chapter 621 Milk; Dairy Products; Substitutes

GENERAL PROVISIONS

621.012 Exception for small-scale on-farm sales.

The provisions of ORS [621.062](#), [621.070](#), [621.072](#), [621.076](#), [621.084](#), [621.088](#), [621.116](#), [621.117](#) and [621.259](#) and standards developed under ORS [621.060](#), [621.083](#) or [621.224](#) do not apply to a person owning not more than three dairy cows that have calved at least once, nine sheep that have lactated at least once or nine goats that have lactated at least once, but such person may sell the fluid milk from those animals for human or other consumption without complying with the provisions of ORS [621.062](#), [621.070](#), [621.072](#), [621.076](#), [621.084](#), [621.116](#), [621.117](#) or [621.259](#) or standards developed under ORS [621.060](#), [621.083](#) or [621.224](#) only if:

- (1) The person does not advertise the milk for sale;
- (2) The milk is sold directly to the consumer at the premises where produced; and
- (3) No more than three producing dairy cows, nine producing sheep or nine producing goats are located on the premises where the milk is produced.

TITLE 49 FOOD AND OTHER COMMODITIES

Chapter 621 Milk; Dairy Products; Substitutes

PROHIBITED ACTS, GENERALLY

621.116 Prohibition against retail sale of unpasteurized milk from cows.

A person may not sell or distribute for sale unpasteurized milk or fluid milk from cows, or dairy products from unpasteurized milk or fluid milk from cows, other than to a distributor, producer-distributor, dairy products plant licensee or nonprocessing cooperative. This section does not apply to the sale or distribution of cheese otherwise exempt from pasteurization requirements or to sales or distributions by a person described under ORS [621.012](#).

TITLE 49 FOOD AND OTHER COMMODITIES

Chapter 621 Milk; Dairy Products; Substitutes

GENERAL PROVISIONS

621.003 Definitions.

(3) "Dairy products" means:

(a) Butter.

(b) All varieties of cheese, frozen desserts and frozen dessert mixes containing milk, cream or nonfat milk solids.

(c) Evaporated, condensed, concentrated, powdered, dried or fermented milk, whey, cream and skimmed milk.

(19) "Producer-distributor" means:

(a) A person who bottles milk on the premises where production occurs, in pasteurized or unpasteurized form and for human consumption.

TITLE 49 FOOD AND OTHER COMMODITIES

Chapter 621 Milk; Dairy Products; Substitutes

GRADE DESIGNATION USE

621.072 Issuance of license to use grade designation; grading by milk hauler; facility inspections; fees.

(1) The State Department of Agriculture shall issue a license to use a grade designation to any person who:

(a) Makes written application for a license on forms provided by the department;

(b) Pays the designated license fee;

(c) Is engaged in the business of producing or distributing fluid milk; and

(d) Meets the requirements of the particular grade designation for which application is made.

(2) If a person carries on the activities of a producer and a producer-distributor, the person must obtain a separate license for each of those activities. If a producer-distributor manufactures products from both Grade A fluid milk and Grade B fluid milk at the same premises, the producer-distributor must obtain separate licenses for Grade A product manufacturing activity and Grade B product manufacturing activity.

621.076 Container labeling; bottling unpasteurized milk; prohibition against milk by or from suspended licensee.

(2) A person shall not bottle unpasteurized fluid milk except on the premises where it is produced.