

# French 'Cheese' Breed

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There are 300,000 cows on test in France. "No cow can be registered if she's not on test," he said. This number represents a substantial number of cows in France, since the breed is the second dairy breed of the country.

In France the production average is 15,000 pounds on grass with less than five pounds of grain per day.

The reason for the breed's popularity in France is linked to a product that France is famous for: cheese. Their components — the "cheese quality" of the milk which Normandes produce — are outstanding, according to Chateau.

"In France it is the cheese breed," he said, pointing out that Normandes average 4.4 percent fat and 3.6 percent protein.

With those component percentages, cheesemakers receive a three-to-five percent higher yield on the same quantity of milk with Normande milk than with other breeds' milk, said Chateau.

Additionally the milk contains a high incidence of — often more than 80 percent — kappa caseine, a key protein necessary in cheese production. A smaller-than-usual fat miscelle also makes cheese production easier.

## Entering The U.S.

The "dairy side" of the breed started in Wisconsin in the grazing circles. Next California, a state long known for its penchant for embracing the new and unique, began integrating the Normande breed in the U.S.

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The present herd book for Normandes was started in France in 1883. Though the breed was nearly decimated by the Allied invasion of Normandy during World War II, they are now France's second largest breed and have adapted to areas such as South America, as well.

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