



United Electric Cooperative, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

United Electric Cooperative, Inc.
 Post Office Box 688
 DuBois, PA 15801-0688
 Customer Service: 888-581-8969
 www.unitedpa.com
 Outage: 800-262-8959
 Office Hours: M - F 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chairman

Stephen A. Marshall, District 5
 1030 Donahue Rd.
 Luthersburg, Pa. 15848
 814-583-7320

Vice Chairman

Timothy D. Burkett, District 6
 5059 Hamilton Markton Rd.
 Punxsutawney, Pa. 15767
 814-938-7991

Secretary/Treasurer

Eileen Pisaneschi, District 2
 1964 River Hill Rd.
 Frenchville, Pa. 16836
 814-263-4491

DIRECTORS

Shanelle Hawk, District 1
 502 Pine Run Rd.
 Mayport, Pa. 16240
 814-365-5646

Arden E. Owens, District 7
 505 Trout Run Rd.
 Shawville, Pa. 16873
 814-765-6458

Richard Petrosky, District 3
 P.O. Box 612
 DuBois, Pa. 15801
 814-371-8672

David W. Walker, District 4
 631 Olanta Rd.
 Olanta, Pa. 16863
 814-236-3321

President & CEO
 Brenda Swartzlander

Consumer Advocate
 Paula Pascuzzo, ext. 8501

Richard Heverley, Editor

From the President & CEO



“Co-ops Commit” - National Cooperative Month

By Brenda Swartzlander

UNITED Electric Cooperative is joining 40,000 cooperatives nationwide in October to celebrate National Cooperative Month, which recognizes the many ways cooperatives are committed to strengthening the local communities they serve. “Co-ops Commit” is the theme for this year’s celebration, spotlighting the countless ways cooperatives meet the needs of their members and communities.

A cooperative, by definition, is an autonomous association of people united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly owned and democratically controlled business. Or, more simply put, cooperatives are owned, controlled and operated for the benefit of their members. This defines what cooperatives are all about. As your electric cooperative, United Electric’s main purpose is to provide safe, affordable electricity to our members, but there

are many other types of cooperatives.

There are producer cooperatives, such as Sunkist, Ocean Spray and Blue Diamond Almonds, which assist farmers in getting their products to the consumers. There are retail or purchasing co-ops, such as Ace Hardware, and there are housing cooperatives, consumer cooperatives and credit unions. Throughout the United States, over 350 million people are members of one or more cooperative. Combined, cooperatives generate \$514 billion in revenue and more than \$25 billion in wages, according to a study conducted by the University of Wisconsin Center for Cooperatives, with support from U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development.

Rural America is served by a network of about 900 not-for-profit electric cooperatives, most of which were formed in the 1930s and 1940s to bring electricity to farms and rural commu-

(continues on page 14d)



From the farm to your table – Cherish Creamery

By Richard Heverly

THE FARM-TO-TABLE movement is a concept we have heard more about in recent years as consumers have come to realize there really is a difference between foods shipped from commercial producers across the country, or around the world, and the food we purchase directly from local farmers. Most of us think of farm-to-table as the fruit and vegetables we purchase from local farmers in season. Some of us may also purchase eggs, beef, pork or poultry directly from local farmers, but there are other foods we can get from local farmers. One such product is cheese and yogurt from the Cherish Creamery in Reynoldsville.

Since 2014, Paula and Don Keswick have been producing some of the finest, all-natural feta and chevre cheeses, as well as goat's milk and drinkable yogurts, which they sell directly to consumers. The Keswicks, who were originally from Michigan, had extensive backgrounds in running their own businesses. They had established a successful Paramedic Ambulance service in South Bend, Ind., which they sold before starting a landscaping business. They later purchased their own over-the-road tractor and trailer, which Don refers to as their "undercover RV"



PHOTO BY RICHARD HEVERLEY

GOATS AT REST: Cherish Creamery's goat herd grazes on most of the 50-acre farm.

because it provided a great way to tour the country, see all the sights, and get paid to do it. Wanting to get back to her farming roots, Paula had a dream to start an all-natural goat dairy.

Paula and Don began researching goat dairy operations and the equipment they would need for such a venture. Their research led them to Steve Cleghorn, a retired professor in Washington, D.C., who had a goat dairy operation in Reynoldsville. Paula, along with her longtime friend, Pennie Christie, made the trip to Pennsylvania to meet with Cleghorn. The 1880s-era farm served by United Electric Cooperative on Paradise Road

in Reynoldsville had been renovated into a dairy processing facility. Cleghorn had installed dairy processing equipment, as well as solar panels on the barn to produce some of the electricity used in the dairy operation. Within weeks of visiting the farm, the Keswicks, along with their partner, Christie, decided to lease the 50-acre farm and dairy-processing facility, and took over the operation in April 2014.

They contacted Tiffany

Rich, an artisan cheese maker from Michigan, who agreed to travel to the farm to assist them in developing their cheese- and yogurt-making processes.

"There is a lot more to making high-quality cheese than knowing the right cultures to use," explains Paula.

"Good cheese starts with good milk," explains Don. "Our goat herd consists of a number of breeds of goats, which, just like cows, produce milk with differing levels of butter fat (or cream) content. This allows us to produce dairy products with the richness and creaminess we are looking to achieve."

The herd consists of Nubian goats, which are not heavy milk producers but have a high butter fat content; Toggenburgs and French-Alpines, which produce more milk but have a lower butterfat content; and LaManchas, which also produce milk with a relatively high butter fat content.

Don explains, "Not only does the milk from these various breeds have differing butter fat content, they also have slightly differing flavors that they bring to the cheeses and yogurt products."

They currently milk 31 goats, but the herd consists of around 100, including the kids.

Cherish Creamery is state-certified as a manufacturer and processor and is



PHOTO BY RICHARD HEVERLEY

MORNING MILKING: Farm Intern Alexander Payton does the morning milking of the 31 goats presently producing at Cherish Creamery. In addition to his morning and evening milking duties, Alexander also handles marketing for the creamery's products.



MAKING CHEESE: Farm Intern Craig Johnson prepares to slice the cheese curd prior to draining the whey as he processes a batch of chevre cheese. Craig also handles the packaging of the finished products for market.

inspected regularly by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture to ensure it is adhering to all state standards. They are also in the process of being certified as a wholesale supplier in order to distribute their products through retail grocery stores.

The dairy processing begins with pasteurizing the milk, which is then cooled before the cultures are added to achieve the cheese type they are producing. Vegetable rennet is added to form the curd, which is allowed to cure before it is cut and drained of the whey. The cheese is then dried to achieve the solidity and texture they are looking for in their product. Cherish Creamery currently produces two basic types of cheese: feta and chevre. The chevre cheese is produced in a number of different flavors: plain chevre, garlic and chives, garlic and basil, horseradish dill, queso blanco, crushed red pepper, buffalo chicken, cranberry chipotle, and chocolate cheesecake. In addition to the cheese products, they also bottle and sell pasteurized whole goat milk and a drinkable yogurt.

Cherish Creamery has achieved Certified Naturally Grown (CNG) status, which requires farmers to commit to not using any synthetic herbicides, pesticides, fertilizers, antibiotics, hormones or genetically modified organisms (GMO). Certified Naturally Grown is a grassroots alternative to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Organic Program meant primarily for small farmers distributing through local channels — farmers markets, roadside

stands, local restaurants, community supported agriculture (CSA) programs and small local grocery stores.

Paula explains, "Certified Naturally Grown allows small operations like ours to assure our consumers that we are maintaining the highest standards without the exorbitant cost and paperwork required by the USDA program."

During their first year of production in 2014, Paula and Don sold all of their cheeses and yogurt at the farmers market in the Strip District in Pittsburgh (this has since closed). In the following year, they extended their sales to two farmers markets in Altoona and the Phipps Conservatory Farmers Market. As their production has increased, they have expanded their marketing to include eight to ten farmers markets throughout western Pennsylvania and the local area. They also provide their cheeses to several Pittsburgh-area restaurants.

In addition to Christie, who oversees the dairy herd's health and handles some of the paperwork, the Keswicks have two full-time farm interns: Alexander Payton, who oversees the milking duties and marketing, and Craig Johnson, who oversees the dairy processing, cheese making, and packaging their products for market. They also have a number of part-time staff who help out as



HOME OF CREAMERY: This 1880s-era barn is now the home of Cherish Creamery's dairy. Solar panels interconnected with United Electric's system are installed on the roof to provide some of the power needed to operate the creamery.

needed.

Cherish Creamery hand makes about 1,000 packages of high-quality cheeses a week, plus their whole goat milk and drinkable yogurt at their Paradise Road facility on co-op lines near Reynoldsville. So the next time you think of farm-to-table products, remember, there is more available from our local farmers than just produce, eggs and meats — try some cheese and yogurt straight from the farm.

For more information on Cherish Creamery or to order some of their cheese or yogurt, check them out at www.cherishcheeses.com, or look for them on Facebook. 🌞

Energy Efficient Water Heater Only \$100

As a participant in United Electric's Load Management Program, you can replace your water heater for only \$100. It's as simple as calling United Electric at 1-888-581-8969 to take advantage of this special offer.

Water Heaters can be picked up at three convenient locations:

- H&H Supply Punxsutawney
- H&H Supply DuBois
- True Value Hardware Curwensville

Not only do you receive a high efficiency water heater for \$100, as part of the load management program you will also receive \$3.00 off your electric bill each month.

Call United Electric the next time your water heater needs replacing.

Stay safe around power lines

YOU DO not have to touch a power line to be in danger. High-voltage electricity can jump to anyone who gets too close. Stay at least 10 feet away from power lines and their connections.

Safety tips

- ▶ Look up before raising a ladder or pole to make sure it will not come within 10 feet of any power lines.
- ▶ Use wooden or fiberglass ladders outdoors. Metal ladders conduct electricity more readily.
- ▶ Contact United Electric immediately to report downed power lines outside your home.
- ▶ Always assume fallen power lines are energized. Stay at least 35 feet away from a downed power line and any nearby objects it may be touching, such as a fence or a tree limb.
- ▶ Downed power lines can carry an electric current strong enough to cause serious injury or even death. Electricity wants to move from a high-voltage zone to a low-voltage zone — and it could do that through your body.

Downed power line safety tips

- ▶ If you see a downed power line, move away from it and anything touching it. The ground around power lines — up to 35 feet away — may be energized.
- ▶ You cannot tell whether or not

a power line is energized just by looking at it. You should assume all downed power lines are live.

- ▶ The proper way to move away from the power line is to shuffle away with small steps, keeping your feet together and on the ground at all times. This will minimize the potential for a strong electric shock.
- ▶ If you see someone who is in direct or indirect contact with the downed line, do not touch the person. You could become the next victim. Call 911 for help.
- ▶ Do not attempt to move a downed power line or anything else in contact with it by using an object such as a broom or stick. Even non-conductive materials like wood or cloth can conduct electricity if even slightly wet.
- ▶ Be careful not to touch or step in water near where a downed power line is located.
- ▶ Do not drive over downed power lines.
- ▶ If your car comes in contact with a downed power line while you are inside, stay in the car. Honk your horn to summon help, but direct others to stay away from your car.
- ▶ If you must leave your car because it is on fire, jump out of the vehicle with both feet together and avoid contact with both the car and the ground at the same time. Shuffle away from the car. ☀

From the President & CEO

(continued from page 14a)

nities that large investor-owned power companies had no interest in serving because of the higher costs involved in serving low-population and low-density areas. The intent of any for-profit corporation is to produce a profit for its owners. Cooperatives are member-owned corporations whose owners are also its customers. As such, the members of cooperatives have a built-in incentive to work together, along with their co-op's staff, to achieve better purchase prices, efficiencies and value-added services for its members.

United Electric is one of a network of independent cooperatives serving 16,423 members in our 11-county service area of Pennsylvania. Delivering safe, reliable, affordable power is our top priority, but we are also invested in our communities. Because we are locally owned and operated, revenue generated by United Electric Cooperative goes back to our members and into our communities, not to some stockholder in a distant area.

Even though times and technology continue to change, our commitment to our members remains the same. We continually upgrade our electric system, implementing new technologies, where appropriate, and explore new ways to help our members and our communities. We listen to you and your fellow co-op members, and we know we have to keep pace as technology and consumer tastes evolve. As always, we welcome your participation as we plan for the future.

“Co-ops Commit” is an appropriate theme for this year's co-op month celebration. Even as technologies change and the co-op and our members' needs change along with it, our commitment to our members and our local community remains unchanged. United Electric is committed to meeting the needs of our members both now and into the future.

Until next month,

Brenda
Brenda

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Fall/Winter Energy Tip: When you are asleep or out of the house, turn your thermostat back 10° to 15° for eight hours and save around 10 percent a year on your heating and cooling bills. A programmable thermostat can make it easy to set back your temperature – set it and forget it!

Source: U.S. Dept. of Energy

