



Fresh Mozzarella Know-How

Ingredients: * Note: Do not use calcium chloride solution when making mozzarella.

- 1 gallon whole milk (the high fat content is important)
- 1 ¼ teaspoon citric acid
- 1/8 tsp. mild lipase powder
- 1 packet Thermophilic TA Culture (1/4 tsp.)
- ½ tablet rennet (cut with sharp knife or pill cutter)
- Cheese salt (optional)
- Distilled water (optional)

Instructions

1. Prepare to heat your milk: pour it into a sanitized pot, 6 quarts or larger. Over low heat, stir, slowly bring it up to 90° F. Maintain temperature. [See Cheesemaking Skill Sheet, #1](#)
2. Dissolve the citric acid in a bit of distilled water. Add this solution to the warm milk, stirring in thoroughly. You will see a bit of curdling on the surface. Next, dissolve the lipase powder in a few tablespoons of distilled water and add it to the milk. Stir. Now sprinkle the culture over milk surface and let it soak in for 1 or 2 minutes. Thoroughly stir into milk. Now cover your pot and allow it to ripen at 90° F for about 45 minutes.
3. Take a moment to dissolve the rennet in a few tablespoons of distilled water. Then add it to the milk and mix it in thoroughly, for about 1 min. Let it sit undisturbed for at least 15 minutes, keeping the temperature at 90° F.
4. When you get a clean break, cut the curd. [See Cheesemaking Skill Sheet, #2 & 3](#)
5. After cutting, let the curds heal for 5-10 minutes; next “cook” the curd for about an hour. Begin to gently stir the curds every 10 minutes or so while slowly raising the temperature to 115° F. It is common for mozz curds to be fragile. Don’t worry if the curd does not seem to stay in nice cubes. After about 45 min., stop stirring and just allow the curds to settle for an additional 15 minutes. [See Cheesemaking Skill Sheet, #4](#)
6. Spread a large piece of cheesecloth inside a colander or mesh strainer and place it over another pot. Gently scoop or pour the curds and whey over the cheesecloth. (The whey can be saved for making ricotta.) Gather up and tie the cheesecloth closed at the top; suspend it for 3-4 hours. This is crucial for proper acid development, which is the key to stretchy mozzarella cheese. [See Cheesemaking Skill Sheet, #5](#)
7. After 3-4 hours, begin to work the curd. To prepare, heat water or your reserved whey to 160-165° F. Gather a cutting board, knife, slotted spoon, and a bowl of ice water. You will be handling very hot cheese! The basic procedure is to cut up the cheese into ½ inch cubes, place a handful on a slotted spoon to submerge them in the hot water (160-165° F), let them heat and soften, then gently press them into a mass, and finally, stretch them. This can be a tricky process but so satisfying once it works. Tips for success:
 - Begin by gently squeezing the mass of heated curds in your hand until it comes together. Next fold the mass in half and cradle it in your hand, holding it upright so it begins to pull and stretch itself by its own weight.
 - Keep dipping your mass or strand of curd back into the hot water. The curd must be hot in order to stretch. If you get it too hot, however, it will melt and fall apart.
 - Repeat “dip, stretch, fold, squeeze” until the cheese is smooth, elastic, and shiny.
8. Place your ball(s) or rope(s) into ice water to cool completely and firm up. Then pat them dry, seal in plastic wrap, and refrigerate. The sooner you eat it, the better the texture will be! Adding salt is an optional final step.