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TORN BETWEEN TWO LOVES; FOOTBALL AND CHEESE
New England-New York Big Game Pairing Leads to Cheesy Fun as Agri-Mark Farmers, Makers of McCadam and Cabot Cheese, Show Their True Colors

CABOT, Vt. (January 24, 2008) – Never mind that America’s TV writers are on strike. It’s New York vs. New England again – déjà vu all over again – and no one could have penned a better script for what’s playing out between the farmer-owners of Agri-Mark, one of America’s most successful cheese producers. The Northeast-based dairy cooperative, makers of New York’s famous McCadam Cheese – and of Vermont’s equally famous Cabot Cheese – is in a friendly uproar over who will win the BIG Game on February 3.

Last March, McCadam Cheese – located in the New York town of Chateaugay – vanquished rival Wisconsin cheese makers at the 2007 US Championship Cheese Contest. McCadam’s extra-sharp cheddar shocked the cheese world by taking first place over a raw milk alpine cheese from a Madison, Wisconsin producer – very much just the way the New York Giants thrashed the Green Bay (Wisconsin) Packers in the NFC Championship game this past weekend.

And set the stage for another New England vs. New York battle. Of the cheeses, that is!

“We’re having a ton of fun with all the hype and the New England-New York comparisons and rivalries from both the football and the cheese side of things,” said Jed Davis, Marketing Director for McCadam Cheese. “Our farmer owners are pretty much split down the middle in terms of their football loyalties – half are with New England and half with New York, and our fifteenth board member is caught right in the middle, like a referee,” he said.

The odds makers in Las Vegas are giving New England the edge, making them a 12-point favorite over New York’s underdog Giants. The Agri-Mark farmers backing the Giants and McCadam must feel like underdogs, too, having to square off against their New England-rooting board members backing Agri-Mark’s most famous brand of cheese, Cabot – twice winner of the title “The World’s Best Cheddar” in international competitions.

But Davis likened McCadam’s uphill contest for cheese recognition to recent NFC playoff battles. “We’re head-over-heels,” said Davis about winning the 2007 US Championship Cheese Contest. “We’re a relatively small player and few thought we would win. But we did. And just as the New York Giants beat out favorites Dallas and Green Bay, we’re going to take it to New England, too.”

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Not if the reigning Cheese Champions at Cabot have anything to say about it.

“Ha, this is just too much fun,” says Cabot Senior Vice President of Marketing Roberta MacDonald. “New England has the best team in football and Cabot is the best cheddar cheese in the world. And let’s face it, whether it’s Cabot Cheese or McCadam Cheese being served at your Bowl Game party, everyone is a winner.” But MacDonald couldn’t resist getting in a little dig at her sister brand saying, “Look out New York and McCadam, New England and Cabot are coming at you!”

While all the comparisons and rivalries can be fun, no one on the Agri-Mark board or at Cabot and McCadam is taking themselves or the big game too seriously.

“We’re all about producing the world’s best dairy products,” said Agri-Mark Chairman of the Board, Neal Rea. “And with a New York versus New England Bowl Game at hand, we’re certainly having a great time poking fun at each other’s football loyalties while we enjoy our two world class brands. It just doesn’t get much better than this,” he said, and laughed out loud.

For some added Big Game fun, try these popular recipes from Cabot Creamery and McCadam Cheese:

ROAST BEEF-N-CHEESE QUESADILLAS

Makes 4 servings

2 ounces sliced lean roast beef
4 (8-inch) flour tortillas (soft taco size)
3/4 cup grated McCadam Sharp Cheddar (3 ounces)
2 tablespoons minced red onion
1 teaspoon minced fresh thyme
1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
Butter-flavored cooking spray
3 tablespoons horseradish sauce
8 small sprigs fresh thyme (optional)

1. Divide roast beef among 2 tortillas. Top each with half of cheese, onion, minced thyme and pepper. Press remaining 2 tortillas firmly on top. Lightly coat top and bottom of each quesadilla with cooking spray.

2. Heat 8-inch nonstick pan over medium-high heat. Add first quesadilla and cook, pressing down gently with spatula, until golden on underside, 3 to 5 minutes. Turn over and cook until golden on second side and cheese is melted, 3 to 5 minutes longer. Cut into 4 wedges. Cook and cut remaining quesadilla.

3. Serve each wedge topped with dollop of horseradish sauce and thyme sprig, if using.

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HABANERO CHEDDAR AND BLACK BEAN SPREAD

Makes about 2 cups

- 1 (15-oz.) can black-eyed peas or black beans, drained
- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 1/2 tbsp. fresh lime juice
- 1 1/2 tsp. ground cumin
- 4 oz. Cabot Habanero or Chipotle Cheddar, grated (about 1 cup, lightly packed)
- salt to taste

1. In medium bowl, combine black-eyed peas or black beans, oil, lime juice and cumin; mash coarsely with potato masher (mixture should hold together but some beans should still be visible).
2. Gently stir in cheese; taste and season with salt if needed. Serve in red or yellow shells, surrounded by oven-crisped triangles of tomato or spinach flatbread or crackers.

ABOUT McCADAM, CABOT and AGRI-MARK

Founded in 1876, McCadam Cheese www.mccadam.coop manufacturers more than 20 different cheeses in their Chateaugay, NY facility. Winner of numerous national awards for best tasting cheeses, McCadam most recently was named best extra-sharp cheddar at the 2007 US Championship Cheese Contest. Cabot Creamery www.cabotcheese.coop, has been in continuous operation in Vermont since 1919 and is best known as makers of "The World's Best Cheddar." The Cabot and McCadam brands are owned by Agri-Mark, the Northeast's premier dairy cooperative. With approximately \$680 million in 2006 sales, Agri-Mark markets more than 300 million gallons of farm-fresh milk each year for 1,375 dairy farm families in New England and New York. The cooperative has been marketing milk for dairy farmers since 1916, and also actively represents their legislative interests in the Northeast and in Washington, D.C. Agri-Mark has also invested in operations to manufacture and market valuable whey proteins and sells fluid milk from its farmers to the region's largest dairy processors. For more information about Agri-Mark, visit our web site at www.agrimark.net.

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