



# RICOTTA CHEESE MAKING

## Introduction

Cheese is a mixture of fats, proteins, and other lactic ingredients.

Ricotta cheese is a light, smooth and creamy cheese with a gentle texture. It is formed from buttermilk. Typically low in salt and fat content, it is ideal for people suffering high blood pressure or cholesterol problems.

**Buttermilk** is the liquid extracted from curdled milk. It contains a diverse range of proteins, such as albumins and globulins, and is of a yellowish colour and sweet flavour.

## Ingredients

- Buttermilk
- Salt
- Citric acid, or Vinegar, or Lemon

## Materials

- Stove
- Cooking pot / pan
- Thermometer
- Stirring paddle or spatula
- Strainer or sieve
- Containers
- Cloth sacks
- String or tape
- Polythene bags
- Detergent
- Bleach

## Preparation

### Washing

- Before commencing the production process, all the utensils must be washed.
- Wash using water and detergent, ensuring to rinse thoroughly with plenty of water afterwards.



## Disinfection

- Prepare a mixture of water and bleach, adding a teaspoonful of bleach to a litre of water.
- Soak the utensils in the mixture, then rinse them with hot water.

## Method of Production

### Step 1

Heat the buttermilk to 86°C (- this temperature may vary depending on your height above sea level).

### Step 2

Add salt – a quantity 0.1% of the total amount

Whilst the buttermilk is heating up to the desired temperature, prepare the acidic ingredient:

#### Citric Acid

- Add a teaspoon of citric acid to a glass of cold water and stir.
- Use 5g of citric acid for every 10 litres of buttermilk.

#### Vinegar and Lemon

- Add a tablespoon of vinegar per 10 litres of buttermilk.
- Add [the juice of] one lemon per 10 litres of buttermilk.

### Step 3

Ensure to add the citric acid only when the buttermilk reaches 86°C.

### Step 4

Take the pan off the heat and leave it to stand for half an hour. This allows the rennet to rise to the surface.

### Step 5

Pour the contents of the pan through a sieve, then place the contents of the sieve in a bag of fine cloth.



### Step 6

Hang the bag overnight to air it.

### Step 7

The following day, empty the contents of the bag into a mould.

Crumble up the rennet, taking care that no dirt gets in.

Place the crumbled rennet in polythene bags, to avoid contamination by micro-organisms or other foreign bodies.

Having done this, refrigerate the product at 4°C.

In order to give greater nutritional value to the product, you may add milk to it, at 10% of the total amount of buttermilk.

## Links

<http://www.wikihow.com/Make-Ricotta-Cheese>

[http://cheese.about.com/od/homecheesemaking/ss/making\\_ricotta.htm](http://cheese.about.com/od/homecheesemaking/ss/making_ricotta.htm)

## References and further reading

*Dairy Processing: Food cycle technology source book*, UNIFEM, Practical Action Publishing

*Baking for Profit: Starting a small bakery*, George Bathie, Practical Action Publishing.

*Dairy* a selection of Practical Action Technical Briefs

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