

# WRÅNGBÄCK CHEESE FROM ALMNÄS BRUK

- a unique product
- with a unique history
- from a unique area





## WRÅNGBÄCK CHEESE – THE FIRST CHEESE IN NORTHERN EUROPE TO WIN PROTECTED DESIGNATION OF ORIGIN STATUS

It is with great pride and happiness that we announce our Wrångebäck™ cheese received Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) status from the European Union.

As the only cheese in the Nordic region to achieve this designation, Wrångebäck reflects the commitment at our farm, Almnäs Bruk, to nurture local food production that builds upon Swedish agricultural history and practice.

According to EU quality schemes, a product's name registered as PDO has the strongest ties to the land where it's made. That means

raw material production, processing, preparation and handling of the product must take place within a defined area. We are thrilled that Wrångebäck, registered in 1889 and the oldest cheese brand in Sweden, meets these requirements. Our cheese reflects the unique properties of an area around Almnäs called Guldkroken. This area stretches from Södra Fågelås in the south to Grevbäck in the north and follows the sloping shores of Lake Vättern.



“... raw material production, processing, preparation and handling of the product must take place within a defined area.”



Photocredit: @anhede



▲ Here on Almnäs' fields and pastures our work begins.

## BENEFITTING FROM OUR LAND

We are fortunate that many of our fields were originally lakebed, leaving us a legacy of rich, organic soil that supports red and white clover, legumes, and different grasses.

Over time, a mosaic of different vegetation evolved across our cultivated grasslands and natural pastures. What makes our farm unique is the diversity of its soil composition. Even within a single Almnäs field, there can be four to five types of soil, varying from sand, to clay, to pure organic matter. Thanks to our organic environment, we have a permanent "seedbank"

that's always available to germinate a complex mosaic of weeds and herbs to flourish on the soil type that suits them best.

Throughout the summer, our herd of 240 Holstein Friesian and Brown Swiss cows graze across these fields, picking up a variety of symbiotic microbes associated with each type of plant. These different microbes add their own flavour as they find their way into the milk. Thus, Wrångebäck is endowed with a unique, complex aroma and taste that's tied directly to our land — and can be found nowhere else.

"We are fortunate that many of our fields were originally lakebed, leaving us a legacy of rich, organic soil that supports red and white clover, legumes, and different grasses."





The first dairy on Almnäs was in front of the castle.

Wrångebäck cheese is the first cheese in Sweden protected by a registered trademark on April 8th, 1889.

## STAYING TRUE TO OUR HERITAGE

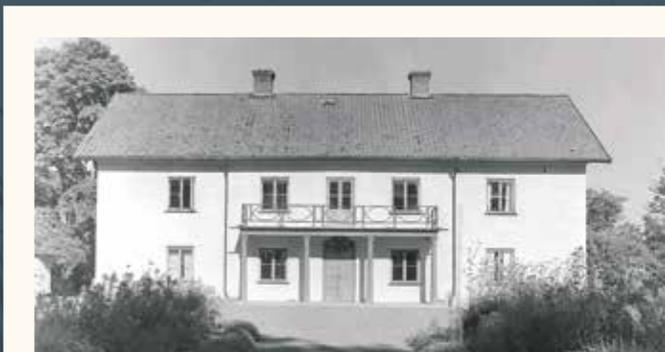
Our PDO designation also recognizes the long tradition of artisanal cheesemaking that's inextricably linked to our practice today. In fact, it's not an exaggeration to say that Wrångebäck cheese is our 21st century expression of an agricultural heritage that's unique to our farm and the Guldkroken area.

The oldest written reference we have about cheese at Almnäs comes from a court record in 1651 when the farm's bailiff, Anders Andersson, was sentenced to pay Sven in Katebo "some cloth and half a pound of cheese" for having deprived him of a couple of oxen that same year.

Later, Catharina Wallenstedt, who owned Almnäs between 1686 and 1719, wrote about the farm's cheese: "I hear no complaints from the cow stable. The cheesemaker there makes beautiful butter and cheese."



Catharina Wallenstedts (owner between 1686–1719)



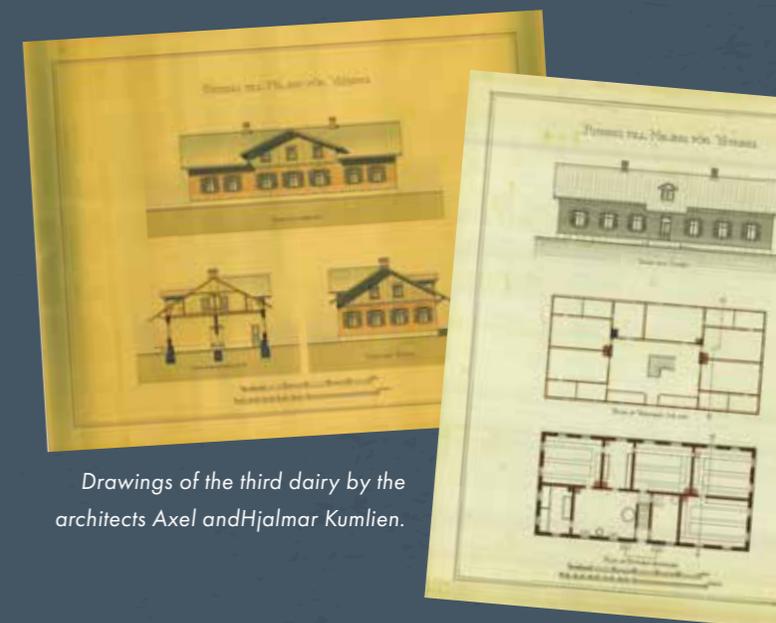
The second dairy at Wrångebäck.



The third dairy next to the old barn built by Oscar Dickson.

Our first documented dairy was built in 1828, followed by another at the leasehold Wrångebäck, and it was here that our most famous cheese was first created. It caught the attention of the Gothenburg entrepreneur Oscar Dickson, who had purchased Almnäs in 1887. He registered the trademark and by 1892 had built a new dairy, Almnäs Mejeri, to increase its production.

Dickson entered Wrångebäck cheese in Swedish agricultural fairs, including the Seventeenth General Swedish Agricultural Meeting in Gothenburg in 1891. That year, it won first prize in the "sweet milk cheese with large holes" category and the Almnäs dairy woman, M. Krüger was also recognized for her cheesemaking talent. Cheesemaking was an important and highly regarded profession and it's worth noting that "cheesemaker" was the only professional category that competed for its own rewards at the exhibition.



Drawings of the third dairy by the architects Axel and Hjalmar Kumlien.

"In the autumn of 2008, the  
Wrångebäck cheese  
was once again made at Almnäs."



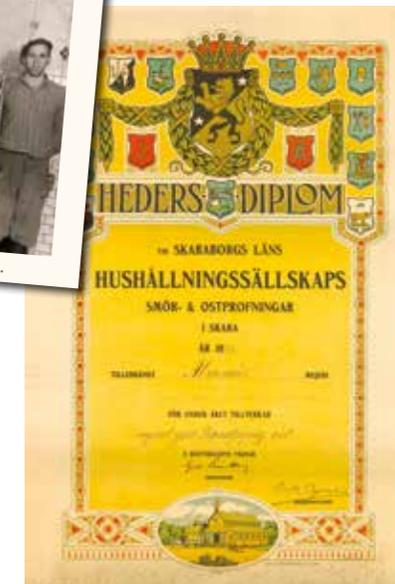
The milk is left for cheese-making in the dairy from 1892.



Major renovations were made in the 1940s.



Dairy women at Almnäs at the turn of the century.



▲ One of many honorary diplomas awarded to Almnäs.

◀ The mainhouse was build in 1766.

## BUILDING ON OUR HISTORICAL EXPERTISE

When the Berglund family purchased the farm in 1915, production of Wrångebäck cheese continued unabated, requiring major renovations to the dairy to meet new hygiene requirements. However, after milk production from the farm's tenants and crofters was reduced, the family decided to close the dairy in 1961.

Fortunately, this hiatus was short lived. When Thomas Berglund took on the administration of the farm, the family saw an oppor-

tunity to revive an important part of its history. And luckily our former cheesemaker, Hans Stiller, was able to reproduce the farm's flagship cheese with the original recipe, drawing on the traditional knowledge he learned from his predecessors.

At Almnäs, cheesemaking was traditionally the domain of dairy women whose expertise was handed down through the generations — and that continues today. In 2005, at an age of

Kerstin leads the dairy today.



Tommy is in charge of the cheese cellars and handles sales.



In 2021, we made 35 tonnes of Wrångebäck cheese.



The old distillery that was refurbished during 2006-2008.



One of our cheese cellars and our cheese shop.



The new barn which was completed in 2021.

82, Stiller passed his knowledge on to the first cheesemaker of our new era, Elisabeth Andreasson. Our current cheesemaker, Kerstin Johansson, along with an able team of helpers, continues to practice state-of-the-art cheesemaking with an eye to our history.

Today, cheese production at Almnäs rests on a single chain of artisanal expertise handed down since at least 1889.

We transformed the farm's old distillery into a modern dairy, taking advantage of technical advice and equipment from Switzerland.

Alongside a modern production facility, we built a new robotic milking barn and updated a 225-square-meter cheese cellar. Here we age approximately 5,000 wheels of Wrångebäck cheese for 9 to 10 months at 11 degrees Celsius — on the original wooden planks we saved from our old dairy. Thus, the original bacterial cultures



◀ Our 4 cheeses from the top left:  
Anno 1225  
Wrångebäck  
Almnäs 1 liter  
Almnäs Tegel

that remain in the planks infuse today's Wrångebäck with an aroma that provides an authentic historical note through an unbroken chain of cultures dating at least 150 years.

Since we renewed cheesemaking at Almnäs, we've introduced three new cheeses to complement Wrångebäck: Almnäs Tegel to reflect the farm's history of brick production, Anno 1225 to reference the farm's founding year, and Almnäs 1 Liter, to

commemorate the visit of Crown Princess Victoria and Prince Daniel to the farm in 2010.

But Wrångebäck remains our flagship cheese. It's a round cheese, weighing in at about 8 kilograms (22 pounds). Instead of coating the cheese with wax, we wash the rind with salt water, which benefits the bacterial culture called *Brevibacterium Linens* and gives the cheese a lovely reddish hue.

We wash the rind with salt water, ▶ which benefits the bacterial culture called *Brevibacterium Linens* which contributes to this beautiful surface.

## How Wrångebäck is made

- The copper clad vat is filled with 3600 liters of milk, lactic acid bacteria and rennet.
- One day later, the milk has transformed into 48 wheels Wrångebäck in the cheese press, with help of the right temperature and know-how.
- The cheeses are placed in brine for 48 hours then they are removed and placed to mature in the dairy's cheese cellar.
- While it is being matured, the cheese is washed regularly with salt water and turned.



A small selection of ►  
our fine customers.

“Our common goal is the same after all... that whoever has a piece of Wrångebäck cheese on their plate, get a good and memorable taste experience.”

## LOOKING FORWARD TO A BRIGHT FUTURE

Last year, we made 35 tons of Wrångebäck along with 23 tons of our other cheeses, thanks to our loyal customers. We are grateful to the many restaurants and fine cheese shops in Sweden and abroad who have endorsed our cheese and introduced it to their customers. Much of our cheese ends up on Swedish tables, but an ever-increasing proportion goes to customers in the USA, Canada, Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, the United Kingdom and Norway — even as far away as Macau and Hong Kong.

Along the way, many of the most talented chefs, sommeliers, bakers, and cheese connoisseurs have provided us with valuable

feedback. The mutually beneficial relationships we have built with them over the years are a strong element of our success.

Our common goal is the same after all... that whoever has a piece of Wrångebäck cheese on their plate, get a good and memorable taste experience.

That the EU has distinguished Wrångebäck with a POD designation is a much appreciated endorsement of our approach to the art of cheesemaking. At Almnäs, we'll continue to honour our history and our land as we look forward to an exciting future.



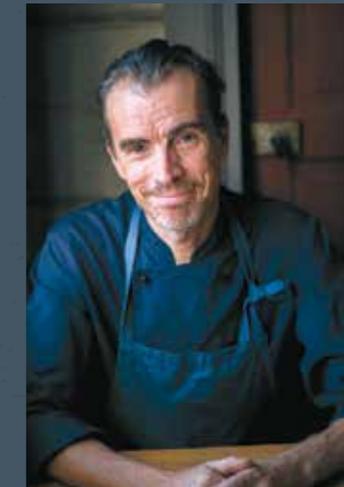
Cheese biscuits made from Wrångebäckost, rolled in chopped hazelnuts, oregano, flower sprinkles, rapeseed or any spice.

Recipe thought out by Katja Palmdahl  
– Chef, consultant, food stylist,  
inspirer and cookbook author.



“To work with Almnäs has been a true romance between the product and the persons behind. Implementing these flavors in our dishes has been a wonder for our guests.

Jean Henkel  
– Chef at CARBON  
Photographer: Jean-Paul Bastiens



“A food craft with respect for the area and its history but also for a sustainable future. A cheese whose taste is gossiping about prosperous cows grazing freely in the meadows. A cheese that embodies creativity and brings joy to both body and soul. All respect.

Patrik Sewerin  
– Chef at Gunnebo Kaffehus & Krog  
– our oldest customer.

”Ecological, protected by origin, from Almnäs”



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