

Midwest Camel Milk Is Shipped Nationwide



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A 1,000-acre family farm in Missouri is home to the country's largest camel dairy. Humpback Dairy produces Camel Culture Milk, a beverage that's non-GMO, soy-free, gluten-free, and produced under organic practices. It's naturally lower in

lactose than cow's milk, making it ideal for those with dairy sensitivities.

Founders Ryan and Lauren Fee started the business in 2015 to provide camel milk to homesick Somali immigrants. They initially sourced the milk from a small camel dairy

in Colorado. As demand grew, so did the business, and the Fees joined forces with Humpback Dairy in Missouri, a camel farm run by the Amish-Mennonite community. Now, the milk is shipped nationwide.

Camel Culture's licensed milk production facility routinely tests all camels for signs of food-borne disease at a certified food safety lab in accordance with the Missouri State Milk Board. The pasture-raised camels are fed an organic grain diet of flax seed, sunflower seed, alfalfa, and oats, and the milk bottles are PET and BPA-free. While all farm practices are 100 percent organic, the milk itself is not officially certified.

Sourcing milk from a camel differs from dairy cows. Camels won't give milk unless they have first nursed their baby. Then, they will release milk for about 90 seconds. This amounts to an average of 6 to 8 liters per day. In contrast, cows produce between 8 to 10 gals. The milk is flash-pasteurized at 150 degrees for 15 seconds and then rapidly cooled to preserve its nutritional properties and flavor.

Taste-wise, camel milk has a lower sugar content than cow and a smooth, slightly salty taste. It has a consistency similar to 2

percent fat milk. Lactose and casein levels are lower than cows' milk, meaning many people find it easier to digest. The milk is also lower in saturated fat and has ten times more iron and five times more vitamin C than cows. From a nutritional standpoint, many consider it the closest animal milk to human breast milk. Adults need to drink just 3 to 8 oz daily for these dietary benefits. The milk is also ideal for baking.

While Camel Culture milk can be found in retail locations nationwide, most of it is shipped. Pint pricing starts at \$14, and liters are \$22. You can also purchase 8 oz. of camel milk powder, sourced from the United Arab Emirates, for \$48. All milk ships on Mondays and Tuesdays to arrive between Wednesday and Saturday. Everything is shipped frozen in a Styrofoam cooler filled with ice. Fresh camel milk lasts 3 to 4 weeks when refrigerated. Frozen, the milk will last 6 mos.

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Canadian Olive Farm Presses Its Own Oil

The Olive Farm is currently the only commercial olive farm that presses its own oil in Canada. When George and Sheri Braun considered trying to grow olives in a more northerly climate than typical, they looked around and settled on a south-facing slope in Salt Spring Island, British Columbia, which has good exposure and drainage.

Olives thrive in mild Mediterranean climates, and while hardy, they don't like overly wet weather.

"In B.C., we get rain and barely enough hours of sunlight, so that's a knock right there," says Sheri Braun. "With our short growing season, we watch the weather like a hawk for signs of freezing and try to squeeze out every hour of sunlight we can. Then we call the harvest when the weather turns."

With the lack of sunlight hours, none of the olive varieties the Brauns have tried

growing reach a fully ripened stage. Surprisingly, this has worked to the farm's advantage as they are forced to pick the olives green when they contain high polyphenols, high antioxidants, and low acidity.

"We were somewhat amazed that this made our oil popular," Sheri says. "We're unique with our dark emerald green color, taste, and viscosity. It's been well received by top chefs."

She explains it takes about 10 of the farm's trees to equal the same amount of oil harvested from one tree in prime olive-growing countries. The Olive Farm's 3,000 trees are all harvested by hand, which adds up to extra manual work for the family members and the few staff they're able to hire.

A large amount of labor is dedicated to replacing the 10 percent of trees that die each year due to weather challenges.

Last year, their 7th year of production,

the Brauns realized their largest yield of 339 liters. Previous years' production ranged from zero when frost destroyed the olives, to around 75 liters.

Prices for their unique olive oil are roughly \$125 (Can.) for a 200-milliliter bottle.

"It's farming, no matter what you do, there are challenges in nature and things you can't control, so we'll always consider ourselves 'aspiring' olive farmers," Sheri says. "We've been more successful than we could've envisioned with people across the country supporting us. Strangers write to us with encouragement, and restaurants go on waiting lists for our oil."

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interested in drinking milk again. Between flavors of yogurt, ice cream, and cottage cheese, milk is incredibly diverse," Brickner says. She started by putting bottles in a cooler outside the milk parlor for friends to taste. Raspberry was the first, and four different kinds of chocolate soon followed.

Brickner takes a portion of the milk from her family's 85-cow herd to a farm that bottles the milk and also churns ice cream for Destiny Dairy. The milk comes in pints and quarts, with pints the most popular.

Brickner is in the process of hooking up a processing container on the farm that will allow her to make and bottle the flavored milk in small batches. She'll be able to offer more flavors at a time and have less waste. The shelf life for the flavored milk is 14 days. She also hopes to meet customer requests and add other products, such as drinkable yogurts, fresh cheeses, and cottage cheese.

"Customers bring their families week after week and love to get close to the animals and experience parts of the farm. They keep thanking me," Brickner says.

In addition to the on-farm store with dairy and beef products, there are two petting zoo areas, a balcony viewing area of the milking parlor, and opportunities to feed animals.

Brickner is passionate about educating customers about how local farmers care for their animals, and she offers tours by reservation.

Working with other family members, Brickner is determined to continue her family's dairy legacy and create a sustainable farm that provides quality products.

"I don't want to expand. I want to help the next farmer in the next town to do the same thing. It has to be local," she says.

With about 14 flavors already, she plans to continue to add more flavored milk seasonally, offering concoctions such as Malibu coconut rum in the summer and pumpkin pie in the fall, for example.

"I'm still trying to work on a key lime, it's driving me crazy," she says, with a laugh.

For more information about her farm's location and available products, check out the website.

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Destiny Dairy Bar uses A2 milk in their products which is easier to digest and higher in protein.



A2 Flavored Milk, Ice Cream Catching On

Raspberry, cookies and cream, salted caramel, and of course, chocolate are just a few of the flavors of milk found at Destiny Dairy Bar in Carlisle, Penn. Made with A2 protein milk, they're easy to digest. And with creamline milk, right from the cows and minimally pasteurized, the milk is

higher in protein with a creamy flavor.

Amy Brickner tested and gave out hundreds of samples before selling flavored milk at her family's third-generation dairy farm. It was her creative way to offer an added-value product.

"I wanted something unique to get people