

Speaker 1: [00:00](#) Welcome to the old fashioned on purpose podcast. So a lot of people view home dairy as the ultimate in homesteading. It's kinda like a status symbol, if you will. And I know for me personally, it completely captured my imagination at the beginning of our own homestead journey. However, if you have been wanting to venture into this world of home dairy but felt like you couldn't for a variety of reasons, this is the episode for you. I'm dispelling three very common home dairy myths that a lot of homesteaders believe. Keep listening to see if any of these sound familiar. I'm your host Jill Winger and for the last 10 years I've been helping people just like you who feel disenchanting by modern life. I'll show you how to create the life you really want by leaving the rat race and growing your own food. So I feel like there's a lot of difference myths and beliefs around home dairy.

Speaker 1: [01:06](#) And one of the ones that always kind of cracks me up a little bit comes when I find myself talking to someone, usually of an older generation who grew up with an actual milk cow. And I'm not talking about a trendy, modern homestead milk cow. I'm talking about someone who really, you know, their family at that point in time had no other option for milk other than owning a milk cow and milking it twice a day. And I always giggle a little bit because usually those people will come up to me and say, Oh my gosh, I saw you have a milk cow. What is wrong with you? Why would you ever do that to yourself on purpose? It's so much work, which I have to say if you've listened to any of my other home dairy podcast episodes or read about the milk cow posts on my blog, the Prairie homestead, you know, that keeping a cow doesn't actually have to be as complicated as you think.

Speaker 1: [02:05](#) The same goes for dairy goats. Now, you know, that's a myth about keeping the dairy animal. There are also some myths about making the actual dairy products. So I wanted to dive into three of the most common myths I see people believing that are holding them back from creating more home dairy recipes in their kitchen. And when I say home dairy recipes, I'm talking about anything that you might make, whether it be butter or ricotta cheese or mozzarella cheese or buttermilk, anything you might make that's related to milk and you can do those things at home. So here we are, we're going to dive in because I'm betting that no matter your situation, no matter where you may live, you probably can do a whole lot of these things a lot sooner than you think. Okay? So the first myth that is associated with home dairy is that you have to have your very own cow or goat if you're going to make things like butter or cheese or any sort of home dairy recipe.

- Speaker 1: [03:17](#) Now, thankfully that's not true because I know a lot of you are not exactly in situations where you can keep a dairy animal. You know, you may have an acre or two or maybe you have chickens in your suburban backyard. But that doesn't mean that you necessarily can go buy a Brown Swiss milk cow. But the good news is there is a whole lot you can do with home dairy in your kitchen. Even if you're in the middle of New York city, you don't have to have a source of, you know, homegrown milk necessarily to get it done. So when we're talking about getting milk, if you don't have your own animal, my best recommendation is always going to be getting the milk raw from a farm or a cow share or a friend with a dairy animal or something along those lines. Now, depending on where you live, that may or may not be legal, which sounds a little bit crazy.
- Speaker 1: [04:22](#) But yes, certain types of milk, namely raw milk or milk that has not been pasteurized is illegal in some States, which I could do a whole episode on that topic and maybe I will. Most of that is usually ends up being a rant on my part because I'm very passionate about raw milk. I personally think it's much better for you. I like that you can do a lot more with it, but you can't always buy it. And I know for us that, and originally when I started getting into this world of home dairy, it was still illegal in Wyoming for us to purchase it. So I either had to kind of go a little bit black market. Uh, I can't believe I'm admitting that on air, but I am, you know, and buy it from people under the table who weren't advertising it. Or sometimes you can buy raw milk that's labeled as pet food and you know whether or not you feed it to your dogs, that's up to you, if you know what I mean.
- Speaker 1: [05:21](#) So anyway, not telling you to do something illegal, but know that generally there are some options. If you do live in a state where you cannot legally purchase raw milk, one option that's generally legal is the cow share, which I just mentioned a cow share is, is a setup where someone, usually a small dairy farm has a cow or several or goats and you purchase partial ownership in that animal. And of course one of the benefits of being a partial owner in a dairy cow or a dairy goat would be that you get some of the milk, right. So you're not really buying milk, you're more just paying the farmer for the care and keeping of that animal. And the milk is a, um, byproduct if you will, of that relationship. So cow shares I know are still pretty popular and you absolutely can look into those in your area, ask around, look on different organic food hubs to see if you can find that option.

Speaker 1: [06:26](#) But that's a fantastic way to get high quality raw milk or maybe even pasteurized milk that's just not quite as processed or maybe it's from grass fed cows or it's not pasteurized at high temps. There's lots of different combinations there. And a cow share or a goat share is a great way to access that. Now if you cannot find any sort of local raw milk, all is not lost because you can still use regular store milk for a lot of things. So one of the options that I use when our cow is dried up, which she is right now, in fact she's not milking for us. I go to our local organic food store, which is very, very small because Wyoming is very behind the times with organic options, but they have gallons of a milk, I think it's called Kalona or Kalana natural.

Speaker 1: [07:26](#) I might be butchering that name. Anyway, K a L O w N a or something like that. Kalowna natural and it is pasteurized but it is low temperature vat pasteurize so it's not quite cooked as long as your typical milks and it's grass fed and I like that it still has cream on top. So if I don't have my raw milk from the cow. I feel like that's a good option as a backup. Now let's say worst comes to worse. You've got nothing, right? You're in a organic food desert where you live. You can still use regular gallons of whole milk from the regular old grocery store if you have to. Is that the very best option? No. But I kind of subscribe to this idea of good, better, best when it comes to ingredients. And if you have my cookbook, you've seen that section in the front of the cookbook, I get it because not everybody has a whole foods in their backyard.

Speaker 1: [08:31](#) And I feel like sometimes when I'm on the internet, certain bloggers or certain groups, it feels like judgment is easily cast upon those who don't have those options. But guess what? I can relate to that because sometimes it's very, very difficult for me to find much of anything locally that's just not your typical, you know, Cheetos and SpaghettiOs and TV dinners. We've got plenty of that. If I want a whole natural ingredient, I have to hunt for it. It's not something that we have a lot of options for in Wyoming. So sometimes you just do the best you can. But you can use regular store milk for a lot of dairy recipes. The trick here is that I would advise you not to get UHT milk. That's ultra heat treated milk. Now the problem when you look at a lot of widespread organic milk products, there's one I think of in particular has like a red carton with the cow jumping, cartoon cow.

Speaker 1: [09:36](#) If you look at the labels, they're UHT, which means they have been heated to the point of sterilization. Those cartons of milk can be technically kept at room temperature and they will not go bad, which that's a little too much for me. That's a little too

far gone. I want something that's got a little bit more of the good bacteria and the enzymes in there, something that's sterile to that point, it's not going to have much, beneficial value, at least in my opinion. The other problem with UHT milk is it acts really, really weird in home dairy recipes. So if you're trying to make mozzarella cheese or any type of cheese or yogurt or anything with the UHT milk, your results are probably going to be funky and definitely frustrating. So usually when someone sends me a picture of their recipe gone wrong, my first question is, what kind of milk did you use?

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Because the UHT stuff just doesn't act right because it has been changed so much. So to wrap that all up, if you can, your very best option is to get milk straight from the farm, you know, cow share, goat share, a friend with a, with a dairy animal. If you can't do that, your next option would just to be to use a low temperature vat pasteurized milk from your whole foods store or your organic food store if you have one. And if that's not an option, get some store bought milk that is not ultra heat treated. And honestly, sometimes when I'm experimenting with a new type of dairy recipe and I know my chances of messing it up are probably high, sometimes I'll get the cheaper regular pasteurized store milk to experiment with versus getting a super expensive raw milk that I'm buying or you know, something equivalent at the grocery store.

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Now obviously when I have my milk cow and she's milking away, I have so much milk I can afford to, to test recipes and do trials all day long, no big deal. But if I'm buying milk, it adds up. Good milk is a little bit pricier and it should be because it is definitely worth it. But when you're used to paying, you know, three bucks a gallon for whole milk at Walmart, then it's a little bit of a shock what you're paying \$10 a gallon or more for good raw milk or more organic milk options. So you got options, you just have to get a little creative. Okay, so that was myth number one. Myth number two is that it's only about cheese, right? It's all about the cheese. If you're going to make home dairy, you gotta be going for a cheddar or some sort of Parmesan or some sort of hard cheese.

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Here's the reality of this. My friend, most of the home dairy recipes that I make are not cheese or they're not actually hard cheese. I actually make very little hard cheese. Not that you can't do that, but my favorite home dairy items to make are things like yogurt and buttermilk, cultured buttermilk and ricotta and butter. And of course from those things I get lots of whey, which is fantastic for so many different things. So if you think that you know, home dairy equals having a cheese press

and a cheese cave and you're going all in or nothing, I'm very happy to inform you that you can start very small and likely start with dairy items that you're purchasing on a regular basis and you can make homemade replacements for them instead. And I'm going to talk about the specifics of each of these options on a very soon to come episode.

Speaker 1: [13:33](#) So stay tuned for that. But you've got so many options. And I, like I said, I found that most of the time when I'm making something with milk and my kitchen, it's not necessarily cheese. I know that, at least for myself, every time at the beginning of my journey, when I realized that another home dairy thing could actually be made at home, it was like this moment when the skies opened and the angels sang, and I was like, Oh my gosh, I can't believe I can make yogurt myself or I can make cream cheese myself or I can make buttermilk. It was like so silly, but I was just enthralled. So it's quite exciting to realize that you're not a slave to the grocery store on those items. You've got so many options. Okay. Now myth number three is that you gotta be like at home all day long, all week long.

Speaker 1: [14:29](#) And if you're going to be making any sort of cheese or dairy, it's going to basically become your new hobby and you'll have no friends and you'll be stuck in your kitchen forever. And it is a little bit of a long myth, but you get the idea. Here's the deal. Home dairy is not complicated. It doesn't have to be. Now if you want to take your home dairy passion and turn it into a full fledged hobby, you absolutely do that. And I think there's a whole lot of message boards and Facebook groups for cheesemakers, so you can go as far as you want to go. But here's the thing, and like I talk about this in my heritage cooking crash course that a lot of you have seen, we all want to have better food, but not all of us want to become artisan bread bakers or these cheesemongers who spend 20 hours a week, you know, crafting cheddar, like not all of us want to go quite that far.

Speaker 1: [15:19](#) The good news is there is a middle ground where you can make your own sourdough breads and your fermented sourkrauts and your canned foods and your cheeses and your dairy stuff without having to become obsessed with it. Maybe, shall we say. Although I tend to be a little obsessive about anything I do, but you don't have to be like me. You can, you can just pick and choose what you want. And I think that I've always been a little bit fascinated by this idea of slow food. Obviously, you know, you probably heard that before. It's kind of in contrast to the world of fast food that we live in and a lot of times we celebrate the idea of slow food. But the cool thing about it is oftentimes

with the slow foods that we are crafting at home, they are slow, yes, meaning they take more hours to get to completion, but that doesn't mean you're standing in the kitchen for all of those hours.

Speaker 1: [16:15](#) And even when I have my kitchen in full swing and I'm fermenting and sourdoughing and cheesemaking and all of the things, it's more about checking into the kitchen and less about being in there 24-7. When it comes to homemade dairy, a lot of the things that I make the most, whether it's the ricotta or the yogurt or the buttermilk or the cultured soft cheese, it literally is hard as taking a jar of milk, stirring in some culture, making sure it's the right temperature and leaving it alone. It's just not a complicated process. You don't have to babysit it. You could literally do it before you leave for work in the morning. You don't even have to do it on a weekend. So it doesn't have to be complicated and you get a lot of enjoyment out of it and it's kind of magical.

Speaker 1: [17:01](#) Let's be honest, to see milk transform into so many different things. So that was my collection of myths. I'm curious to see if you thought any of those sounded familiar or if any of those beliefs have been holding you back. I'm going to encourage you, as long as you don't have some sort of really crazy dairy allergy, I'm going to encourage you to try this, to put this on your bucket list of things you want to try or things you want to expand in your homestead repertoire of skills. It's really, it's really enjoyable. It's really easy and I think homemade dairy has gotta be one of my favorite things to eat. So give it a try. I'm curious to see how it goes for you. Okay. So all that said, one of the biggest problems have found, and this is not a myth, this is a legit problem when you start to get into this world of home dairy is trying to find the supplies you need.

Speaker 1: [17:59](#) I remember quite comically at the beginning of my journey trying to go into my local little stores and even find things like cheese cloth or different types of cultures. And I'd ask the, the employees and they're like, what is wrong with you woman? You are crazy. Why are you even asking me? I don't even know what that is. And you have to like try to explain it and they're like looking at you like you have three heads. But I digress. You're probably not gonna find a lot of the little supplies you need in your local stores unless you live in some sort of food Mecca, which I do not. So because of that, I rely very heavily on retailers like New England cheese making supply company. Like they're my lifeline for everything I need to make home dairy. The good news is like I can just usually do an order, and get everything I need in one fell swoop.

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And the culture's last in your freezer for a very long time. I won't tell you how long I've had some of mine in the, in the freezer there in the house. But they've got it all, from cultures to equipment to supplies, everything from the cheese cloth to the butter paddles to the butter molds to everything in between. So I know it can be a little confusing when you're first trying to shop for cheese and home dairy stuff. So to make your life a little bit easier, we have put together a free downloadable quick start guide. And it has not only my favorite proven and easy of course home dairy recipes that you can just have. It also has the cultures that I use the most. And here's the cool thing about dairy cultures. Like they're usually three or four bucks a pop, super inexpensive.

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And I also got a discount code for ya, cause I'm cool like that. But anyway, you can see all of that, the recipes, the culture lists, and the discount code over at theprairiehomestead.com/cheese so I'll say it one more time and I'll also put it in the show notes that theprairiehomestead.com/cheese you type in your email, you get instant access, you can check out the recipes and then you have to promise though that you tag me either on Facebook or Instagram after you try it. Sound good? Alrighty. And that my friend is all for this episode. Thanks so much for listening. I really appreciate you hanging out with me. If you enjoyed this podcast, this episode or any others, I would love it if you could pop over to your favorite podcast player and leave a quick review. Just helps other people find us. And that being said, I will see you or rather chat with you in the next episode of the old fashioned on purpose podcast.