

- Speaker 1: [00:00](#) Welcome to the old fashioned on purpose podcast. So it's no secret you've seen it. I make a lot of different things in my kitchen, lots and lots, but some of the most rewarding recipes that I make almost always have to do with dairy. And there's a lot of reasons for that well primarily, I like to eat dairy a lot, but there's something totally magical about turning milk into something else and it can turn into so many different things. Now there's this belief out there that's common even among homesteaders that making your own dairy recipes, things like ricotta or yogurt or cheese or buttermilk is just an errantly complicated. Now, guess what? Good news. It's not, surprise, it's really not that complicated. It actually takes just a few minutes of hands on time and that's it. So in today's episode I'm going to walk you through kind of a birds eye view of three of my favorite home dairy techniques.
- Speaker 1: [01:09](#) And I dare you like, I dare you to not want to try these as soon as you're done listening. Oh, and one more thing. Listen through the end of the recipe because I've put together something a little bit extra special for my home dairy peeps. I'm your host Jill winger. And over the last 10 years I've been helping people just like you who felt disenchanting by modern life. I'll show you how to leave the rat race and create the life you really want by learning how to grow your own food and master old fashioned skills. Okay, so the three things I want to cover today are yogurt, buttermilk and ricotta. Now as I was preparing this episode, I realize it's not necessarily easy to teach a recipe on a podcast because you can't see the recipe, you can't see me do the thing. So it kind of helps when you're talking recipes or or cooking details to have it in front of you.
- Speaker 1: [02:12](#) So here's what I've done. So you can still listen to this podcast cause I'm going to walk you through the processes so you can see how stinking easy it is. And then I have all the recipes, all the details, the measurements, the tips, everything in a very easy to access PDF for you. So you don't have to take notes, you don't have to go, um, you know, hunt all over the internet for how to do this. It's all in the PDF and you can grab this PDF by going to theprairiehomestead.com/cheese super simple. You type in your email, you hit submit. There it is like it's right there. Instant access. And I'll put that link in the show notes. But I just want you to know before we get started, you don't have to have this memorized by the time you're done listening. Okay, I'm diving in cause I got some good stuff to talk about here.
- Speaker 1: [03:04](#) So let's talk yogurt. I think that that's a great place to start if you are new to the idea of home dairy because like who doesn't like yogurt? Maybe someone who's very, very dairy intolerant. That

might be the answer to that question. But other than that, who doesn't like yogurt? And it's so good for you. And the cool thing about homemade yogurt is you can make it in any way you want. You can add vanilla, you can add maple syrup, you can use honey, you can use fruit or jams or berries or whatever you want. The sky is the limit. Now, yogurt was actually the very first home dairy item that I kind of, well I guess I kind of came into my vision as a possibility. In fact, I remember way back before we had kids and before I got the goats, um, I was still, uh, working a job and just being a normal person who thought organic things were stupid.

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Like, yes, that was me. I was telling someone yesterday, they're like, tell me your journey. And I'm like, I used to be kind of a jerk when it came to organic things or natural things. I was one of those who thought they were all kind of in your head in a waste of time. So surprise, surprise, people change. But anyway, so, way though, back when I was still that person, I was awakening blossoming into this weird homesteader girl that I am today. And I'll never forget, when I realized you could make yogurt at home. And I actually remember, I was so enthralled with this idea, I hadn't done it yet, but I was scheming about all the things I was gonna make. And I went and told my friend, I'm like, guess what? I just found out you can make your own yogurt.

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How cool is that? And her response was that is gross. Why would you want to do that? And I was like, she kind of popped my bubble. But anyway, I still made it of course, cause I'm, I'm crazy like that. But yogurt is so simple and here's, you know, the bird's eye view. Cause like I said, I'm not going to give you all the measurements on the podcast cause that can be a little bit tiresome when you can't see what I'm doing. But in a nutshell, this is how easy yogurt is. Like, get ready for this. You're going to start with milk. You can use regular store bought milk if that's all you've got. You know, that's maybe not your, my favorite option. But if that's all you have available, you can get a gallon of whole milk from the grocery store and you're going to heat that milk up to about 185 degrees.

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Now the reason we do that is it helps prepare the proteins in the milk that are responsible for thickening the yogurt. And there's lots of different ways to do this. Sometimes people do it in an instant pot or a crockpot. My favorite method is to put the milk right into quart size Mason jars. I heat it up in a water bath to 185 and that's, it's literally that easy. Now once you have your milk heated, we are going to cool it down, which I know sounds weird cause we just heat it and then we're going to

bring it back down to 110 so like I said, the heating process just gets those proteins ready and then we cool it down to a hundred 110 because we're going to be adding some culture, all that beautiful bacteria in there. And if it's too hot, you know we killed the bacteria.

Speaker 1: [06:29](#) Trust me, I've killed a lot of bacteria in my life, but I now know how to read the temperature a little bit better. So you can either remove the jars of milk from the hot water and just let them cool on your counter. Or you can just let the pot come down to temperature slowly on its own. Doesn't matter how you do it. We just want the temperature back to 110. We're going to stir in some yogurt culture, which is very inexpensive. And then we are going to keep that yogurt warm and let it incubate, for anywhere from half a day to about 24 hours. And that really varies depending on a lot of different factors. But I find that usually what I'll do, I'll make the yogurt in the morning, I'll incubate it and I'll keep it about at 90 degrees. While it's incubating with that culture in it, keep it covered.

Speaker 1: [07:24](#) Don't disturb it, don't let the kids knock it around with a dog, poke his head in it. And then about a day, like the next morning, it's ready and you'll know it's ready cause it's thick. It's thick like yogurt, and then you just pop it in the fridge, let it chill completely and it's ready to eat. Now at that point, you can add in sweeteners or berries or any sorts of flavorings that you want. But it's that simple. And I often make a gallon. Yes. A gallon of yogurt at a time that's just 4 quart jars. So it sounds more impressive than it is. Um, and it'll keep for many, many weeks in your fridge. Or if you're like me, it'll keep for a couple of days, cause my kids go through yogurt, like nobody's business, but it's inexpensive. It's so simple. And anyone can do this. I don't, you don't have to have a milk cow.

Speaker 1: [08:11](#) You don't have to have a friend with a milk cow. You can totally do this at home and you'll miss out on a lot of the junk they put into your typical store bought yogurts. So pretty cool, right? You can definitely literally go do this. Like right away. You don't have to wait to do this as something you can try immediately. Okay. So that was number one. Number two, buttermilk buttermilk is magical. Now, I didn't realize this at first, like for the longest time I thought buttermilk was just the byproduct of making butter. And that's not necessarily inaccurate, but there's actually two kinds of buttermilk. There's old fashioned buttermilk, which is indeed a byproduct of butter making. And it has some good uses. You can use it to make breads or mix it into your pancake batter. It's, it's still usable. But my favorite

type of buttermilk, and I do have a favorite of course, is cultured buttermilk.

Speaker 1: [09:11](#) Cultured buttermilk has all that good bacteria. It's kind of like yogurt, but a little bit runnier, a little bit of a different Tang. And when you're making things like buttermilk biscuits or buttermilk pancakes or you're marinating a chicken in buttermilk, like, Oh my word, if you've never done that, it got to try it. Cultured buttermilk is the one you want to use. Okay a little side note here. I don't know if any of you watch Lonesome Dove. If you do, you'll have to let me know cause it's one of our favorite movies here. I don't believe it's in the first Lonesome Dove, but they made like a million sequels. There's nothing as good as the first one of course. But the sequels are still pretty good. And there's one of those sequels that Gus is in Clara's house, I think. And he asks for a cup of buttermilk and he's like reminiscing about buttermilk.

Speaker 1: [10:03](#) And when I first watched that, it was a long time ago and I thought, yuck, why are you drinking buttermilk? Like sour and it's thick and like gross. And then once I started making my own cultured buttermilk, I totally get it. Like it has the most incredible scent when you get it done culturing and you put it in the fridge, it's rich and tangy and it just kind of makes you salivate and it's really good for you, right? It's cultured. It's good for your gut. So anyway, site total, uh, off topic rabbit trail there. But if you're a Lonesome Dove fan, you know, buttermilk as a thing. It's cool. So birds eye view on how to make buttermilk, it's actually even easier than yogurt. You grab some milk, you, you just want to use whole milk. I do suggest you avoid UHT or ultra heat treated milk because that can get, do funky things that when it's been cooked to the point of oblivion.

Speaker 1: [11:01](#) So it makes your homemade dairy products act weird, but just regular old whole milk will work. You could use raw if you like, and then you're going to get a packet of buttermilk starter culture. Or if you have other types of cultures, you can use an eighth teaspoon of mesophilic start a culture. That sounds like a crazy word. It's not that crazy. Once you kind of get into cheese making more dairy making and you'll get used to the lingo, but you either use buttermilk culture or mesophilic culture, it's this easy to get ready for this. You put the milk about four cups in a quart jar. You stir in the culture, you cover it with a towel and a rubber band. Let it breathe a little bit, and you stick it on your counter for 12 to 24 hours. And by then it should be thickened and it will this incredible aroma.

- Speaker 1: [11:55](#) You pop it in the fridge and you can use it for anything your heart desires. It'll last a good couple of weeks in the fridge because it's cultured. So it keeps that from going bad so easy. And like I said, if you've never tried it, like the cultured buttermilk that you buy in the store, it has a lot of thickeners and stuff. And this one doesn't, it's just thickened just by the action of the bacteria doing its thing and culturing the milk. So it is pretty awesome. Now, little note, if you try this and you've noticed that after 24 hours, your buttermilk is still very runny, like regular milk and you're like, well, what does happened? Um, couple of things could be happening. Number one, you could have used a bad culture if it was dead or inactive, or it could need to culture a little bit longer.
- Speaker 1: [12:46](#) Or if your kitchen is super cold, which mine often is in the winter, you know, we have a woodstove. It doesn't have, you know, super even heat. If it's, my kitchen is really cold, it'll take a little bit longer. So you might need to leave it on the counter for a bit, bit more time, but it's kinda, it's usually pretty hard to mess it up. It's a very simple technique. So that's number two on your gotta try it list. Okay. Now number three is ricotta, ricotta cheese. This is a cheese, right? You can tell people I'm making cheese. It's a simple cheese. It's a crazy easy cheese. Ricotta is magical in lasagna or any sort of pasta dish. Now, I don't know about you. I actually grew up with cottage cheese in my lasagna. That's how my mom always did it. That's how a lot of people I know do it.
- Speaker 1: [13:41](#) We just use cottage cheese. That's fine. But if you want to be a little bit more true to a Italian cooking ricotta is where it's at. That's actually what is supposed to be in those filled pastas or in the lasagna or in the manicotti. Now the thing is, store-bought ricotta is a little bit hard to find that sometimes. It's also kind of pricey. So I don't love buying the store bought ricotta now. Good news. You probably saw this coming. Ricotta is not hard to make. It's actually easier than you think, so here's how you can make it. Now a little side note here, there is a lot of ways to make ricotta and you'll find a lot of different techniques. My favorite type of ricotta is called whole milk ricotta because you get a little bit more of a finished product. The alternative to whole milk ricotta is using way now way is this yellowish sticky liquid that we usually hear about in nursery rhymes.
- Speaker 1: [14:44](#) It's actually a real thing and it's a byproduct after you make cheese. So sometimes if you're making cheese like mozzarella or cheddar, you get done with the curds. The curds are off doing their thing. You have this pot of yellow whey and one thing you can do is to reheat that whey and you'll have these cloudy little

clumps of ricotta form in the way. Now a couple of downfalls to that. It takes a while to get that pot hot and you're, you're boiling this sticky ricotta, which is kind of cumbersome, a little bit messy. Also, you don't get a whole lot, you just get a cup or even less, even if you have a couple of gallons of whey, so it's a lot of work for not a lot of results. In contrast, whole milk ricotta uses whole milk to start with, so you get definitely more of a yield, which is why I prefer this and you can freeze it, you can use it right away.

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It stores really well in the freezer so you could make up a bunch and then keep it for your pasta dishes for months down the road. Okay, here's how you do it. Here's the bird's eye view. You get a gallon of whole milk. I don't care if it's store bought milk, I don't care if it's raw milk. I just would suggest it's not UHT milk. Ultra heat treated. You stick it in a big stockpot. You heat it up to medium heat. Once it reaches about 190 degrees, you take it off the heat. You stir in some citric acid. Citric acid is completely natural. It's really easy to find. And if you don't have citric acid, you can actually use some lemon juice or vinegar instead. So super easy, you don't have to have anything crazy fancy. You let the acid sit in the milk for five to 10 minutes, you're going to see some fluffy little magical curds form.

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And when you see that happen, you take it off the heat, you pour the whole kit and caboodle through some butter muslin or a clean tea towel. And that is going to allow the whey to drip out the bottom. It's going to capture all the ricotta, and you kind of hang that up. And you let that drip for a good couple hours until all the whey is done dripping out. And then you scrape the ricotta out of the towel and you can put it in your fridge or your freezer to use for later. So super simple. You don't have to go buy it at the store and you don't have to use cottage cheese anymore. Cause now you know how to make the real deal. So those are my three recipes I think you could easily make this week or next week. So I'm going to challenge you to pick one. Give it a try.

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If you've been on the fence about home dairy or you're thinking you have to wait until you get a goat or a cow to make this happen, you don't. You can absolutely start now. Your family will love you for it and it's really, really rewarding to learn how to take this simple ingredient that is milk and turn it into all sorts of amazing things. Now as you saw, it does not take a whole lot of special equipment to do this at all. You just need a few cultures and to make that as easy as possible for you because I know firsthand are not always easily easy to find locally. I partnered up with my favorite cheese making supply

company. It's called new England cheese making supply and we put everything into a little package for you at a discount. And this is just for prairie homestead readers.

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In this package, you're going to get what you need to make the ricotta, the yogurt, and the buttermilk. It's very inexpensive. If you want to check out this package and also get the recipes that I promised today, go over to theprairiehomestead.com/cheese you get the recipes, the information on the little kit, and of course a discount code because I wanted to make it even easier for you. And that is all for today's episode. Thanks so much for listening. I appreciate you hanging out here with me. If you found this episode useful, I would appreciate it so much. If you drop a quick review over on your favorite podcast player just to, other people can find us and bring homesteading into their lives and that's all for now. But I will definitely chat with you in the next episode of the old fashioned on purpose podcast.