

FOODSERVICE EAST PRESENTS

SECRETS OF **SUCCESS**

November 2012

An ongoing series of interviews with chefs, restaurateurs and foodservice operators, Secrets of Success looks at the paths taken to professional recognition and acclaim.



Dane Huebner Cheesemaker, Grafton Village Cheese By Foodservice East

Dane Huebner set out to be a microbiologist but wound up making award-winning cheeses for Grafton Village Cheese. Discovering fermented foods more than halfway around the world led him back home to create fermented dairy products, he says.

FOODSERVICE EAST SECRETS OF SUCCESS

FSE: What led to your becoming a cheesemaker?

HUEBNER: I had worked in a couple of labs. But It wasn't until After helping my brother move from Hanoi, Vietnam to Bangkok, Thailand, which took 3 months, where I saw and tasted so many fermented fish, seafood and vegetable dishes. I though I should go back home, Wisconsin, and create some new fermented dairy products.

FSE: How do you find inspirations for the various new cheeses such as Red Vask?

HUEBNER: I wanted something that was semi-soft and a bit stinky, made with sheep milk.

FSE: What's the 'secret' of your success?

HUEBNER: Combining science and culinary art.

FSE: What's the most enjoyable part of what you do?

HUEBNER: Creating new cheese.

FSE: If you weren't a cheesemaker, what would you like to be?

HUEBNER: An insect farmer or a vet.

FSE: Do the differences in the cheeses reflect the cows' diets?

HUEBNER: You can taste, see and smell the differences in feed. For example, pastured milk is much more yellow and grassy.

FSE: If no two of the various cheeses ever come out the same, what are the factors that influence how they'll taste?

HUEBNER: This question needs a whole book to explain but simply there are hundreds of variables and those are the ones we know about.

FSE: How is the cave-aged line different from the other cheeses?

HUEBNER: The cave-aged line is aged in the open air exposed to different environmental conditions.

FSE: What would be the most important factors for restaurants in pairing cheeses with wines?

HUEBNER: Not to use big reds that hides the cheese.

FSE: What role does tradition play in creating each new cheese?

HUEBNER: It's usually the starting base.

FSE: What are your favorite cheeses?

HUEBNER: Shepsog and Alsatian Muenster.

FSE: What's your favorite wine/cheese pairing?

HUEBNER: Alsatian Muenster with an Alsatian Gewurtztraminer.