

Ideas for your Cream

Many of you are new to unhomogenized milk. The milk you are enjoying now has a good amount of cream on top (Jersey cows produce a lot of cream). Here is some basic information, tips, and ideas for you.

Some of the cream that is on top of your milk when you pick it up will redistribute during transport home. When you get home with your milk, it is a good idea to let it sit a few hours or ideally overnight to let the cream rise to the top again. The longer it sits before you skim the cream, the thicker the cream will get.

Use a ladle to skim the cream off and put it into a CLEAN jar. If you get some milk in it, just let it sit again (in the refrigerator) and it will separate again. I have heard of people using a turkey baster to suck up the small amount of milk that settles to the bottom of your cream jar.

What to do with your cream:

1. **Stir it back into the milk and enjoy!** If the milk sits long enough the cream will not fully reincorporate (little lumps) but there is nothing wrong with it.
2. **Enjoy it in your coffee or tea.**
3. **Pour it over fresh fruit – Yum!**
4. **Make whipped cream** to garnish desserts (note: If you have trouble getting the cream to whip, you probably have too much milk in with it. The thicker the cream, the more easily it will whip. A cold bowl and beater also help. Sometimes cream that is too fresh will not whip well. I don't know why but sometimes letting it sit a day in the refrigerator will help it whip or turn to butter more easily.) You can also whip cultured cream (see below) with a bit of honey and vanilla – it is like a little dollop of cheesecake – so good!
5. **Make ice cream.** There are many good ice cream makers available. Follow the instructions in the recipe book that comes with it or use a recipe of your own. I often reduce the amount of cream and correspondingly increase the amount of milk. For example, if the recipe calls for 2 cups cream and 1 cup milk, I will use 1 3/4 cups cream and 1 1/4 cups milk instead. The reason for this is our cream is higher in butterfat than what you can buy in the grocery store. Subsequently, as the mixture chills and gets stirred, little clumps of butter can form and stick to the beater.
6. **Make cultured cream.** This is essentially Crème Fraiche (European-Style sour cream). It is thinner than what you are used to but very delicious as a garnish for soups or Mexican dishes. To make it, put one cup cream in a VERY CLEAN jar. Stir in one tablespoon of homemade or purchased buttermilk or a tablespoon of Crème Fraiche from a previous batch. Let it sit in a warm spot (72-75 degrees) for 18-24 hours. Smell it. If it smells good like buttermilk or sour cream, good work. If it smells bad (I've never actually had this happen), throw it out and clean your jar better or use fresher cream next

time. There are also good sour cream cultures available but this is an easy way to get started.

7. **Make butter.** To make butter, place cream in a VERY CLEAN mixer bowl or blender. If using a stand mixer, use the whisk attachment. Whip it on medium-high speed. It will first turn into whipped cream. Keep whipping. If you are using thick cream without a lot of milk, it will turn to butter very quickly. The mixer breaks up the butter into little bits so it takes more practice to recognize when you have butter. The butter looks yellow and feels, well, butter-like between your fingers. The advantage of using a mixer over a blender is that you can deal with more volume at one time. If using a blender, make sure it is CLEAN, then dump in your cream. Blend until you have whipped cream. If the cream stops moving, add some ice water to get it going again. It is a little easier to tell when you've achieved butter if you are using a blender. The bits of butter are larger and if you added water, you will get a definite separation of solids and liquid. Once you have butter (using either method), pour it into a CLEAN metal, fine mesh strainer. Let the liquid drain a minute over the sink or a bowl. Sometimes I rinse the butter "curds" if I've used the blender. Use COLD water. This does not work well if you've used a mixer but don't worry, it is not a necessary step.

Now the work begins. Place the butter in a CLEAN ceramic or metal bowl. Tip the bowl away from you and begin to work the butter with a CLEAN wooden spoon. You are mashing (this is a technical term) the butter pieces together and squeezing out the liquid. As the liquid comes out of the butter, dump it out. Keep working the butter against the side of the bowl with a spoon until all the liquid is out (or until you get tired). I often rinse the butter with a little cold water right in the bowl and work it again (repeat two or three times). If your butter starts to get "sticky" put it in the fridge in the bowl for 5 minutes or so to let it firm up. If you get interrupted, put it in the fridge to keep it cold.

Now you may add a little salt or leave your butter unsalted. If you salt it, go easy on the salt at first. The salt will dissolve and distribute over the next few hours and will taste "saltier". If you use this butter for baking, be aware that it has a higher butterfat content than most commercial butters. You may have to adjust recipes (like cookies) so they do not come out too short.

Enjoy your cream however you decide to use it.

The cream has the highest concentration of the "good stuff" from the grass the cows are eating (CLA, omega-3's, beta carotene, etc.).

Please feel free to contact James Ranch through their [website](#) anytime. We want you to really enjoy your milk and cream!