

FIREFLY FARMS CREAMERY & MARKET

Maryland's Award Winning Creamery & Retail Shop in Their New Home in Accident, MD



Left to right: PR & Marketing Director, Pablo Solanet; President, Mike Koch; Director of Operations, Matt Cedro; and Director of Sales & Marketing, Andrea Cedro.

Photography by **Lance C. Bell**

FireFly Farms has been passionate about the art of handcrafting goat's milk cheeses for nearly a decade now. Maryland's first and premier artisan cheese producer, their cheeses have been celebrated for winning both national and international cheese competitions beginning in 2002 with their launch. FireFly Farms' nuanced line of cheeses range from fresh and flavored chèvre, to soft ripened and washed rind cheeses, to longer ripened firmer cheeses aged as long as a full year. After two years of planning and construction, the FireFly team relocated its creamery operations to their second and current facility on South Main Street, in Accident, MD.

This new state of the art, revamped building houses all of FireFly Farms' cheese manufacturing activities. It includes milk receiving & holding tanks, a central cheese manufacturing area, three climate controlled aging rooms and packaging, shipping and storage areas. Most recently

the building – with a long history – was a machine shop. So, the FireFly team commissioned Lakeside Architects and local general contractor Lorne Brenneman of Lee's Drywall for the design, layout, and construction of the building. "This was a fun project, even though we encountered some unique, challenging issues along the way," said Brenneman. "And I now know more about making cheese than I ever thought I would," Brenneman added.

This new location also houses FireFly Farms' flagship retail location: The FireFly Farms Market. Emphasizing its commitment to handcrafted arts, FireFly Farms' Market integrates observation windows allowing visitors to watch the artisan cheese making and cheese aging processes.

As well, the retail space incorporates unique, custom-designed artwork for visitors to enjoy. Two hand-carved goat totems greet customers at the entrance of the FireFly Market. In the shop a mural depicts a whimsical landscape

of the FireFly Farms' cheese making allegory for visitors to observe. The 21- by 5-foot installation includes figurative characters such as a milk maiden, a goat herder, curious goats, and, of course, cheese, wine and fireflies.

Mike Koch, President of FireFly Farms, explains why it was important for the new facility to be an interactive and multi-functional environment, "Part of our desire to re-locate to a new plant wasn't just about being able to increase production, although that is definitely an advantage... we wanted FireFly Farms to become another interesting and desirable destination for Garrett County visitors. This region is rich with natural beauty and ripe with potential for other businesses to thrive. My hope as an entrepreneur is to show others the reward that comes with the risk of starting a small business."

One of the most appetizing features available at the FireFly Farms' Market are seasonally curated wine and cheese pairing menus. These custom experiences have quickly become a popular afternoon activity for county

residents and visitors to Mountain Maryland's Deep Creek Lake resort area. FireFly Farms' Director of Sales and Marketing, Andrea Cedro mentioned, "these seasonal pairing experiences allow us to introduce our guests to a new set of carefully selected cheeses, wines, and beers... we'll focus on celebrating the best of the season in all our pairing selections, and provide our guests with a new experience each time they make a pairing reservation!"

Pairing reservations can be made for groups from two to six and may include three or four cheese pairings.

Cheeses can be paired with fine wines or craft beers. Pairing guests are seated at the Market's farm table with a direct view into the manufacturing and aging rooms. The light dining experience includes other delectable treats selected from the FireFly Farms Market: crackers or fresh bread, membrillo or fig jam, charcuterie or cured meats, olives, chocolates and chilled bottled water. Pairing guests also receive a 10 percent discount coupon on all in-store items purchased on the day of their reservation. Make your reservation for this unforgettable Garrett County experience any Thursday, Friday, or Saturday afternoon (301-746-8188).



Interior and exterior views show the unique character of Firefly Farms Creamery & Market — specializing in a variety of goat's milk cheese made on location at 107 South Main Street, Accident, Maryland 21520. Also visit our website at www.fireflyfarms.com.