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to market

Crackers for quality cheese

Cheese isn't merely a good accompaniment to the odd cracker for Cappariss master cheesemaker Aled Hoggett. For the Hoggett family, cheesemaking has become a life passion and a source of great achievement.

Hoggett has been making goat's milk cheese at the family property near Gloucester for six years, and began selling Cappariss cheeses at the Capital Region Farmers Market at exhibition Park last year.

The family produces and sells a wide range of pure goat's milk, and blended goat and cow milk cheeses. The goat's cheeses include a creamy fresh cheese, a classic goat feta, a creamy soft-rind white cheese, and a mild, soft, well-ripened blue vein.

The Cappariss tibbuc is made from a blend of goat and cow milk. It combines the long, creamy texture of a mature cow's milk camembert with the flavour highlights of a goat's milk cheese.

Hoggett previously worked for Forests NSW and put aside an almost completed PhD in forestry at the University of British Columbia in 2001 to turn to cheesemaking.

"Specialty cheesemaking is a way of life," he says. "It starts with healthy land and healthy animals. Each handmade cheese is imbued with the individual style of the country, season, dairy herd and cheesemaker. "As a result, no two cheeses made by hand are exactly the same – and we wouldn't want them to be."

The Hoggetts take great care in farming their herd of pure Anglo-Nubian goats, a herd of 67 milking does, 30 kids (future milkers) and six bucks.

Cappariss has won numerous awards for the cheeses, including five gold and 20 silver medals, mostly from the Sydney Royal Cheese and Dairy Produce Show. Hoggett was awarded the Australian Cheese Board Trophy in 2006 for one of the top five cheeses exhibited.

Cappariss cheeses sell for \$9 to \$15, depending on quantity.

■ This article was contributed by the Capital Region Farmers Market, open Saturdays 8am-11am.