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| MILK | Pasteurised cows milk |
| RENNET | Traditional animal rennet |
| MADE BY | Dane Hopkins, Catherine Mead & the crew at Lynher Dairy |
| REGION | Lynher Dairy near Pengreep, Cornwall |
| FLAVOUR & TEXTURE | The flavours are gently lactic but with rich, creamy and slightly sweet undertones. The texture crumbles very slightly but is moist and rich. |

Cornish Yarg was first made in 1983. The Prince of Wales' Estate, the Duchy of Cornwall approached Lynher Dairies who were already producing pasteurised milk and suggested a venture into cheesemaking. The basis for Yarg is a 13th century recipe that is a cross between Caerphilly and Wensleydale. However the nettling is a 20th century addition. The name Yarg is an inversion of the name of the first cheesemaker, Mr Gray. The current cheesemakers are the Meads who farm a mixed herd of Ayrshire, Jersey and Friesian cows in west Cornwall, the most south-westerly point of England.

Their cows are grass-fed and particular attention is given to the mineral content of the soil and thus the pasture. Ben Meade has researched how the mineral and nutritional quality of his pasture affects the health of his herd and the flavour and health giving qualities of the milk.

Apart from the nettling, Cornish Yarg is very similar to Caerphilly: curd is set, cut, drained and textured like a caerphilly. At Lynher Dairy, as in many Caerphilly Dairies these processes are done mechanically. The curd is then packed into 9lb moulds and pressed overnight before brining for 18 hours. So far this is a very similar process to Caerphilly

making. After brining it begins to be different. The cheeses are left to dry for 2 days and then it is time for nettling.

Traditionally, Cornish farms are divided into small fields or paddocks by stone walls (known locally as hedges). The hedges provide shelter for wildlife and plants and the stinging nettle in particular is a common sight. Nettles start growing in April and flourish in the damp and relatively warm Cornish climate. By the middle of May the leaves are large enough to pick.

The pickers go out on a daily basis when it isn't raining and pick individual nettle leaves. No stalks or stems are allowed, neither are leaves with holes in or dirty leaves. They are stacked with the veins upwards in the palm of the picker's gloved hand and placed in a basket once there's a handful. The stacks of leaves are tightly packed in cling film and frozen (which removes the sting) ready for when they're needed. The individual leaves are peeled from the stack, dipped into a sterilising solution and applied in concentric circles to the cheese, with a brush. A practised nettler can nettle 6 cheeses in an hour. After nettling, the cheeses are put into the maturing store where they grow a mould coat over the nettles.

