

SHROPSHIRE BLUE



MILK	Pasteurised cows milk
RENNET	Traditional animal rennet
MADE BY	Billy Kevan and his team
REGION	Colston Bassett & District Dairy, Colston Bassett, Nottinghamshire
FLAVOUR & TEXTURE	Creamy, savoury cheese with a slight yeasty bite from the blueing.

Shropshire Blue sounds like a very old traditional cheese but was in fact invented by a Cheshire cheese grader called Dennis Biggins in the 1930s. Effectively it is Stilton with annatto colouring to make it orange. The annatto has a mildly spicy flavour and is considered to soften the texture a little but its effects on the flavour are not very strong.

Our Shropshire Blue is made at the Colston Bassett Dairy. As Colston Bassett are some of the last Stilton-makers to hand ladle the curd of their cheese from the vats to the draining tables where it acidifies overnight, they also do the same thing for their Shropshire Blue. As with Stilton, it lends a buttery creaminess to the texture, which Shropshire Blue from other dairies does not have.

Another distinctive feature about Colston Bassett's Shropshire Blue is its rennet. They make an animal rennet cheese for us. Animal rennet is generally used by the most exacting cheesemakers and considered to make the best cheese. When Colston Bassett started using it again for their Stilton, those cheeses had a more structured consistency and a cool creaminess which the vegetable rennet cheeses lacked. We have noticed the same with the Shropshire Blue also. As it is still early days with regard to the animal rennet cheeses

and they are only made for us, we have to give Billy projections of how many cheeses we can sell. For the moment, we're keeping these quite moderate so that he won't make cheese he can't then sell to us. As this is the case, if we need more cheese, we have to buy some vegetable rennet cheeses. We will be able to advise you as to what we have in stock and help you track down the animal rennet cheeses in particular.

