



Conserving our natural resources through education, demonstration, and collaboration.

## Here's to Doing It Our Way: Southern Whey



One maple-pecan and crispy country ham-encrusted ball of cheese over the holidays was all that we needed to become instant fans of Southern Whey, a new Southern Pines shop opening on Broad Street in early February.

Owners Susan and Steve Peters, newly relocated from Manhattan, are inspired by the traditional community grocer who knew your grandfather hated turnips, and could recite your great-aunt's pickled okra recipe. They seek to be an outpost not of "gourmet fare", but of real, regional and artisanal specialties. In a welcoming, casual setting, the store will offer local cheeses, cured meats sourced from neighboring counties, and yes, maybe a jar of two of that pickled okra.

"We're incredibly excited about the food culture that's evolving in this area", says Susan, a Southern Pines native. "There's a real celebration of locally sourced fruits, vegetables, and meats. It's inspiring and one of the reasons we chose to settle here in Southern Pines. Steve and I are really looking forward to being a part of all this."

No standardized, industrialized fare at Southern Whey. Instead, showcased are foods that celebrate the great culinary traditions of our south; foods that are reminders of our shared culture and underscore the rich agricultural heritage of our Sandhills community. Says Susan, "We expect our inventory to change and evolve based on supply, seasonality and most importantly –

customer tastes and demands. We're eager to work with local organizations like Sustainable Sandhills and Sandhills Farm to Table, as well as with local farmers, chefs and other Farm to Fork fans to reflect what's happening locally with food."



Here are Susan's soon-to-be-famous cheese balls, which we hope to be stocking up on very soon. Both flavors are a Southern take on the classic cheddar cheese ball, as well as a rich, pungent blue cheese option. Add crispy bits of country ham and candied nuts to both ...um, what more can we say?

**Cheddar:** *Our Southern interpretation of a classic...*

A three-year Cheddar and full-cream Gouda, both from Wisconsin, are combined with butter-like Kenny's St. Jerome from Kentucky. The cheeses are hand-grated, gently blended with chopped pimentos and a smidge of coarse mustard, then topped-off with crispy, cured ham from Johnston County and toasted maple-pecans.

**Blue Cheese:** *If you love blue, this cheese ball's for you...*

A crumbly Stilton — hailing from one of only six dairies in England licensed to make this name-protected cheese — meets hand-grated full-cream Gouda from Wisconsin and butter-like Kenny's St. Jerome from Kentucky. The three cheeses are firmly pressed to mingle the flavors then dressed in crispy, cured ham from Johnston County with toasted walnut and dried fig candy.

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Sustainable Sandhills  
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