



## PRESS RELEASE

### **Brits strike gold at World Cheese Awards**

The resurgence of quality British cheese-making was confirmed at the 2009 World Cheese Awards in Gran Canaria last week, with 28 Brits winning gold medals and two named among the 10 best in the world.

Saint Giles, an organic cow's milk cheese produced by High Weald Dairy in East Sussex, was placed 5<sup>th</sup> out of nearly 2,500 entries in the world's largest cheese competition, which is organised by the UK's Guild of Fine Food. St Giles is a semi-soft creamy cheese in the style of a St Paulin

The traditional Blue Stilton from Long Clawson Dairy in Leicestershire came ninth.

Long Clawson picked up a total of four gold medals, closely followed by another Stilton producer, Quenby Hall, which took three.

Cornwall's Lynher Dairies took gold for both its entries, Cornish Yarg and Garlic Yarg, and cheddar makers Keen's and Dairy Crest took two apiece. This year's World Champion was a Canadian goat's milk cheese, Le Cendrillon, from La Maison Alexis de Portneuf in Quebec.

The annual competition was staged this year in Las Palmas on October 1st as part of a three-day cheese festival. It was only the second time the awards have been held outside Britain in their 21-year history, and attracted cheeses from 34 countries.

Over 150 judges from 24 nations, including Mexico, South Africa, Japan and Australia, sampled 2,440 entries in a marathon tasting session before agreeing on the bronze, silver and gold winners. Around 140 gold medals were awarded and each of these cheeses was tasted for a second time by an international jury of 13 experts before the main trophy winners were named.

Guild of Fine Food national director Bob Farrand said: "This was the most international team of judges ever assembled, with representatives from four continents involved in choosing the World Champion. It's the largest and most cosmopolitan cheese awards scheme on the planet."

A gala awards dinner took place after the judging at the Hotel Santa Catalina in Las Palmas where the judges were joined by a further 150 guests including the Canary Islands' President and senior government ministers. This year's awards formed part of a wider global event organised by the Guild of Fine Food, including an international cheese conference and the World Cheese Festival, an exhibition of cheese and wine for both trade and consumers.

The awards featured on all local and most mainland Spanish TV networks and in a group of islands where per capita cheese consumption is among the highest in Europe, over 15,000 visitors packed the Alfredo Kraus Auditorium for the three-day festival, setting a new record for attendance for any event at this venue.

Edited highlights of the judging and the awards dinner can be viewed at [www.finefoodworld.co.uk](http://www.finefoodworld.co.uk)

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### **The Guild of Fine Food**

The Guild of Fine Food promotes excellence in speciality food and drink through its magazines, training programmes, awards, exhibitions and other food events.

The Guild of Fine Food is the trade organisation of the UK speciality food & drink sector, with a membership of around 1,300 fine food retailers, producers and distributors. As well as running

the World Cheese Awards, it organises the Great Taste Awards, which attract around 5,000 product entries annually.

[www.finefoodworld.co.uk](http://www.finefoodworld.co.uk)