

Have you herd?

The Waldo Way dairy pairs teaching and tasty products

Story by ANDREA AGARDY

NaRisa Waldo traded her classroom for a farm, but her devotion to education is unwavering. Today, instead of instructing classes of future medical professionals, Waldo teaches the community about where food actually comes from.

Alongside her son, Trenton Montgomery, she owns and operates The Waldo Way, a dairy farm and artisan bakery. What started as a small operation on the family's Mineola property has become a herd of more than 125 cows and a wide range of products available at two locations. The Waldo Way offers grass-fed meats, local honey, granola, baked goods, milk-based skin care products and more.

FINDING A NEW PATH

Waldo was working as a professor at the University of Texas at Tyler College of Nursing when she purchased her first cows in 2012. She credits the decision to divine inspiration. "It was God," she says. "That's about as close as I can get, because there's nobody with a sane mind that would do what I do unless God had designed them to do it."

With a new path charted, Waldo, who had no prior experience in dairy farming, bought five Guernsey cows from a breeder in Janesville, Wisconsin, and set about teaching herself the business. "I didn't know anything, but I was willing to learn about cows, and she was willing to sell five cows to me," Waldo says. "I still teach myself something every day."

All dairy products at The Waldo Way come from milk from Guernsey cows. The cows, which take their name from the Isle of Guernsey, one of the Channel Islands between France and England where the breed originated, produce especially nutrient-rich milk.



The Waldo Way's herd is comprised of Guernsey cows, which produce a nutrient-rich milk.

Photography contributed by of The Waldo Way

"It's called 'the golden milk' because they have a very high amount of beta carotene, which makes the milk gold," Waldo says. "They're a heritage breed, and their milk is higher in every macro- and micronutrient and vitamin. It has more cream than any other milk, and if you're in the nutrition business of raw milk, the very, very high fat is actually what you're looking for."

All of The Waldo Way's dairy offerings are made of raw milk, meaning it hasn't

been pasteurized. The milk is bottled or made into products like kefir and butter right on the farm.

"Pasteurized milk is a highly processed substance, where ours is milked the same day as it's consumed," Waldo says. "People choose raw milk because of the health benefits. The taste is phenomenal. It's clean, it's fresh, and our cows are humanely treated. Those are some of the many reasons why people feel compelled to find good milk."