

PROPERTIES OF THE YOGURT

Cream on Top? Whey on top?

- **Cream on top** occurs when the cream in whole fat yogurt is allowed to naturally rise to the surface rather than being stirred back in.
- **Whey** is a thin liquid often found as a separate layer in yogurt that is a byproduct of culturing milk and contains vitamins, minerals, proteins, and probiotics. It can be stirred back in or drained off.

Live and Active Cultures/Probiotic?

Live and active bacterial cultures (“probiotics”) support our digestive systems.

- **At least 2 strains of bacteria**, *Lactobacillus bulgaricus* and *Streptococcus thermophiles*, are required by the FDA in all products sold as yogurt. Some yogurt producers include additional strains.
- **All the yogurt sold at City Market contains live and active cultures.**

Added Sugar/Flavorings?

Since yogurt is tart by nature, sweeteners are a popular addition to yogurt. If you buy sweetened/flavored yogurt:

- **Look for natural and organic sweeteners on the ingredient label** – maple syrup, honey, organic sugar, and whole fruit are good choices
- **Compare grams of sugar on the nutrition labels** – Plain yogurt has 7-9 grams of sugar from naturally occurring lactose and every 4 grams of sugar beyond that is equal to 1 teaspoon of added sugar
- **Consider buying plain yogurt and mixing in your own flavorings**

Other Cultured Dairy Products

- **Kefir:** Kefir is cultured with a combination of bacteria and yeast, called a SCOBY. The cultures ferment almost all of the lactose, and kefir ends up 99% lactose-free. It has a higher probiotic count than most yogurt, and can be made from goat, sheep, or cows’ milk.
- **Labneh:** Labneh is a Middle Eastern savory take on yogurt that resembles cream cheese—falling in the middle of the spectrum between yogurt and cheese. It’s cultured with a starter used for yogurt, not cheese. Salt is added to plain yogurt and then is strained for 2-3 days.

About City Market, Onion River Co-op

City Market, Onion River Co-op is a consumer cooperative, with over 11,300 Members, selling wholesome food and other products while building a vibrant, empowered community and a healthier world, all in a sustainable manner. Located in downtown Burlington, Vermont, City Market provides a large selection of organic and conventional foods, and thousands of local and Vermont-made products.

Visit City Market, Onion River Co-op online at www.CityMarket.coop or call 802-861-9700.

City Market's Yogurt



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Choosing a container of yogurt these days can be more than a little daunting, given the many varieties and the many claims made on the labels!

Inside, we'll see how two main things account for most of the information on yogurt labels:

- 1. The properties of the milk that goes into the yogurt, and**
- 2. How the yogurt is made.**

What is Yogurt?

Yogurt is made by culturing milk with one or more strains of bacteria. These bacteria consume much of the sugar, or lactose, in milk, creating tart and tangy lactic acid, which thickens and naturally preserves the milk.

Health Benefits

There are many health benefits to consuming yogurt with live, active cultures, including:

- **Probiotic** – replenishes the bacterial cultures in our digestive systems that aid with digestion and immunity
- **Supports the digestion of lactose** – contains live enzymes that help break down the lactose in milk
- **High protein** – higher in protein than a serving of milk, with live enzymes that help break down the casein in milk
- **High calcium** – higher in calcium than milk, and the live cultures help increase the absorption of calcium into our bodies

PROPERTIES OF THE MILK IN YOGURT

Type of Dairy/Non-Dairy?

Yogurt may be made from cow milk, goat milk, sheep milk, or non-dairy milk such as soy, almond, or coconut. Besides differences in taste, there are differences in nutritional properties. Sheep and goat's milk yogurt are:

- **Higher in protein** than cow's milk (sheep's milk has 86% more protein)
- **Higher in certain types of minerals**, particularly calcium
- **Higher in "short" and "medium" chain fatty acids** that are more quickly absorbed for a source of energy
- **More easily digested** because the fat molecules are smaller. Some children and adults who are unable to tolerate cow milk will tolerate goat or sheep milk.

For those who cannot tolerate the protein or sugars in milk, or who avoid dairy products, live cultures may be added to almond, soy, and coconut milk.



Single Source/Vermont Milk?

Because Vermont is a dairy state, there are many choices for yogurt made with Vermont milk. Local farms that make yogurt (single source or mostly single source):

- **Butterworks Farm, Polymeadows Farm**
- Yogurt companies that use some Vermont milk:
- **Cabot, Green Mountain Creamery, Stonyfield**

Organic Milk?

Organic standards require that organic dairy cows:

- **Must graze outside part of the year and eat organic feed** grown without chemical fertilizers, pesticides, or GMO's
- **Must not be given antibiotics or artificial growth hormones** to boost milk production

Pastured or 100% Grassfed?

Pastured means cows, sheep, and goats graze on grass a portion of the year and may be fed a combination of hay, corn, soy, and grain the rest of the year. 100% grassfed means that cows are fed only grass. Pastured animals produce milk with:

- **A more optimal balance of fats** (ratio of Omega 3 to Omega 6 fatty acids); **more of a certain type of fat** found mainly in meat, milk, and eggs from pastured animals (conjugated linoleic acid or "CLA"); and **a richer, creamier color** (more beta carotene and Vitamin E in the milk)
- **Maple Hill Creamery** in upstate New York produces 100% grassfed yogurt.

Hormone-Free?

Hormone-free means that the dairy cows are not given recombinant bovine growth hormones (rBST or rBGH) to increase milk production. Consumer pressure has forced many companies to switch to hormone-free milk.

- Dairy products that make non-rBST claims on their products are required by the FDA to also state, *"No significant difference has been shown between milk derived from*

rBST-treated and non rBST-treated cows."

- **With the exception of Yoplait, all the yogurt that City Market sells is made from milk that is hormone-free.**

Non-Fat, Low-fat, Whole Milk?

All milk starts out as whole milk but, due to consumer demand, the cream is usually skimmed to produce non-fat, low-fat, and whole milk varieties. Whole milk yogurt is:

- **higher in calories than plain non-fat yogurt**
- **more filling;** and
- **naturally higher in certain nutrients** found in the fat, such a vitamins A and D and Omega 3 fatty acids

Strained or unstrained?

Yogurt that has been strained removes some of the liquid, which is called the whey. Straining produces a thicker and firmer texture, increasing the protein, but will lose some of the calcium as it's primarily found in the whey. Strained yogurt includes varieties like Greek and Icelandic yogurt. You can also strain your own regular yogurt at home through cheesecloth.

Type	Strained/Unstrained	Consistency	Taste	Milk
Icelandic (Skyr)	Strained	Thicker than Greek	Creamy, smooth, not too sweet	Non-Fat
Greek	Strained	Thick	Creamy and tart	Non-fat usually, but can be made with low or full fat milk
Australian	Unstrained	Loose, but creamy	Velvety	Low or full fat
Labneh	Strained	Stiff	Creamy, salty, tangy	Usually non - or low fat