

# ILLINOISouth Tourism Times

## ILLINOIS MADE

When you think of California, what comes to mind? You most likely think of sun, surf and wine country. How about Texas? Maybe the panhandle and BBQ? But how about Illinois? Abe Lincoln? The Chicago style hot dog? Deep dish pizza? ILLINOISouth offers dozens of delicious food offerings outside of the standard issue hot dog and pizza. Welcome to Made in ILLINOISouth.

The Marcoot family story begins in 1840 when their ancestors sailed from Switzerland to New Orleans. They traveled by steamship up the Mississippi River to the Bond-Madison county area of southern Illinois, finally settling in Greenville—all with a Jersey calf in

tow. Fast-forward to 2010, seventh generation sisters, Beth and Amy along with their parents, launched a cheese-making operation that produces 23 artisanal cheeses in their high-end facility. Their cheese is made solely from the milk of their own registered Jersey cows who are primarily grass-fed, enjoying only natural nutrition; free of any added hormones. The cheeses are aged in a man-made underground cave modeled after the cheese caves found in Switzerland, providing the optimal environment for the cheese-aging process. The creamery has large viewing windows where visitors can watch the cheese-making process first-hand. Guests are welcome to watch their “field-to-fork” video on how their cheese is crafted and shop in their on-farm store. For tours, contact the creamery. Tours include a stop at the calf barn, the milking parlor and a sampling of their cheeses.

### SALSA ROSE

Heading south to Mascoutah, James and Hope Reinneck have been making salsa since the 1980's. Over the years, James estimates he has given out hundreds of samples of his home-

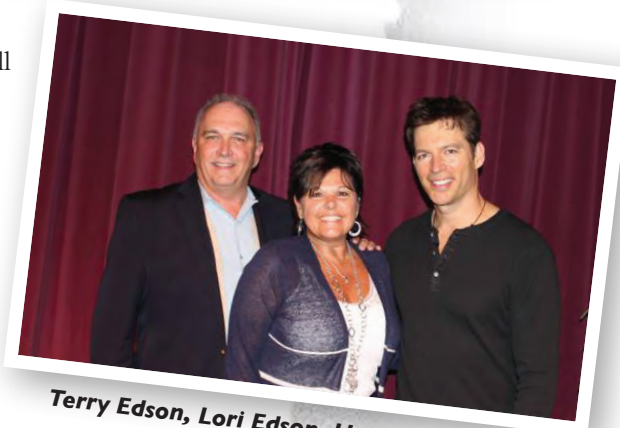
made product, and that, in part, is how the couple's business venture was launched. In 2012, the first batch of “Salsa Rose” was ready for distribution. Today, the business continues to expand. Product line include: salsa flavored Hickory Smoked Meat Sticks and Salsa Turkey Jerky. Locally, you'll find Reinneck Ranch products at Rural King and Schnuck's stores along with some specialty shops and farmers' markets across the state.

### HORSERADISH & POPCORN

We've covered cheese and salsa but those are just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to agricultural goods produced for ILLINOISouth. If you haven't heard, more than 60 percent of the world's horseradish is grown in our region! Farms like JR Kelly's in Collinsville are famous for producing the root. In fact, there is an annual festival held in Collinsville celebrating the root! Along with horseradish and all sorts of other yummy produce, did you know that special black popcorn is grown exclusively right in our own back yard?



Michael W. Smith, Terry Edson, Jeff Foxworthy



Terry Edson, Lori Edson, Harry Connick, Jr.

In the small Southern Illinois town of St. Francisville circa 1963, Black Jewell Popcorn began growing and selling a unique and proprietary strain of black kernel popcorn. It pops snow white and virtually free of hulls. Over the past 50 years, Black Jewell Popcorn has grown steadily from a company serving smaller rural farm communities, to one that harvests and offers a broad line of Black Jewell popcorns across the Midwest.

*continued on page 3*



Country Bob's



Amy Marcoot, Audie Wall, Beth Marcoot