

## Making Vegetarian Rennet from Plants

<http://www.countryfarm-lifestyles.com/rennet.html> (toward bottom of page)

If you wish to make a vegetarian rennet you can do so using the following plants:

- nettle leaves
- butterwort leaves
- mallow
- yarrow
- teasel
- knapweed
- lady's bedstraw
- thistles
- fig tree bark

There are 2 ways of using the plants. One of the simplest ways is to take enough plant matter and crush the plants in a large pestle and mortar until you get enough of the juice from the plant which then will allow you to coagulate the milk.

Another way is to use the leaves dry. If you are making rennet from nettles, once you have harvested the leaves chop them finely and leave them to dry. Then make 6 cups of very strong nettle tea and mix with 4 cups of unionized salt. There is no specific amount for each quart of milk used but add just enough to get the coagulation that you need.

You will have to experiment and add 1 tablespoon every 15 minutes to judge. Just remember to keep your milk at the required temperature, while you wait.

The only drawback of using vegetarian rennets for hard cheese that need to be aged for a long time, they tend to develop a slightly bitter taste.

Final Tips:

Whatever rennet you use, if you store it in a fridge, your rennet will last 3 months. Some say up to a year, however, 3 months on the safe side as the older the rennet, the more bitter your cheese will be.

Don't expose your liquid rennet to light as the light will cause it to break down.

Remember to bring your rennet that has been in the fridge back up to room temperature before you use it, as temperatures below 50 degrees F. will cause the activity of the rennet to be suppressed.

If you are using a recipe that is using rennet in tablet form, you can substitute 1/4 teaspoon normal strength liquid rennet for half a rennet tablet.