Classroom Activity — Making Butter

Do you know that you possibly spread coalesced fat droplets on your bread?

You can spread your toast with the results of this experiment.

You will need:

- 300ml of cream
- A large jar with a Secure lid
- A sprinkle of salt
- A new chux cloth
- A plastic jug
- A wooden spoon
- A wooden or plastic Mixing bowl

Procedure:

1. Take the cream out of the fridge and let it stand for 30 minutes.
2. Pour the cream into the jar so it is one-third full and screw the lid on tightly.
3. Shake the jar for about 20 minutes and watch the cream change form. It will begin to look like whipped cream, but as you continue shaking the jar small granules of butter will start to form.
4. When the granules are the size of apple seeds, stop shaking the jar.
5. Place the chux cloth over the top of the plastic jar and pour the contents of the jar into the cloth.
6. The butter granules will be caught in the chux cloth and the buttermilk will drain into the jug.
7. Wash the butter granules in cold water to rinse off any remaining buttermilk.
8. Put the butter granules in the bowl, sprinkle on the salt and mash into the butter with the wooden spoon. Make sure it is worked in evenly and pack together.
9. Form the butter into any shape you like and put it into the fridge to harden.

Teacher’s Notes:

How does it work?

Cream is basically tiny droplets permanently floating in water. When you force enough of these together, globs of butter form and separate from the water. This is called coalescing.

Your butter may be lighter and darker than the butter you usually get from the supermarket. That is because the colour of pure butter depends on the breed of cow the milk is from and the food the cows have eaten. Butter bought from the shop might have dye added to make it a uniform colour, as expected by the consumer.

Related School Journal Articles:

Make your own butter, 83 2:3 p 30.
Visiting a dairy factory, 83 3:1 PP 4-13.
Making cheese at home, 83 3:1 p13.