



# CHEESE FROM THE USA

## MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE

As a buyer or an end-user of cheese, you are most likely looking for the best products or ingredients to set your business apart from the competition. Hundreds of years of excellence stemming from a melting pot of backgrounds and cultures makes the United States a unique partner to meet the world’s cheese needs. We invite you to discover what makes the United States the best-suited source for global cheese supply.

### GREAT MILK MAKES GREAT CHEESE

With over 9.4 million cows, the United States produces over 100 million metric tons of milk per year, making it the world’s largest single-country producer of cow’s milk.

In addition to ensuring superior comfort of their herds, U.S. dairy farmers feed their cows throughout the year with a rich and nutritious diet. This allows for a consistent and high-quality milk which is in turn converted into hundreds of wholesome dairy products such as cheese.

### A LONG-STANDING HERITAGE

As a country of immigrants, many of our traditions reflect our ancestry, and one of those traditions is a love for cheese. Using Old World recipes and traditional methods, an industry was born with the first settlers. Today, the U.S. cheese industry is an international center of cheesemaking excellence and innovation. The United States offers hundreds of varieties and styles perfectly crafted to meet global customers’ and consumers’ desire for enjoyable, great-tasting cheese. While cheese is essential and beloved in many of the world’s favorite foods, like pizza and cheeseburgers, it is also an excellent addition to many international dishes.

The U.S. cheese industry is proud of its heritage and strives to continuously innovate to meet the growing needs of its customers.



## DID YOU KNOW

- The United States is the world’s largest cheese producer.
- Once a marginal player, the United States now exports more cheese than any other country in the world.
- U.S. dairy producers make over 1,000 varieties of cheese, including European styles such as cheddar, parmesan and mozzarella and American Originals—cheeses invented in, and unique to, the United States—like Monterey Jack, Colby Jack and cream cheese.

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture

## INNOVATIONS IN RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY

The U.S. cheese industry is recognized for its advancements in cheesemaking research and technology. Just as farmers get more efficient in making more milk through animal care and sustainable practices, U.S. efforts to support innovations in cheeses are ongoing.

Dairy research centers in the United States are developing new ways to satisfy consumer demand with new cheese prototypes and processes that allow better control over production, safety, shelf life and more; but innovation also manifests itself through the never-ending new creations of talented and passionate American cheesemakers who are not afraid of putting quite a few spins on the originals by creating cheeses with new textures and flavors.

## AWARD-WINNING CHEESE PRODUCTION

The U.S. cheese community has gained recognition and praise on the international stage for many years, winning numerous awards and competitions. These accolades from cheese experts are a clear testament to the fantastic quality and craftsmanship of USA Cheeses.

While Cheeses from the USA may not be as famous as those from Italy, France or Switzerland, the countless awards from international judges prove that Cheeses from the USA can compete on a global stage.

The U.S. cheese industry's success against its international counterparts is reflected in the remarkable performance of USA Cheeses at the 2019 World Cheese Awards (WCA) in Bergamo, Italy, where U.S. cheesemaker Rogue Creamery's Rogue River Blue was crowned World Champion Cheese, the first American recipient of this honor.



## AN AWARD-WINNING INDUSTRY

- **147 MEDALS | 2023-2024 World Cheese Awards**  
7 super gold, 29 gold, 41 silver, 77 bronze
- **88 MEDALS | 2023-2024 International Cheese and Dairy Awards**  
34 gold, 29 silver, 25 bronze



## HIGH-QUALITY STANDARDS

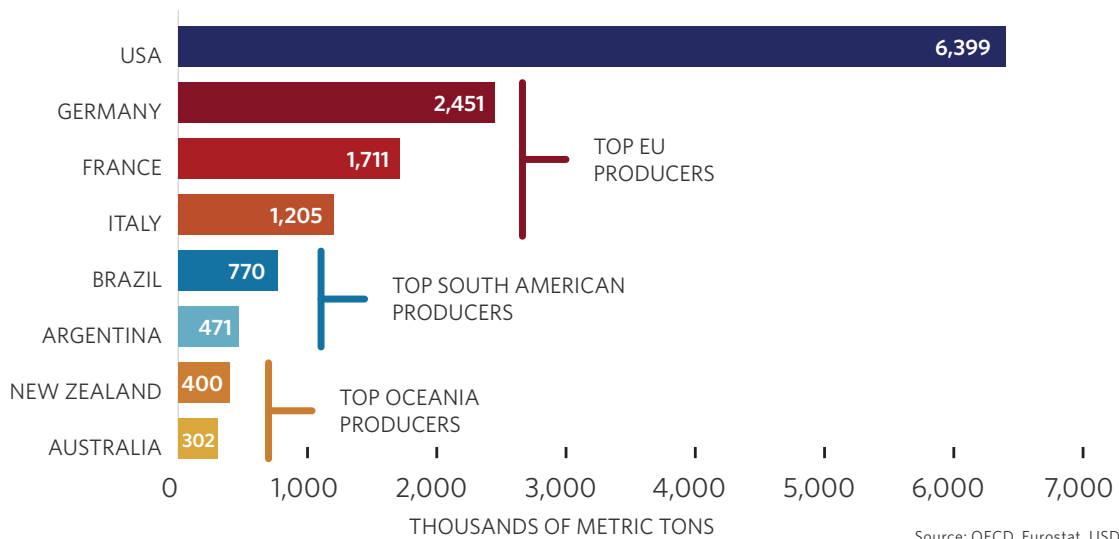
The United States has a long and enviable history of manufacturing safe cheese and dairy products. This is a responsibility that U.S. dairy farmers, dairy processors, and processing equipment manufacturers and ingredient suppliers who work with state and federal regulatory agencies have taken very seriously. The U.S. dairy industry is a highly regulated industry with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) ensuring that Cheeses from the USA meet some of the highest sanitation and quality standards in the world.

## A KEY GLOBAL CHEESE SUPPLIER

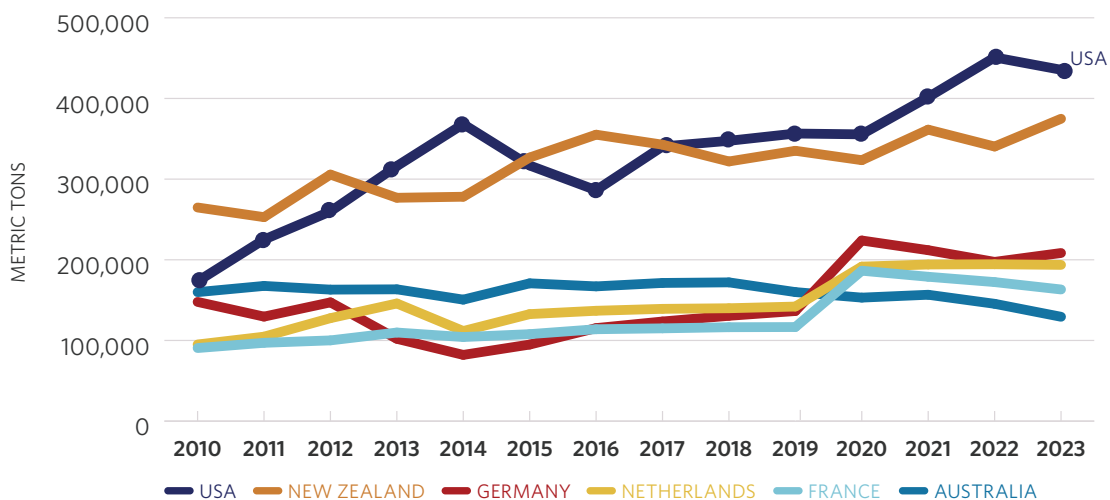
More than a quarter of the world's cheese (see chart 1, below) is manufactured in the United States, and production continues to grow. Year-round cow's milk production guarantees product availability at any time of the year. With its state-of-the-art production facilities, U.S. cheese production continues increasing at a steady pace to meet global demand.

In fact, because of the excellent value offered by the U.S. dairy industry, cheese exports have skyrocketed as shown in chart 2, below. While the United States is the world's largest cheese exporter, that isn't all the country has to offer. The U.S. is also home to thousands

### 1. GLOBAL CHEESE PRODUCTION 2023



### 2. GLOBAL CHEESE EXPORTS 2010-2023



of small, specialty cheese producers who are eager to meet international demand for unique products. These companies produce everything from fresh mozzarellas and cold pack spreads to cave-aged cheddars and spice-rubbed wheels. Over the years, this level of innovation has led to the creation of multiple varieties known as American Originals, cheeses invented in—and unique to—the United States.

For the past 20-plus years, sales of USA Cheese to international customers have grown exponentially. The U.S. cheese industry is equipped for today's fast-paced business, focused on the future and willing to serve overseas customers as their partner in trade.

While traditionally only part of the Western diet, over the past few decades, cheese has become a more familiar food in the diet of many cultures not customarily consuming it. As global appetites for cheese continue to grow, the U.S. cheese industry is well suited to supply the increased demand.

## A FEW SIMPLE INGREDIENTS

Natural cheese is made from only four ingredients: milk, salt, starter culture (good bacteria) and rennet (an enzyme). Since milk is the main ingredient, cheese contains many of the same nutrients—including calcium, protein and phosphorus—found in milk. Salt is a vital part of the cheesemaking process, as it controls moisture, texture, taste and functionality, and also acts as a natural preservative to ensure food safety.

Processed cheese comes from natural cheese and contains the same important nutrients, including calcium, high-quality protein and phosphorus. It also can be fortified with extra calcium and Vitamin D.

The U.S. cheese industry is unbound by tradition and recognized around the world for its

- Craftsmanship
- Innovation
- Versatility

## ESSENTIAL NUTRITION FOR HEALTH

Cheese is an important source of required nutrients, providing several health benefits. It is a concentrated source of many of milk's nutrients, including protein, vitamins and minerals.

Scientific evidence indicates that cheese can be part of a healthy diet and help reduce the risk of major chronic diseases, such as osteoporosis and cardiovascular diseases. Aged cheeses, such as cheddar, contain little or no lactose, the major carbohydrate in milk. Therefore, these cheeses are well tolerated by individuals who are lactose intolerant and suffer from lactose maldigestion.

Since cheese is nutrient dense, it can also be a valuable food for child nutrition. The U.S. cheese community offers many varieties and convenient on-the-go forms to meet children's nutritional needs, tastes and lifestyles. Cheese provides energy and nutrients needed for growth and development, supports bone health, protects teeth, and possibly lowers body fat. ■



## GET IN TOUCH

Looking to learn more about cheeses from the USA?

The USA Cheese Guild works on behalf of American dairy farmers and the entire U.S. cheese community to build global awareness of the excellent cheeses from the USA.

To learn more about the U.S. cheese industry or find a USA Cheese Guild representative near you, visit our website at [CheeseFromTheUSA.org](https://CheeseFromTheUSA.org).



Managed by the U.S. Dairy Export Council  
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