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## EC73-902 Cheese in Your Diet

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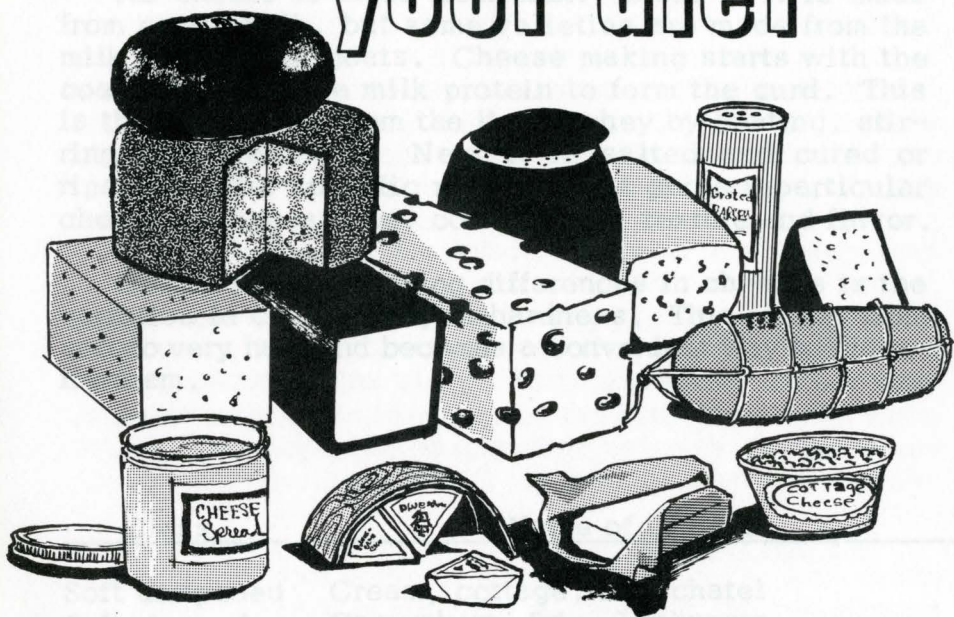
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# cheese in your diet



Extension Service, University of Nebraska-Lincoln College of Agriculture Cooperating with the  
U. S. Department of Agriculture and the College of Home Economics  
E. F. Frolik, Dean J. L. Adams, Director

# *CHEESE in the DIET*

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Cheese has been an important food for centuries and is still widely used in various parts of the world. Many varieties have been developed, each with its own special flavor. The wide range in prices, excellent food value and good keeping quality make it easy to use cheese often in planning nutritious meals.

## Kinds of Cheese

All cheese is made from milk. Most of it is made from cow's milk, but some varieties are made from the milk of sheep or goats. Cheese making starts with the coagulation of the milk protein to form the curd. This is then separated from the liquid whey by heating, stirring and pressing. Next it is salted and cured or ripened. The specific method used gives a particular cheese its appearance, consistency, texture and flavor.

One of the outstanding differences in cheeses is the variation in consistency or hardness. This ranges from soft to very hard and becomes a convenient way to classify them.

<u>Class</u>	<u>Name of Cheese</u>
Soft unripened	Cream, cottage, Neufchatel
Soft ripened	Camembert, Brie, Limburger
Semihard	Brick, Muenster, Gouda, blue
Hard	Cheddar, Swiss, Edam, Gruyere, Gjetost
Very hard	Parmesan, Romano



## Natural and Process Cheeses

Cheeses may also be classified as natural or process cheese. The name indicates how the cheese was made.

Natural cheese is made from pasteurized whole milk to which bacteria, rennet and sometimes color are added. The curd is heated, stirred and pressed to remove excess moisture and then cured. The longer the curing period the sharper the flavor. The most popular natural cheese is Cheddar.

Process cheese is made by blending new and aged lots of the same or different varieties of natural cheese. An emulsifier is added and the cheese is pasteurized to stop further curing. As long as process cheese is unopened, it will keep at room temperature for several months.

Process cheese is the cheese to use if you want uniform flavor, consistency and cooking quality. Because it contains an emulsifier, it will melt smoothly and quickly without becoming stringy. Among the flavors of process cheese are mild, medium and sharp American, American pimento, Swiss, brick and Limburger.

Process cheese food is a blend of natural cheeses to which non-fat dry milk or whey solids and water have been added. It is milder in flavor, softer in texture and contains somewhat less cheese than process cheese. Cheese food may be smoked, or have pimento, fruit, vegetable or meat added for flavor.

Process cheese spread is a product containing more water and less milk fat than cheese food. Flavoring materials and stabilizers are often added. The soft consistency makes it easy to spread with a knife at room temperature.

Packaged grated cheese is still another kind of cheese with good keeping qualities. Hard American and Italian cheeses are prepared in this way. Grated cheese is convenient to use for sprinkling on foods such as spaghetti, salads and casserole dishes.

## Food Value of Cheese

Since cheese is made from milk, it has many of the nutrients found in milk. From 20 to 30 percent of cheese is high quality protein. It is an excellent source of calcium and phosphorus but only a fair source of riboflavin since most of this vitamin is pressed out with the whey. Cheddar or cream cheese made from whole milk is rich in fat and vitamin A value. Cottage cheese made from skim milk contains very little fat.

## Uses of Cheese

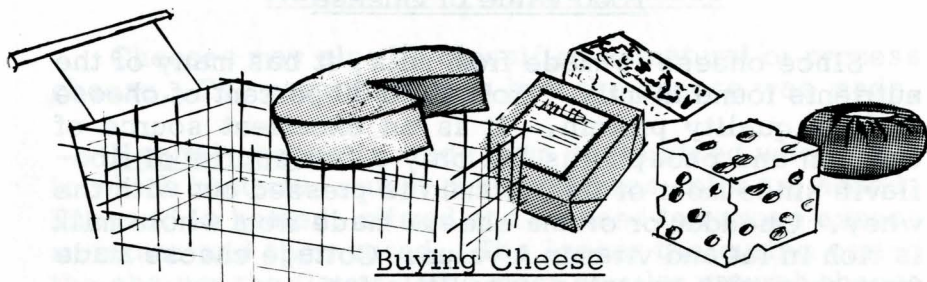
There is a cheese to suit every taste, mood and occasion. Almost all varieties can be served plain as appetizers or with other foods. Crackers spread with cheese may be served with soup or salad. Cheese sandwiches make good additions to the lunch or picnic box. A cheese tray arranged with several kinds of cheese and fresh fruit makes an interesting and unusual type of dessert. A piece of cheese goes well with apple pie. For easy slicing and better flavor, remove cheese from the refrigerator an hour before serving.

Cheese dishes are often used in place of meat, fish or poultry. Cheese fondue, souffle, Welsh rabbit, omelet and pizza are typical examples. Smaller amounts of cheese are used for flavor with potatoes, other vegetables, rice, macaroni, noodles, or spaghetti. Cheese may be added to sauces and dressings, grated as a garnish for soups or hot dishes, and made into desserts such as cheese cake.

## Cooking of Cheese

Some cheeses blend more easily than others. Cream cheese combines very easily and is used in a number of main dishes and desserts. Process cheese or aged Cheddar give best results as an ingredient in a main dish. Cooking should be done at a low temperature so that the cheese does not become tough or stringy. To speed up melting and blending of cheese, grate, slice or shave thin before you heat it. Whenever possible, mix cheese with a sauce before adding it to other ingredients.





Keep in mind the use for which cheese is intended. Consistency and flavor should be considered if the cheese is to be served plain. If the cheese is to be used for cooking, it should be a variety that will melt easily. An important bit of information on the label of certain kinds of natural cheese indicates the age or degree of curing. Cheddar cheese, for example, may be labeled as "mild", "medium", or "sharp."

Keeping quality is another point to think about when buying cheese. The hard varieties and process cheeses keep best. The size of the package or the quantity to buy at one time should also be considered. Larger amounts may be cheaper but may not be a bargain unless the cheese can be used within a reasonable time.

### Care and Storage

Soft cheeses spoil quickly and must be refrigerated until used. Hard and semihard cheeses need to be stored at low temperatures. To prevent drying out, cheese should be carefully covered with a moist cloth, waxed paper or foil. Whenever possible the original wrapper or cover should be left on the cheese. Grated cheese will dry out least when stored in a covered jar in the refrigerator.

Cheese tends to become dry and crumbly when frozen. Certain varieties such as brick, Cheddar, Edam, Gouda, Muenster, Swiss, Provolone, Mozzarella and Camembert are sometimes frozen. These should be packaged in small pieces weighing a pound or less and used as soon after thawing as possible.



## Lasagna

1/2 lb lasagna or any wide noodles  
1/2 lb ground beef  
1 medium onion, chopped  
1 clove garlic, minced  
1 can tomato paste

1 can tomato sauce  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1/2 teaspoon oregano  
2 cups creamed cottage cheese  
1/2 lb Mozzarella or process cheese  
1/4 cup Parmesan cheese

Cook noodles in boiling salted water until tender. Brown beef with onion and garlic in skillet and add tomato paste and sauce, salt and oregano. Mix with cottage cheese. In an 8 x 12-inch baking dish, arrange alternate layers of noodles, cheese slices and sauce mixture. Top with grated Parmesan cheese. Bake at 350° for 30 minutes. Remove from oven and let stand for 15 minutes before serving. Makes 6 to 8 servings.

## Grilled Reuben Sandwich

8 slices rye bread  
4 slices Swiss cheese  
4 slices corned beef  
  
2 tablespoons thousand island  
dressing  
1 cup sauerkraut, drained  
Softened butter

Place one slice of Swiss cheese and 1 slice of corned beef on each of 4 slices of bread. Spread corned beef with dressing and top with sauerkraut. Top with remaining bread slices. Spread outsides of sandwich with softened butter. Grill slowly on both sides until lightly browned and cheese is melted. Makes 4 servings.

## Creamy Blue Cheese Dressing

1 cup dairy sour cream  
1/2 cup crumbled blue cheese  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1/8 teaspoon pepper  
  
1 tablespoon finely chopped  
onion (optional)  
Few drops Worcestershire sauce  
1 teaspoon lemon juice

Combine all ingredients, mixing well. Chill thoroughly before serving with vegetable salad. Makes 1 1/2 cups.



## CHEESE CHART

Type	Description	Uses
American or Cheddar	Firm to crumbly. Mild to sharp flavor. Nearly white to yellow.	Sandwiches and cooking. With crackers and fruit pies.
Brick	Semisoft, smooth and elastic texture. Slices well. Creamy white in color.	Sandwiches and salads. With fruit and crackers.
Camembert	Soft, semi-fluid creamy inside with a thin, white crust which can be eaten.	Dessert and salad. With crackers and dark bread. On thin slices fruit.
Colby	Whole milk Firm soft texture Yellow color Mild flavor	Eating Cooking Sandwiches
Cold Pack	Cheese food Spreads easily	Appetizer With crackers
Cottage	Soft, mild, uncured. Made of skim milk with large or small curds. White.	With salads or fruit. In spreads, desserts, or casseroles.
Cream	Soft, rich, mild. All cream or cream and milk. White or cream colored.	Sandwiches, salads, desserts.

## CHEESE CHART (continued)

Type	Description	Uses
Edam	Semihard to hard. Smooth and mild. Ball shaped. Outside red, inside creamy yellow.	Cheese tray, with crackers. In cooking.
Gouda	Similar to Edam but contains more fat. Flattened ball usually red-coated.	Cheese tray with crackers.
Limburger Liederkranz	Semisoft. Strong characteristic flavor and aroma. Greyish white surface, creamy white inside.	Cheese tray, desserts. With crackers and dark bread or potato chips.
Mozzarella	Soft and elastic. Uncured, unsalted delicate flavor.	In pizzas.
Muenster	Like mild brick cheese with tiny holes. Orange-yellow rind. Light yellow inside.	Sandwiches
Neufchatel	Soft, smooth, mild. Like cream cheese but made of whole milk.	Sandwiches, salads, canapes.
Parmesan	Very hard, granular texture. Keeps almost indefinitely. Dark green outside. Light yellow inside.	Grated for soups, salads, casse-roles, spaghetti.

Process	Pasteurized blend of uniform flavor Melts easily	Sandwiches Casseroles Salads
Port du Salut	Whole or partly skimmed milk Russet surface, creamy inside Mellow to robust	Eating
Provolone	Hard, smooth. Usually pear shaped. Mellow, smoked flavor.	For eating and cooking. Snack cheese.
Roquefort	Semisoft, crumbly. Made from sheep's milk. Sharp, peppery flavor.	In salads, dressings. Cheese tray, desserts.
and		Appetizer.
Blue	White with blue veins. Similar but made from cow's milk in USA.	
Bleu	Made in France.	
Stilton	Made in England.	
Georgonzola	Made in Italy.	
Swiss	Hard and elastic with large holes. Sweet nutlike flavor. Pale yellow interior.	Sandwiches. Chef's salad. For eating.
and		
Gruyere	Like Swiss with smaller holes and sharper flavor.	



