opportunities

INNOVATION CENTER FOR U.S. DAIRY®

HEALTHY PEOPLE • HEALTHY PRODUCTS • HEALTHY PLANET

For Industry Members: Leadership Opportunities

Cheese makers and dairy industry partners: Don't get left behind. Join efforts to pre-competitively protect and promote cheese's place on the plate.

The nutrition environment is more active than ever and there's a sea of information – some accurate, some misleading – washing over consumers. Now, more than ever, is the time for industry to work collaboratively and speak with a unified voice to correct myths and misperceptions about cheese and show leadership in addressing the role of cheese in health and wellness.

The Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy® Health and Wellness Committee spearheaded a Cheese and Sodium Best Practices Task Force to proactively address the opportunities and challenges associated with reducing sodium content in cheese.

Three important areas of task force work related to the challenge of sodium levels in cheese products include the following:

- Maintaining taste and functionality in lower-sodium cheese products
- Updating process controls in manufacturing
- Educating key audiences about the necessary role of sodium in cheese in terms of the cheese making process and food safety/shelf stability

Part of education involves having the right communication resources to share information. This document will provide some education and communication thought starters and examples for industry members.

Now is the time to be a part of the solution to help meet public health guidelines and consumers' health and wellness needs, all while maintaining strict expectations for food safety and taste.

Thought Starter

Use myth busters, FAQs, fast facts, "did you know?" and true and false examples as hooks to get the attention of your target audience in your education and communication outreach.

These also are great for social and traditional media to get your audience primed to listen to the answer. See samples on the following page.

Did you know?

- Sixteen percent of teenagers and 26 percent of adults are reducing or not eating meat in their diets, and both are looking for additional sources of protein.[1]
- Cheese can help fill the protein gap. Cheese contributes high-quality protein as well as calcium, phosphorus and vitamin A to the American diet.
- U.S. pre-teen and teenage girls 9 to 18 are at risk for not getting enough calcium according to the Institute of Medicine.[2]
- As part of a healthy, balanced diet, cheese can help fill this gap. Most cheeses are a good to excellent source of calcium.
- Cheese may help children eat more fruits, vegetables and whole grains. A recent study indicates that the visible addition of cheese to various middle school menu offerings may help increase the consumption of fruits, vegetables and whole grains compared with these items without cheese.[3] Pairing foods with cheese potentially helps to increase total nutrient intake to improve diet quality.

Fast Facts

- It takes 10 pounds of milk to make 1 pound of cheese.
- The dairy food group is the top source of dietary calcium in the American diet.[4]
- Cheese is the No. 2 source of dietary calcium for Americans.[4]
- Cheese is more than just calcium; it also provides high-quality protein needed to help stay healthy.
- For those with lactose intolerance, cheese can be an important source of calcium. Natural cheeses such as Cheddar, Colby, Monterey Jack, mozzarella and Swiss contain minimal amounts of lactose, because most of the lactose is removed when the curds are separated from the whey in the cheese making process.
- Most dairy foods are gluten-free. Natural cheeses are gluten-free. In the case of cheeses that have added flavors or are processed, check the food label's ingredient list to make sure ingredients sourced from wheat, barley or rye aren't added.

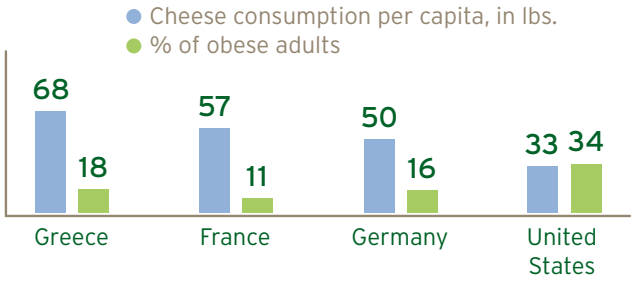
Use creative hooks to get your audience ready to learn about cheese

Myth Busters

Myth: Americans eat more cheese compared to people in other countries.

Fact: The French eat more cheese than Americans.

In fact, many other countries have higher cheese consumption yet lower incidence of hypertension and obesity. Hypertension affects 16.5 percent of French adults compared with 31.3 percent of U.S. adults.[5,6,7,8]



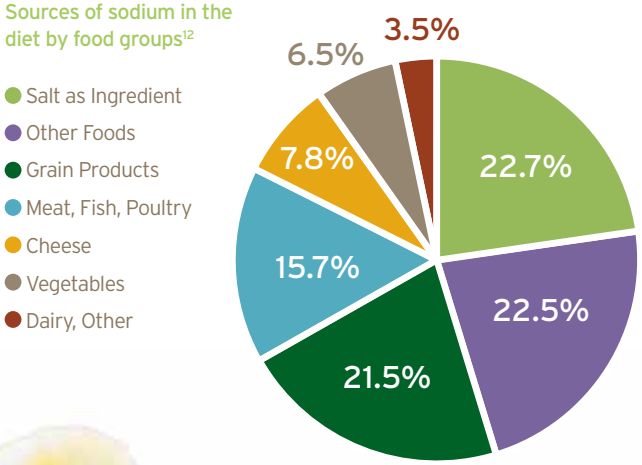
Food for thought: Salt intake levels are nearly the same today as they were 50 years ago,[9] but rates of high blood pressure across all age groups continue to increase.[10] Focus is often misplaced on cheese's salt content, but it also provides 21 percent of the calcium, 11 percent of the phosphorus, 9 percent of the protein and 9 percent of the vitamin A in Americans' diets.[11]

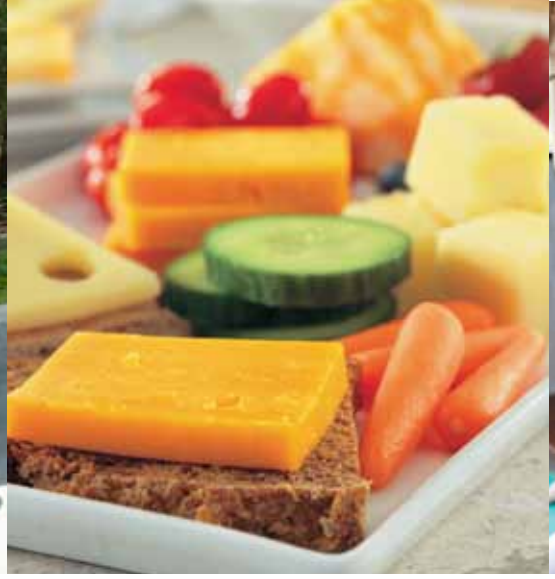
Myth: Cheese contributes too much sodium to the U.S. diet.

Fact: Cheese contributes very little sodium — about 8 percent.[12]

In fact, the majority of sodium comes from grain products, meat, poultry and fish; and salt as an ingredient.

Sources of sodium in the diet by food groups[12]




As the debate continues within the scientific community on sodium's role in high blood pressure, practical and science-based education is more important now than ever.

Education

The True Link Between Diet and Health

Health and nutrition professionals and consumers need to better understand the following in order to make the best recommendations and decisions, respectively:

- How foods like cheese are made.
- That some foods naturally contain sodium.
- The role of added salt in the cheese making process — an essential ingredient that directly impacts flavor, aroma, texture, versatility, food preservation/food safety and cooking performance.
- The variety of cheeses available and how the levels of sodium (and fat) differ by type and form; cheese is not one single food — each type of cheese is a food.
- Cheese contributes many essential nutrients to Americans' diets — it's the No. 2 diet source of calcium (calcium is a nutrient of public health concern) and also contributes protein, phosphorus and vitamin A.
- Cheese not only tastes great but also is a convenient, portable, versatile and nutritious food. When paired with fruits, vegetables and whole grains, it may help make these foods more enjoyable to eat.
- The body uses protein all day long. Cheese can help provide needed high-quality protein throughout the day.

U.S. cheese makers are dedicated to helping Americans live healthier lifestyles by working toward progress together; seeking collaborations with researchers, public health, and health and nutrition professional experts; and recognizing the importance of leading by example through safe and nutritious innovations that meet consumers' health and wellness needs.

Cheese maker call to action:

Use the thought starters and examples in this document along with the health professional/thought leader and general audience cheese education pieces to help better inform audiences about the role of cheese in health and wellness.

Meeting Consumers' Health and Wellness Needs

Consumers may be looking to reduce certain nutrients or calories in their diets, but when it comes to sodium, 79 percent of adults don't know the recommended amount of daily sodium, and sodium and salt rank low compared with their other concerns (e.g., trans fat, preservatives).[13]

Consumers limit added salt more than they limit foods. Additionally, cheese is low on their radar when it comes to sodium reduction.[13]

The dairy industry has been working to provide solutions that will satisfy consumer needs and also help to address public health priorities. Collectively, the industry has:

- Introduced more than 200 new cheese products since 2007 that are reduced-fat, low-fat or fat-free.
- Formulated reduced-sodium process cheeses and blended cheeses available for school and other commodity use, with just 200 to 300 grams of sodium per 28-gram serving.
- Innovated cheese packaging to help consumers with portion and calorie control.
- Spearheaded the largest independent, blinded study to assess sodium levels in major cheese types sold at retail.[14] The study findings are being used to help develop industry-adopted best practices to minimize variability in sodium content, which ultimately will help reduce the sodium content in cheese.

References

1 DMI Emerging Diets Research, 2010.

2 IOM (Institute of Medicine). 2011. *Dietary Reference Intakes for Calcium and Vitamin D*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press:480.

3 Donnelly JE, Sullivan DK, Smith BK, et al. The effects of visible cheese on the selection and consumption of food groups to encourage in middle school students. *J Child Nutr Manag.* 2010;3(1). Available at: http://schoolnutrition.org/Content.aspx?id=14040.

4 Fulgoni III VL, Keast DR, Quann EE, Auestad N. Food sources of calcium, phosphorus, vitamin D, and potassium in the U.S. Presented at Experimental Biology, Anaheim, Calif. April 24-29, 2010.

5 International Dairy Federation. Bulletin of the International Dairy Federation 446/2010: The World Dairy Situation 2010.

6 Tibi-Levy Y, de Pouvourville G, Westerloppe J, Bamberger M. The cost of treating high blood pressure in general practice in France. *Eur J Health Econ*. 2008;9(3):229-236.

7 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. High Blood Pressure Frequently Asked Questions. Available at: http://www.cdc.gov/bloodpressure/faqs.htm. Accessed Nov. 18, 2010.

8 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Available at: http://www.oecd.org/document/35/0,3343,en_21571361_44315115_46064099_1_1_1_1,00.html. Accessed March 8, 2011.

9 Bernstein AM, Willett WC. Trends in 24-h urinary sodium excretion in the United States,1957-2003: a systematic review. *Am J Clin Nutr.* 2010;92:1172–1180.

10 Cutler JA, Sorlie PD, Wolz M, Thom T, Fields LE, Roccella EJ. Trends in Hypertension Prevalence, Awareness, Treatment, and Control Rates in United States Adults Between 1988-1994 and 1999-2004. *Hypertension* published online Oct. 13, 2008; DOI: 10.1161/HYPERTENSIONAHA.108.113357. Available at: http://hyper.ahajournals.org/cgi/reprint/HYPERTENSIONAHA.108.113357v1.

11 Dairy Research Institute™, NHANES (2003-2006). Ages 2+ years. Data Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey. Hyattsville, Md.: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2003-2004; 2005-2006. Available at: http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nhanes.htm.

12 Hentges E. Sources of sodium in the food supply. Paper presented at Institute of Medicine Committee on Strategies to Reduce Sodium Intake, Information-Gathering Workshop; 2009; Washington D.C.

13 Dairy Management Inc. Prepared for the Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy®. *Sodium: Insights for the Dairy Industry* white paper executive summary, September 2010.

14 Agarwal S, McCoy D, Graves W, Gerard PD, Clark S. Sodium Content in Retail Cheddar, Mozzarella and Process Cheeses Varies Considerably in the United States. *J Dairy Sci.* 2011;94:1605-1615.

If you are a cheese maker, manufacturer or industry partner and would like to be more involved, please contact Erin Coffield at Erin.Coffield@rosedmi.com or 617.269.9070.

More information also is available on www.USDairy.com/HW.

INNOVATION CENTER FOR U.S. DAIRY®
HEALTHY PEOPLE • HEALTHY PRODUCTS • HEALTHY PLANET


INNOVATION
CENTER FOR U.S. DAIRY
HEALTHY PEOPLE • HEALTHY PRODUCTS • HEALTHY PLANET