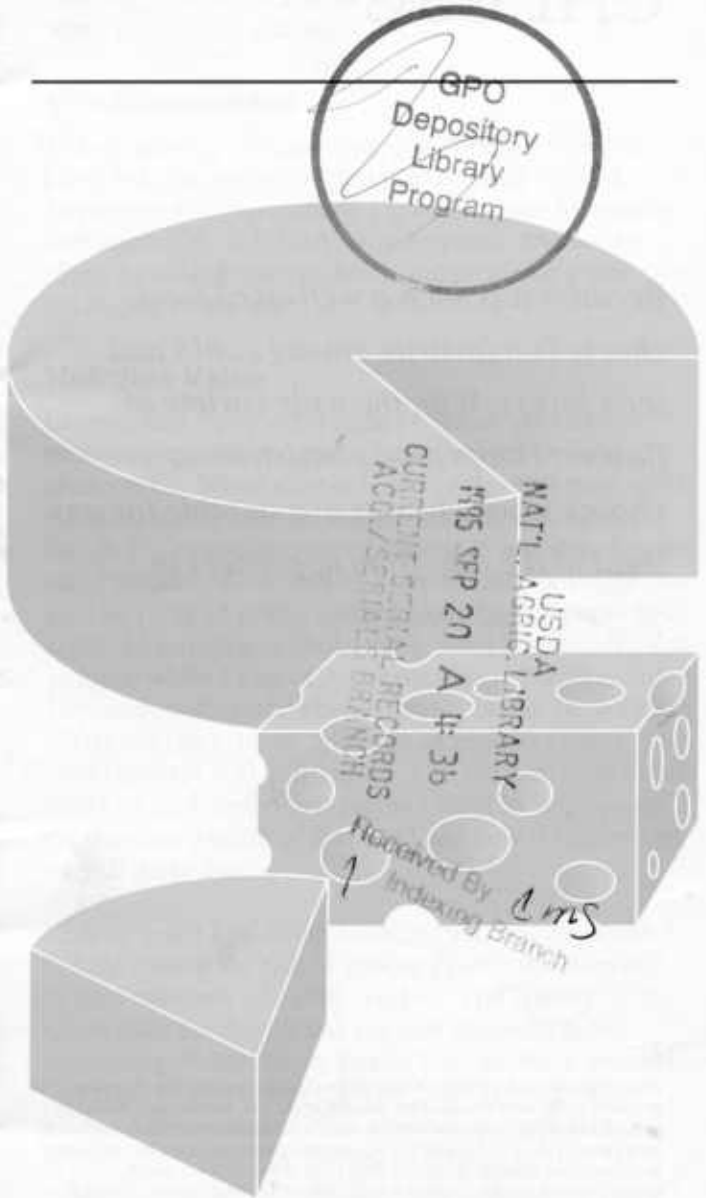


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How to Buy

CHEESE



United States
Department of
Agriculture

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Home and
Garden Bulletin
Number 256

How to Buy CHEESE

Because it is such a well-liked food, cheese is a favorite among cooks and food lovers. With the wide variety of flavors, colors, and consistencies to choose from, cheeses are suitable for any meal of the day, from appetizers to desserts and snacks.

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Points to Consider

Wholesomeness...nutritive value...quality...informative labeling...and use are some of the points to consider when purchasing cheese.

Wholesomeness

Before grading or inspection of a cheese product is provided, the processing plant must meet the U.S. Department of Agriculture's specifications for quality and sanitation. A USDA dairy inspector checks the plant, incoming raw products, and processing and packaging techniques.

Nutritive Value

Cheese, like many other milk products, provides protein, vitamins, minerals, fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol. While cheese is one of the best sources of calcium, it may also be high in sodium and saturated fat. A 1½-ounce serving of natural cheese supplies the same amount of calcium as 1 cup of milk or yogurt, as well as 12 to 14 grams total fat, 9 grams saturated fatty acids, 44 milligrams cholesterol, and 173 calories. For sodium, while 1 cup of milk contains 120 milligrams, 1½ ounces of natural cheese could contain from 110 to 450 milligrams, while 2 ounces of process cheese could contain 800 milligrams. Use the *Nutrition Facts* panel on each individual product label to learn about the nutrient content of that food and how it fits into an overall daily diet.

Choose a diet low in fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol to help reduce the risk of getting certain diseases and to help maintain a healthy weight. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans suggest choosing a diet containing 30 percent or less of calories from fat and less than 10 percent of calories from saturated fatty acids. Also, some health authorities suggest that dietary cholesterol be limited to an average of 300 milligrams or less per day.

The Food Guide Pyramid (see inside back cover) suggests 2 to 3 servings each day of food from the milk, yogurt, and cheese group. Count as a serving 1½ ounces of natural cheese or 2 ounces of process cheese.

Tips: Fat-free, “part skim,” or lowfat cheeses are available. When you choose a higher fat cheese, balance your fat intake by choosing other foods that are low in fat.

Quality Assurance

USDA’s Agricultural Marketing Service has established U.S. grade standards for four varieties of cheese: Cheddar, Colby, Monterey, and Swiss. The cheese industry uses the grade standards to identify levels of quality, to have a basis for establishing prices at wholesale, and to provide consumers with the qualities they want. Generally, these grades do not appear on consumer packages, but the U.S. Grade shield may appear on some consumer packages of Cheddar cheese, including low-fat varieties.

Using USDA’s Cheese Grades

The USDA grade shield means that the cheese has been inspected and graded by an experienced and highly trained government grader. And it means the cheese was produced in a USDA-approved plant, under sanitary conditions. It is your guarantee of consistent and dependable quality.

USDA Grade AA Cheese

Cheddar cheese meeting the U.S. Grade AA is the highest quality. It meets exacting USDA standards, has a fine, highly pleasing flavor, a smooth, compact texture, uniform color, and attractive appearance.

To earn this grade, cheese must be produced with special care — in the quality of the milk, cheese-making skill, curing or ripening process, and packaging.

The AA shield is assurance of consistently fine Cheddar flavor and texture in every package.

USDA Grade A Cheese

Cheddar cheese meeting the U.S. Grade A is also of good quality, but not as high as AA. The flavor is pleasing. However, there may be more variation in flavor and texture between packages.

USDA “Quality Approved” Cheese

Cheese and cheese products not covered by a U.S. grade standard may be inspected and bear the USDA “Quality Approved” inspection shield on the label. Pasteurized process cheese, cheese food and spreads, and cottage cheese are examples of cheese products receiving USDA inspection.

To carry the “Quality Approved” shield, the product must be manufactured in a plant meeting the USDA sanitary specifications for plants and equipment.

Labels

Labels on natural cheese, pasteurized process cheese, and related products carry important descriptive information. The name of a natural cheese will appear as the variety, such as “Cheddar cheese,” “Swiss cheese,” or “Blue cheese.”

Pasteurized process cheese labels will always include the words “pasteurized process,” together with the name of the variety or varieties of cheese used — for example, “pasteurized process American cheese” or “pasteurized process Swiss and American cheese.”

Cheese food also contains ingredients other than cheese and therefore is labeled as “pasteurized process cheese food.” Cheese spreads have a different composition from cheese foods and are labeled as “pasteurized process cheese spread.” All the ingredients used in the preparation of these products are listed on the respective labels along with the kinds or varieties of cheese used in the mixture. Also, the milkfat and moisture content may be shown.

Coldpack cheese and coldpack cheese food are labeled in the same manner as other cheese and cheese foods, except that the names “club cheese” or “comminuted cheese” may be substituted for the name “coldpack cheese.”

Check the Cure

The age or degree of curing is very important label information on certain varieties of natural cheese. For example, Cheddar cheese may be labeled as “mild,” “medium” or “mellow,” and “aged” or “sharp.” In some cases, pasteurized process cheese may be labeled to indicate a sharp flavor when a much higher proportion of sharp or aged cheese was used in its preparation.

Check the Name

Look for the name of the cheese item. Don’t confuse the brand name with the name of the cheese. For some purposes, you may want natural cheese, for others, process cheese or cheese food. For still others, pasteurized process cheese spread or coldpack cheese may best serve your needs. In many cases, products may be packaged alike, but the names on the labels will be different.

Making Natural Cheese

Cheesemaking is a centuries old art. It consists of separating most of the milk solids from the milk by curdling with rennet or bacterial culture or both. The curd is then separated from the whey by heating, stirring, and pressing.

Most cheeses in this country are made from whole milk. For certain types of cheese, both milk and cream are used. For other types, skim milk, whey or mixtures of all of these are used.

The distinctive flavor, body and texture characteristics of the various cheeses are due to: 1) the kind of milk used; 2) the method used for curdling the milk and for cutting, cooking, and forming the curd; 3) the type of

bacteria or molds used in ripening; 4) the amount of salt or other seasonings added; and 5) ripening conditions such as temperature, humidity, and length of time. Sometimes only minor differences in the procedures followed may make the difference between one variety of cheese and another.

After the cheese has been formed into its characteristic shape, it is coated with wax or other protective coating or wrapping, then cured or aged for varying lengths of time, depending upon the kind or variety of cheese being made.

When the cheese has reached its proper curing stage, it is often cut or sliced from larger blocks or wheels into smaller sizes. The refrigerated showcase in a modern food market is most enticing with its display of various shapes and sizes of cheese packages such as wedges, oblongs, segments, cubes, slices, blocks, and cut portions.

Care in the Home

All natural cheese should be refrigerated. When possible store the cheese in its original wrapper or covering. To store opened cheeses for any extended period, wrap them tightly in clinging plastic wrap to keep all air and moisture away from the surface. The following storage times are guidelines for maintaining the quality of cheese in the refrigerator after purchase:

Soft unripened cheeses: cottage — 10-30 days; creamed and neufchatel — opened 2 weeks; ricotta — 5 days.

Ripened or cured cheeses: hard and wax coated Cheddar, Edam, Gouda, Swiss, brick, etc. — unopened 3-6 months, opened 3-4 weeks, sliced 2 weeks.

■ Mold formed on natural, hard, block cheeses is not harmful and may be removed; just cut off at least an inch around and below the mold spot, keeping the knife out of the mold itself. The particular mold in the interior of cheeses such as Blue, Gorgonzola,

Characteristics of Some Popular Varieties of Natural Cheeses

Kind or Name Place of Origin	Kind of Milk Used in Manufacture	Ripening or Curing Time	Flavor	Body and Texture	Color	Retail Packaging	Uses
Soft, Unripened Varieties							
Cottage, plain or creamed (Unknown)	Cow's milk skimmed; plain curd, or plain curd with cream added	Unripened	Mild, acid	Soft, curd particles of varying size	White to creamy white	Cup-shaped containers, tumblers, dishes	Salads, with fruits vegetables, sandwiches, dips, cheese cake
Cream, plain (U.S.A.)	Cream from cow's milk	Unripened	Mild, acid	Soft and Smooth	White	3- to 8-oz. packages	Salads, dips, sandwiches snacks, cheese cake, desserts
Neufchatel (Nû-shä-těł') (France)	Cow's milk	Unripened	Mild, acid	Soft, smooth similar to cream cheese but lower in milk fat	White	4- to 8-oz. packages	Salads, dips, sandwiches, snacks, cheese cake, desserts

Characteristics of Some Popular Varieties of Natural Cheeses-Continued

Kind or Name Place of Origin	Kind of Milk Used in Manufacture	Ripening or Curing Time	Flavor	Body and Texture	Color	Retail Packaging	Uses
Ricotta (Rĭ-cōl-ta) (Italy)	Cow's milk, whole or partly skimmed, or whey from cow's milk with whole or skim milk added. In Italy, whey from sheep's milk	Unripened	Sweet, nut-like	Soft, moist or dry	White	Pint and quart paper and plastic containers, 3 lb. metal cans	Appetizers, salads, snacks, lasagne, ravioli, noodles and other cooked dishes, grating, desserts

Firm, Unripened Varieties

Gjetost, ¹ (Yê t-ôst) (Norway)	Whey from goat's milk or a mixture of whey from goat's and cow's milk	Unripened	Sweetish, Caramel	Firm, buttery consistency	Golden brown	Cubical and rectangular	Snacks, desserts, served with dark breads, crackers, biscuits or muffins
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¹Imported only

Characteristics of Some Popular Varieties of Natural Cheeses-Continued

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Kind or Name Place of Origin	Kind of Milk Used in Manufacture	Ripening or Curing Time	Flavor	Body and Texture	Color	Retail Packaging	Uses
Myost (Müs-ôst) also called Primost (Prêm-ôst) (Norway)	Whey from cow's milk	Unripened	Sweetish, caramel	Firm, buttery consistency	Light brown	Cubical, cylindrical, pie-shaped wedges	Snacks, desserts, served with dark breads
Mozzarella (Mô-tsa-rel'la) also called Scamorza (Italy)	Whole or partly Skimmed cow's milk; in Italy, originally made from buffalo's milk	Unripened	Delicate, mild	Slightly firm, plastic	Creamy white	Small round or braided form, shredded, sliced	Snacks, toasted sandwiches, cheeseburgers, cooking, as in meat loaf, or topping for lasagne, pizza, and casseroles

Soft, Ripened Varieties

Brie (Brê) (France)	Cow's milk	4 to 8 weeks	Mild to pungent	Soft, smooth when ripened	Creamy yellow interior; edible brown and white crust	Circular, pie-shaped wedges	Appetizers, sandwiches, snacks; good with crackers and fruit, dessert
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Characteristics of Some Popular Varieties of Natural Cheeses-Continued

Kind or Name Place of Origin	Kind of Milk Used in Manufacture	Ripening or Curing Time	Flavor	Body and Texture	Color	Retail Packaging	Uses
Camembert (Kâm'êm-bar) (France)	Cow's milk	4 to 8 weeks	Mild to pungent	Soft, smooth; very soft when fully ripened	Creamy yellow interior; edible thin white, or gray-white crust	Small circular cakes and pieshaped portions	Appetizers, sandwiches, snacks; good with crackers and fruit such as pears and apples, dessert
Limburger (Belgium)	Cow's milk	4 to 8 weeks	Highly pungent, very strong	Soft, smooth when ripened; usually contains small irregular openings	Creamy white interior; yellow surface	Cubical, rectangular	Appetizers, snacks, good with crackers, rye or other dark breads, dessert

Characteristics of Some Popular Varieties of Natural Cheeses-Continued

Kind or Name Place of Origin	Kind of Milk Used in Manufacture	Ripening or Curing Time	Flavor	Body and Texture	Color	Retail Packaging	Uses
Bel Paese ² (Bel Pă-a-zě) (Italy)	Cow's milk	6 to 8 weeks	Mild to moderately robust	Soft to medium firm, creamy	Creamy yellow interior; slightly gray or brownish surface, sometimes covered with yellow wax coating	Small Wheels, wedges, segments	Appetizers; good with crackers, snacks, sandwiches, dessert
Brick (U.S.A.)	Cow's milk	2 to 4 months	Mild to moderately sharp	Semisoft to medium firm, elastic, numerous small openings	Creamy yellow	Loaf, brick, slices, cut portions	Appetizers, sandwiches, snacks, dessert
Muenster (Mün'stēr) (Germany)	Cow's milk	1 to 8 weeks	Mild to mellow	Semisoft, numerous small openings. Contains more moisture than brick	Creamy White interior; yellow tan surface	Circular cake, blocks, wedges, segments, slices	Appetizers, sandwiches, snacks, dessert

²Italian trademark-licensed for manufacture in U.S.A.; also imported.

Characteristics of Some Popular Varieties of Natural Cheeses-Continued

Kind or Name Place of Origin	Kind of Milk Used in Manufacture	Ripening or Curing Time	Flavor	Body and Texture	Color	Retail Packaging	Uses
Por du Salut (Por dü Sa-lü') (France)	Cow's milk	6 to 8 weeks, robust	Mellow to robust	Semisoft, smooth, buttery, small openings	Creamy yellow	Wheels and Wedges	Appetizers, snacks, served with raw fruit, dessert

Firm, Ripened Varieties

Cheddar (England)	Cow's milk	1 to 12 months or more	Mild to very sharp	Firm, smooth, some openings	White to medium yellow-orange	Circular, cylindrical, loaf, pie-shaped wedges, oblongs, slices, cubes, shredded, grated	Appetizers, sandwiches, sauces, on vegetables, in hot dishes, toasted sandwiches, grating, cheeseburgers, dessert
Colby (U.S.A.)	Cow's milk	1 to 3 months	Mild to mellow	Softer and more open than Cheddar	White to medium yellow-orange	Cylindrical, pie-shaped wedges	Sandwiches, snacks, cheeseburgers

Characteristics of Some Popular Varieties of Natural Cheeses-Continued

Kind or Name Place of Origin	Kind of Milk Used in Manufacture	Ripening or Curing Time	Flavor	Body and Texture	Color	Retail Packaging	Uses
Caciocavallo (Ká'-cho-ká-val'íô) (Italy)	Cow's milk. (In Italy, cow's milk or mixtures of sheep's, goat's, and cow's milk)	3 to 12 months	Piquant, similar to Provolone but not smoked	Firm, lower in milkfat and moisture than Provolone	Light or white interior; clay or tan colored surface	Spindle or ten-pin shaped, bound with cord, cut pieces	Snacks, sandwiches, cooking, dessert; suitable for grating after prolonged curing
Edam (Ēd-ãm) (Netherlands)	Cow's milk, partly skimmed	2 to 3 months	Mellow, nut-like	Semisoft to firm, smooth; small irregularly shaped or round holes; lower milkfat than Gouda	Creamy yellow or medium yellow-orange interior; surface coated with red wax	Cannon ball shaped loaf, cut pieces, oblong	Appetizers, snacks, salads, sandwiches, seafood sauces, dessert
Gouda (Gou'-dá) (Netherlands)	Cow's milk, whole or partly skimmed	2 to 6 months	Mellow, nut-like	Semisoft to firm, smooth; small irregularly shaped or round holes; higher milkfat than Edam	Creamy yellow or medium yellow-orange interior; may or may not have wax coating	Ball-shaped with flattened top and bottom	Appetizers, snacks, salads, sandwiches, seafood sauces, dessert

Characteristics of Some Popular Varieties of Natural Cheeses-Continued

Kind or Name Place of Origin	Kind of Milk Used in Manufacture	Ripening or Curing Time	Flavor	Body and Texture	Color	Retail Packaging	Uses
Provolone (Prô-vô-lô-ne'), also smaller sizes and shapes called Provolette, provolocini (Italy)	Cow's milk	2 to 12 months or more	Mellow to sharp, smoky salty	Firm, smooth	Light, creamy interior; light brown or yellow surface	Pear shaped, sausage and salami shaped, wedges, slices	Appetizers, sandwiches, snacks, souffle, macaroni and spaghetti dishes, pizza; suitable for grating when fully cured and dried
Swiss, also called Emmentaler (Switzerland)	Cow's milk	3 to 9 months	Sweet, nut-like	Firm, smooth with large round eyes	Light yellow	Segments, pieces, slices	Sandwiches, snacks, sauces, fondue, cheeseburgers
Parmesan (Pär'mê-zan), also called Reggiano (Italy)	Partly Skimmed cow's milk	14 months to 2 years	Sharp, piquant	Very hard, granular, lower moisture and milkfat than Romano	Creamy white	Cylindrical, wedges, shredded, grated	Grated for season- ing in soups, or vegetables, spaghetti, ravioli, breads, popcorn; used extensively in pizza and lasagne

Characteristics of Some Popular Varieties of Natural Cheeses-Continued

Kind or Name Place of Origin	Kind of Milk Used in Manufacture	Ripening or Curing Time	Flavor	Body and Texture	Color	Retail Packaging	Uses
Romano (Rō-mā'-nō), called Sardo Romano or Pecorino Romano (Italy)	Cow's milk. In Italy, sheep's milk (Italian law)	5 to 12 months	Sharp, piquant	Very hard, granular	Yellowish- interior, greenish- black surface	Round with flat ends, wedges, shredded, grated	Seasoning in soups, casserole dishes, ravioli, sauces, breads; suitable for grating when cured for about 1 year
Sap Sago ¹ (Sāp'-sā-go) (Switzerland)	Skimmed cow's milk	5 months or more	Sharp, pungent clover-like	Very hard	Light green by addition of dried, powdered clover leaves	Conical, shakers	Grated to flavor soups, meats, macaroni, spaghetti, hot vegetables; mixed with butter makes a good spread on crackers or bread

Blue-Vein Mold Ripened Varieties

Blue, spelled Bleu on imported cheese, (France)	Cow's milk	2 to 6 months	Tangy, peppery	Semisoft, pasty, sometimes crumbly	White interior, marbled or streaked with blue veins of mold	Cylindrical, wedges, oblongs, squares, cut portions	Appetizers, salads, dips, salad dressing, sandwich spreads; good with crackers, dessert
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¹Imported only

Characteristics of Some Popular Varieties of Natural Cheeses-Continued

Kind or Name Place of Origin	Kind of Milk Used in Manufacture	Ripening or Curing Time	Flavor	Body and Texture	Color	Retail Packaging	Uses
Gorgonzola (Gôr-gōn-zō-lā) (Italy)	Cow's milk. In Italy, cow's milk or goat's milk or mixtures of these	3 to 12 months	Tangy, peppery	Semisoft, pasty, sometimes crumbly, lower moisture than Blue	Creamy white interior, mottled or streaked with blue-green veins of mold. Clay- colored surface	Cylindrical, wedges, oblongs	Appetizers, snacks, salads, dips, sandwich spreads; good with crackers, dessert
Roquefort ¹ (Rōk'-fêrt) or (Rōk-fôr')	Sheep's milk	2 to 5 months or more	Sharp, slightly peppery	Semisoft, pasty, sometimes crumbly	White or creamy white interior, marbled or streaked with blue veins of mold	Cylindrical, wedges	Appetizers, snacks salads, dips, sandwich spreads; good with crackers, dessert
Stilton ¹ (England)	Cow's milk	2 to 6 months	Piquant, milder than Gorgonzola or Roquefort	Semisoft, flaky; slightly more crumbly than blue	Creamy white interior, streaked with blue-green veins of mold	Circular, wedges, oblongs	Appetizers, snacks, salads, dessert

¹Imported only

Roquefort, or Stilton has been carefully developed to produce the characteristic color and distinctive flavor of those varieties and is consumed as part of the cheese.

- Ends or pieces of cheese that have become dried out and hard may be grated and kept refrigerated in a clean, airtight container, and used for garnishing or accenting.
- Store aromatic cheeses such as Limburger in tightly sealed containers. These cheeses are fast-curing and are best when used soon after purchase.
- Normally, frozen cheese will lose its characteristic body and texture, becoming crumbly and mealy. However, small pieces (1 pound or less, not over 1 inch thick) of certain varieties may be frozen for as long as 6 months — if they are handled and stored properly. To prevent evaporation, cut cheese should be tightly wrapped in foil or other moistureproof freezer wrapping, then frozen immediately. Freeze the product quickly, at a temperature setting of 0 °F. or lower.
- Cheese varieties that can be successfully frozen in small pieces are: Brick, Cheddar, Edam, Gouda, Muenster, Port du Salut, Swiss, Provolone, Mozzarella, and Camembert. Small cheeses, such as Camembert, can be frozen in their original packages. When removed from the freezer, cheese should be thawed in the refrigerator and used as soon as possible after thawing.
- Except for soft, unripened cheeses such as cottage and cream cheese, all cheese should be served unchilled to help bring out distinctive flavor and texture characteristics. This usually requires 20 minutes to 1 hour or more at room temperature. Soft and semisoft cheeses should not be kept at room temperature longer than 2 hours.

Ripening Classifications

■ Unripened Varieties

The soft, unripened varieties such as cottage cheese contain relatively high moisture and do not undergo any curing or ripening. They are consumed fresh — soon after manufacture. Firm, unripened cheeses such as Gjetost and Mysost also may be used soon after manufacture; but, because they contain very low moisture, they may be kept for several weeks or months.

■ Soft, Ripened Varieties

In the soft, ripened cheeses, curing progresses from the outside, or rind of the cheese, towards the center. Particular molds and bacterial cultures that grow on the surface of some cheeses contribute to their characteristic flavor, body, and texture. Curing continues as long as the temperature is favorable. These cheeses usually contain more moisture than semisoft, ripened varieties.

■ Semisoft, Ripened Varieties

These cheeses ripen from the interior as well as from the surface. The process begins soon after the cheese is formed, with the aid of a characteristic mold or bacterial culture, or both. Curing continues as long as the temperature is favorable. These cheeses contain higher moisture than the firm, ripened varieties.

■ Firm, Ripened Varieties

These cheeses ripen with the aid of a bacterial culture distributed throughout the entire cheese. Ripening continues as long as the temperature is favorable. The rate and degree of curing is also closely related to the moisture content. Therefore, being lower in moisture than softer varieties, they usually require a longer curing time.

■ Very Hard, Ripened Varieties

These cheeses also are cured with the aid of a bacterial culture and enzymes. The rate of curing, however, is much slower because of the very low moisture and higher salt content.

■ Blue-Vein Mold Ripened

Curing is accomplished by the aid of bacteria, but more particularly by the use of a characteristic mold culture that grows throughout the interior of the cheese to produce the familiar appearance and characteristic flavor.

Kinds of Cheese

The charts in this pamphlet will help you in learning some of the more popular and generally available varieties of natural cheese, their general classification, principal characteristics, and some of their uses.

Pasteurized Process Cheese

Pasteurized process cheese is a blend of fresh and aged natural cheeses that have been shredded, mixed and heated (pasteurized), after which no further ripening occurs. It melts easily when reheated. The blend may consist of one or more varieties of natural cheese and may contain pimentos, fruits, vegetables, or meats. Smoked cheese or smoke flavor may also be added.

The flavor of pasteurized process cheese depends largely on the flavor of the cheese used, and may be modified by flavorings added. Pasteurized Gruyere cheese has a nutsweet flavor, somewhat similar to Swiss.

Other available varieties are pasteurized process American cheese, pasteurized process Swiss cheese, pasteurized process Swiss cheese blended with American, and pasteurized process Brick cheese.

Process cheese is packaged in slices, $\frac{1}{2}$ -, 1-, 2-, and 5-pound loaves, and cut portions. It may be used in main dishes, for snacks and cheeseburgers, with cold cuts and salads, on grilled or toasted sandwiches, in numerous sandwich combinations, and in casseroles. All pasteurized process cheese products should be kept refrigerated after opening.

Pasteurized Process Cheese Food

Pasteurized process cheese food is prepared in much the same manner as process cheese, except that it contains less cheese, with nonfat dry milk, or whey solids and water added. This results in a lower milkfat content and more moisture than in process cheese. Pasteurized process cheese food also may contain pimentos, fruits, vegetables or meats, or may have a smoked flavor.

Cheese food has milder flavor and softer texture. It spreads more easily and melts more quickly than process cheese. The most popular variety is pasteurized process American cheese food, packaged in slices, rolls, links and loaves. It may be used any place where process cheese is used, although it is not likely to add as much cheese flavor.

Pasteurized Process Cheese Spread

Pasteurized process cheese spread is made in much the same manner as pasteurized process cheese food, but generally contains higher moisture, and the milkfat content is usually lower. A stabilizer is used in this product to prevent separation of ingredients. It is normally more spreadable than cheese food. Cheese spread also may contain pimentos, fruits, vegetables or meats, or may have a smoked flavor.

The flavor of pasteurized process cheese spread depends largely on the flavor of the cheese used and may be modified by added flavorings. Some available varieties are pasteurized process American cheese spread, pasteurized process pimento cheese spread, pasteurized process pineapple cheese spread, and pasteurized process Blue cheese spread.

Spreads are packaged in jars and loaves. They are convenient for use as snacks, in stuffing celery stalks, in deviled eggs, and as an ingredient in noodle casseroles, meatballs, hot vegetables, sandwiches, sauces, and dressings.

Coldpack Cheese

Coldpack cheese, or Club cheese, is a blend of one or more varieties of fresh and aged natural cheese. Coldpack cheese is similar to process cheese, except that it is mixed into a uniform product without heating. It may have a smoked flavor.

Coldpack American cheese and Coldpack Swiss cheese are the principal varieties. Their flavor, usually aged or sharp, is the same as the natural cheese used. The body is softer than natural cheese and it spreads easily.

Coldpack cheese is packed in jars, rolls, or links. It is especially good as an appetizer, snack, or dessert. Always refrigerate coldpack cheese products after opening.

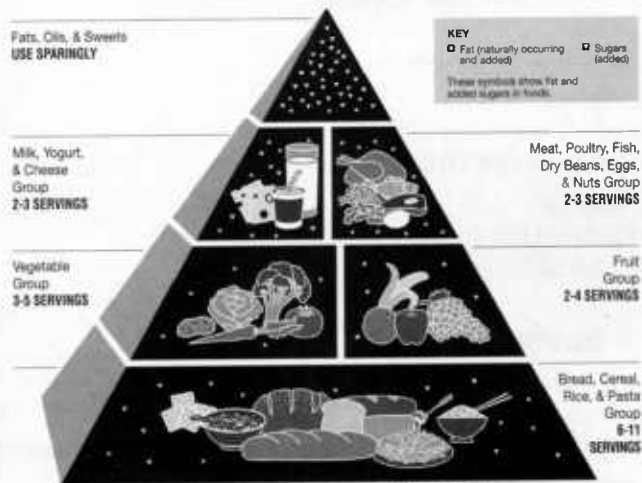
Coldpack Cheese Food

Coldpack cheese food is prepared in the same manner as Coldpack cheese but includes dairy ingredients used in process cheese food. In addition, sweetening agents such as sugar or corn syrup may be added.

Coldpack cheese food may contain pimentos, fruits, vegetables, or meats, or may have a smoked flavor. The flavor resembles the cheese from which it is made but is milder. It is softer than natural cheese and spreads more easily due to the added ingredients and higher moisture content. It is packaged the same way as Coldpack cheese and may be served in the same manner.

For more information about nutrition, write:
 U.S. Department of Agriculture
 Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion
 1120 20th Street NW, Suite 200 North
 Washington, DC 20036

Food Guide Pyramid A Guide to Daily Food Choices



Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture/U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Use the Food Guide Pyramid to help you eat better every day...the Dietary Guidelines way. Start with plenty of Breads, Cereals, Rice, and Pasta; Vegetables; and Fruits. Add two to three servings from the Milk group and two to three servings from the Meat group. Each of these food groups provides some, but not all, of the nutrients you need. No one food group is more important than another - for good health you need them all. Go easy on the fats, oils, and sweets, the foods in the small tip of the Pyramid.

The "Food Guide Pyramid" booklet (U.S. Department of Agriculture, Human Nutrition Information Service, August 1992, Leaflet No. 572) can be purchased. Send a \$1 check or money order, payable to the Superintendent of Documents, to Consumer Information Center, Department 117-B, Pueblo, CO 81009.

HOW TO BUY CHEESE

■ Check the Label

Variety Name

Ingredients

Net Weight

USDA Shield on Cheddar Cheese

Cure on Cheddar Cheese

mild

medium or mellow

aged or sharp

■ Look for the Type

Natural

Pasteurized Process

Coldpack

■ Buy What You Need

Unripened varieties: only what you can use in a few days

Ripened varieties: only what you can use in a few weeks

■ Consider Dietary Needs

Fat: reduced fat, lowfat, or nonfat cheese and cheese products are available for those watching their fat intake.

Sodium: while many cheeses may be high in sodium, low-sodium products are also available.

This pamphlet supersedes:

HOW TO BUY CHEESE

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