

Consumer Trends: Cheese-Eaters Want Specialty Flavors

Packaged Facts

ROCKVILLE, Md. (PRNewswire-USNewswire) — Move over mozzarella, there's a new cheese in town. Indeed, there's a smorgasbord of exotic cheeses finding their way into meals nationwide as food manufacturers and restaurateurs seek to satisfy consumer demand for more indulgent and healthier cheese options, according to *Cheese: Natural and Specialty Cheese in the U.S. and Global Markets, 5th Edition*, a recent report by market research publisher Packaged Facts. Retail dollar sales in the \$16 billion natural and specialty cheese market are forecast to grow by a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 4 percent during 2014-2018.

"The broadening of the American palette beyond traditional favorites, cheddar and mozzarella, is driving growth of higher priced specialty and ethnic cheeses. Consumers are generally looking for products that are more indulgent, with new tastes and experiences, or healthier, more nutritious indulgences that still taste good," says Packaged Facts research director David Sprinkle.

On the indulgent side, flavors of some newly launched cheeses continue to be more robust, with smoky, peppery, and gourmet varieties most prevalent. On the health side, marketers have continued to promote cheese as fundamentally nutritious and good tasting, despite its high fat content. Sodium as well as fat content are challenges to growth, and marketers have been addressing consumer health and diet concerns with better tasting reduced salt and fat cheeses, and cheeses made from healthier milk. Various recent healthier, better-for-you cheese launches address other needs and desires such as low lactose/lactose free and organic ingredients.

Cheese sales have also benefitted from the snacking trend. Marketers are introducing products that cater to hectic, busy consumers looking for convenience in the form of products that are easy to use and store while also good for on-the-go consumption. These and other products also address the needs of the growing single or dual household segment that wants smaller sizes that are easier and more affordable to purchase and consume. Meanwhile, moms perhaps are the real heroes when purchasing cheese products, and they drive sales of snack-friendly forms such as string/stick cheese given to their kids.

About Packaged Facts

Packaged Facts, a division of MarketResearch.com, publishes market intelligence on a wide range of consumer market topics, including consumer demographics and shopper insights, consumer financial products and services, consumer goods and retailing, consumer packaged goods, and pet products and services. Packaged Facts also offers a full range of custom research services.

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