



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### AMERICAN CHEESE SOCIETY RELEASES KEY FINDINGS FROM 2016 STATE OF THE U.S. ARTISAN/SPECIALTY CHEESE INDUSTRY SURVEY

*Denver, CO (January 22, 2017)* – The American Cheese Society (ACS) has released a Report of Key Findings from its inaugural 2016 State of the U.S. Artisan/Specialty Cheese Industry Survey. This report provides a snapshot of the small businesses that make up the community of artisan, farmstead, and specialty cheesemakers in America – a community that has been growing for years, with very little real data available to provide greater insight into this market segment. The survey attempts to fill that void by providing data reported directly from producers.

For this survey, ACS identified and reached out to more than 900 artisan, farmstead, and specialty cheesemakers operating in the U.S. The survey was conducted on behalf of ACS by agricultural economists at the University of Connecticut and University of Georgia with funding provided by the American Cheese Education Foundation.

The newly released report highlights key findings in three areas: Cheesemaker Demographics (location, production volume, product types); Cheesemaking Practices (milk sources, milk types, cheese aging); and Business Insights (sales channels, revenues and profit margins, employees, facilities). There were over 900 artisan, farmstead, and specialty cheesemakers operating in the U.S. at the time of the survey distribution. Key findings among respondents showed that in the past year:

- 74% produced 50,000 lbs of cheese or less.
- 66% made their cheese using milk from their own animals.
- 67% of businesses reported gross revenues under \$500,000.
- 92% of their production was sold domestically.
- 42% say they produce other dairy items in addition to cheese.

Additional data from this survey will be released throughout the year in reports that focus on food safety practices and business benchmarking.

Copies of the Report of Key Findings will be available at the American Cheese Society's booth at the Winter Fancy Food Show in San Francisco (booth #5017) from January 22-24, 2017. A PDF is also available for download at [www.cheesesociety.org/events-education/state-of-the-industry](http://www.cheesesociety.org/events-education/state-of-the-industry).

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#### **About the American Cheese Society (ACS)**

The American Cheese Society (ACS) is the leader in promoting and supporting American cheeses, representing over 1,700 cheese industry professionals. ACS provides the cheese community with educational resources and networking opportunities while encouraging the highest standards of cheesemaking focused on safety and sustainability. Learn more at [www.cheesesociety.org](http://www.cheesesociety.org).