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American Cheese Society Launches ACS T.A.S.T.E. TEST™ First Exam to Be Held July 25, 2018 in Pittsburgh, PA



Denver, CO (January 21, 2018) – The American Cheese Society (ACS) is launching a new certification exam, the ACS T.A.S.T.E. Test™ (Technical, Aesthetic, Sensory, Tasting Evaluation). The exam evaluates cheese professionals' knowledge and skills in the assessment of cheese, from determining cheese condition and quality to evaluating cheese flavor, body, texture, and appearance. Individuals who pass the exam will earn the title of ACS Certified Cheese Sensory Evaluator™, or ACS CCSE™.

The T.A.S.T.E. Test™ is the second industry certification exam offered by ACS. The first exam, the ACS Certified Cheese Professional® Exam, was launched in 2012 and has since certified more than 900 cheese professionals. Whereas the ACS CCP Exam® evaluates candidates' understanding of core competencies common across the majority of cheese industry jobs, the T.A.S.T.E. Test™ is focused exclusively on the sensory and organoleptic assessment of cheese. It promotes the standardization of cheese professionals' approach to communicating about these aspects of cheese, benefiting stakeholders at all levels of the cheese production and distribution chain, from cheesemakers to the consumers who purchase and enjoy their cheese.

The T.A.S.T.E. Test™ is divided into three sections: cheese identification, assessment, and evaluation; single attribute identification; and single flaw/fault identification. Candidates are evaluated against a rigorous and widely respected standard developed using methods employed by the American Dairy Standards Association. Those individuals who pass the exam will receive a lapel pin, embroidered patch, and a certificate, along with the right to call themselves an *ACS Certified Cheese Sensory Evaluator™ or ACS CCSE™*.

Nora Weiser, ACS Executive Director, states: "We are excited that our T.A.S.T.E. Test™ will provide yet another opportunity for cheese professionals to showcase their expertise and differentiate their skillset. It also sets the standard with a common lexicon for how the industry defines and describes cheese."

The ACS T.A.S.T.E. Test™ will take place on July 25, 2018 in Pittsburgh, PA during *Forged in Cheese*, the 35th Annual ACS Conference & Competition. Applications will be accepted from February 1 through March 30, 2018 or until spaces are filled. All candidates must meet a set of minimum eligibility requirements including work and/or education hours in the industry, or they must be an ACS Certified Cheese Professional® in good standing. Due to the technical nature of its content, the exam is not intended for enthusiasts.

To learn more about the ACS T.A.S.T.E. Test™, visit <http://www.cheesesociety.org/certification/taste-test/>.

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About the American Cheese Society (ACS)

ACS is the leading organization supporting the understanding, appreciation, and promotion of artisan, farmstead, and specialty cheeses produced in the Americas. At 1,800 members strong, ACS provides advocacy, education, business development, and networking opportunities for cheesemakers, retailers, enthusiasts, and extended industry. ACS strives to continually raise the quality and availability of cheese in the Americas. ACS's certification programs, including the ACS CCP® Exam and the ACS T.A.S.T.E. Test™, encourage improved standards of comprehensive cheese knowledge and service in the cheese industry. For more information, visit www.cheesesociety.org.