AMERICAN CHEESE SOCIETY JUDGING & COMPETITION
2019 CATEGORIES

A. FRESH UNRIPENED CHEESES
Cheese Curds, Cottage Cheese, Cream Cheese, Fromage Blanc, Fromage Frais, Impastata, Mascarpone, Quark, Ricotta
Excluded: Cheeses with any added flavor (Refer to Category KA), Queso Blanco–types (Refer to Category G), Neufchatel (Refer to Category J), Fresh Goat Cheese (Refer to Category N), Crème Fraiche (Refer to Category Q)
AH: Cheese Curds¹ – all milks
AM: Mascarpone and Cream Cheese – made from cow’s milk
AQ: Fromage Blanc, Fromage Frais, and Quark – made from cow’s milk
AR: Ricotta – made from goat's milk
AS: Cottage Cheese, Cream Cheese, Fromage Blanc, Fromage Frais, Mascarpone, Quark, and Ricotta – made from sheep's milk
AX: Cottage Cheese, Cream Cheese, Fromage Blanc, Fromage Frais, Mascarpone, Quark, and Ricotta – made from mixed, or other milks

OPEN CATEGORY – FRESH UNRIPENED CHEESES
This category is for cheese that does not belong in any of the above listed categories.
AC: Open Category – Fresh Unripened Cheeses – made from cow's milk

Cheese Curds (Category AH)¹
ACS recognizes cheese curds as the fresh, solid, unripened form of curdled / soured / cultured / fermented milk that is the foundation for Cheddar and other cheeses, unique in flavor and texture, and optimally consumed within a day of its production.

B. SOFT-RIPENED CHEESES
White surface mold ripened cheeses (Brie, Camembert, Coulommiers, etc.)
Excluded: Cheeses with any added flavor (Refer to Category KB), Washed Rind Cheeses (Refer to Category TB)
External Molded Blue Cheeses (Refer to Category F)
BB: Brie – made from cow’s milk
BC: Camembert – made from cow's milk
BT: Triple Crème – soft ripened / cream added – all milks

OPEN CATEGORY – SOFT-RIPENED CHEESES
This category is for cheese that does not belong in any of the above listed categories.
BA: Open Category – Soft-Ripened Cheeses – made from cow’s milk
BG: Open Category – Soft-Ripened Cheeses – made from goat's milk
BS: Open Category – Soft-Ripened Cheeses – made from sheep's milk
BX: Open Category – Soft-Ripened Cheeses – made from mixed, or other milks

C. AMERICAN ORIGINALS
Cheeses recognized by the ACS as uniquely American in their original forms:
Brick Cheese, Brick Muenster, Colby, Dry Jack, Monterey Jack, Teleme
Excluded: Cheeses with any added flavor (Refer to Category KM)
CB: Brick Cheese – made from cow’s milk
CD: Dry Jack – made from cow’s milk
CJ: Monterey Jack – made from cow’s milk
CM: Brick Muenster – made from cow’s milk
CY: Colby – made from cow’s milk
CT: Teleme – made from cow’s milk

(Cont.)
**ORIGINAL RECIPE / OPEN CATEGORY**

This category is for cheese that does not belong in any of the above listed categories. Cheesemakers will be asked for a brief explanation of what differentiates their entry.

Cheeses recognized by the ACS as:

- Unique in their recipe and formulation
- Different from other acknowledged recipes for cheese types
- Created with a combination of at least THREE of the following elements that causes it to be globally new and unique from all other cheese recipes:
  - **RECIPE** – Measurable amount of any or all of these: pH, vat time, moisture, acidity, treatment of the curd, use of whey or other manipulation of the raw materials of milk or culture or starter agent or salting, brining, or pressing that adds an obvious difference to an existing recipe or is completely new from all other cheese recipes.
  - **TEXTURE** – Noticeable and desirable cheese texture qualities with an obvious tactile or mouth feel sensation.
  - **COMBINATION OF TWO OR MORE CHEESES OR TWO OR MORE MILKS** – Must be dairy milk (not soy or almond or other non-animal source).
  - **APPEARANCE/ RIND DEVELOPMENT** – The creation of enhanced cheese surface or rind development that alters the cheese and/or its appearance, flavor or texture and contributes to its uniqueness as an original recipe cheese.
  - **FLAVOR** – Create an obvious profile of a specific flavor or combination of flavors not available in other cheese.
  - **NON-DAIRY INGREDIENTS** – The addition of natural, non-artificial flavor agents or ingredients that contributes to the uniqueness of the cheese as an original recipe cheese. The use of ingredients and flavor agents commonly used in cheeses entered into Category K: herbs, seasoning, peppercorns, hot peppers, fruits and liquids is strongly discouraged. Added ingredients should be in support of making a cheese creatively unique and not the dominant flavor.

CC: Original Recipe / Open Category – made from cow's milk
CG: Original Recipe / Open Category – made from goat's milk
CS: Original Recipe / Open Category – made from sheep's milk
CX: Original Recipe / Open Category – made from mixed or other milks

**D. AMERICAN MADE / INTERNATIONAL STYLE**

Cheese modeled after or based on recipes for established European or other international types or styles (Abondance, Beaufort, Butterkase, Caerphilly, English Territorials, Gruyere, Juustoleipa, Monastery, Port Salut-styles, etc.)

**Excluded:** Cheeses with any added flavor, including Leyden (Refer to Category KD), Cheeses with a washed rind (Refer to Category T), all Cheddars (Refer to Category E), all Hispanic/Portuguese-style (Refer to Category G), all Italian-style Pasta Filata types, Grating types and Mozzarella types (Refer to Category H), all Feta (Refer to Category I)

DD: Dutch-style (Gouda, Edam, etc.) – all milks
DE: Emmental-style with Eye Formation (Swiss, Baby Swiss, Blocks, Wheels, etc.) – made from cow’s milk

**ALLOWED:** Cheesemakers producing traditional Emmental wheels (180 lb. approx.) are permitted to submit cuts from original wheels. Entries cut from original wheels must weigh a minimum of 22 lbs.

**NOT ALLOWED:** Emmental wheels, blocks, or cuts that have been plugged, cored, or otherwise visibly sampled prior to entry.

**OPEN CATEGORY – AMERICAN MADE/INTERNATIONAL STYLE**

This category is for cheese that does not belong in any of the above listed categories.

DC: Open Category – American Made/International Style – made from cow's milk
DG: Open Category – American Made/International Style – made from goat's milk
DS: Open Category – American Made/International Style – made from sheep's milk
DX: Open Category – American Made/International Style – made from mixed, or other milks
E. CHEDDARS
All Cheddars – all milks – Based on age at time of Judging & Competition.
**Excluded:** Cheddars with any added flavors (Refer to Category KE), Smoked Cheeses (Refer to Category L)
EA: Aged Cheddar – aged 13 months through 23 months – all milks
EC: Cheddar – aged through 12 months – made from cow’s milk
EG: Cheddar – aged through 12 months – made from goat’s, sheep’s, buffalo’s, mixed, or other milk
EX: Mature Cheddar – aged 24 months through 47 months – all milks
EE: Mature Cheddar – aged 48 or more months – all milks
EW: Cheddar wrapped in cloth, linen – aged through 12 months – all milks
EB: Cheddar wrapped in cloth, linen – aged 13 or more months – all milks

F. BLUE MOLD CHEESES
All cheeses ripened with *Penicillium roqueforti* or *glaucum*
**Excluded:** Blue Mold Cheeses with Flavor Added (Refer to Category KC), Smoked Blue Cheeses (Refer to Category L)

**RINDLESS BLUE–VEINED CHEESE**
Defined as having no additional rind or coating on the external face of the cheese (Roquefort-style, Danish Blue-style, etc.).
FC: Rindless Blue-veined – made from cow’s milk
FG: Rindless Blue-veined – made from goat’s milk
FS: Rindless Blue-veined – made from sheep’s milk
FX: Rindless Blue-veined – made from mixed, or other milks

**BLUE–VEINED CHEESES WITH RIND OR EXTERNAL COATING**
Defined as a fully developed rind growth different from the naturally occurring blue (Bleu de Gex, Bingham Hill Rustic Blue, etc.). The rind can include white mold (soft ripened mold/*Penicillium candidum*; Cambozola, etc.)
External Coatings include non-mold coatings such as nettles, ash, herbs, leaves, spices, crust, cloth, oils, etc.
FK: Blue-veined with a rind or external coating – made from cow’s milk
FL: Blue-veined with a rind or external coating – made from goat’s milk
FM: Blue-veined with a rind or external coating – made from sheep’s milk
FZ: Blue-veined with a rind or external coating – made from mixed, or other milks

**EXTERNAL BLUE–MOLDED/RINDED CHEESES**
Cheeses having NO INTERNAL BLUE VEINING but which DO have a rind, covering or crust made of BLUE MOLD which is completely different and separate from the cheese paste (Hubbardston Blue, Montbriac, etc.)
FE: External Blue-molded cheeses – all milks

NOTE – All entries in this category will be cooked for judging.

G. HISPANIC & PORTUGUESE STYLE CHEESES
Cheeses made in the Americas based on the recipes of the Central and South American, Cuban, Hispanic, Latino, Mexican, Portuguese, and Spanish communities.
**Excluded:** Cheeses with any added flavors (Refer to Category KG), Smoked Cheeses (Refer to Category L)

GA: Ripened, Aged over 90 days (Anejo, Cincho, Cotija, Flamingo Bolla, Prato) – all milks
GC: Fresh, Unripened (Acoreano, Freir, Queijo Blanco, Queso Andino, Queso Blanco, Queso Campesino, Queso Crema, Queso de Pena, Queso Fresco) – all milks
GM: Cooking Hispanic – Cheeses intended to be consumed heated or melted (Chihuahua, Para Freir, Quesadilla, Quesillo, etc.) – all milks

NOTE – All entries in this category will be cooked for judging.

H. ITALIAN TYPE CHEESES
**Excluded:** Cheeses with any added flavor (Refer to Category K), Crescenza, Mascarpone, and Ricotta (Refer to Category A), Blue Cheeses (Refer to Category F), Smoked Cheeses (Refer to Category L), Washed Rind Cheeses (Refer to Category T)
HA: Grating types (Aged Asiago, Domestic Parmesan, Grana, Reggianito, Sardo) – all milks
Romano made only from cow’s or goat’s milk (for sheep milk Romano please refer to Category OU)
HD: Traditional Regional Italian Cheeses (including but not limited to: Mezzo Secco, Asiago Piccante and Fresca, Piave, Montasio, Caciotta, Bra, Ragusano, Fontina, Fontal, Toma, Robiola Natural Rind, etc.) – all milks

PLEASE NOTE: If using an original (new) name but following a traditional recipe, cheesemaker must identify cheese of origin in the comment field.
HP: Pasta Filata types (Provolone, Caciocavallo) – all milks
HM: Mozzarella types (Brick, Scamorza, String Cheese) – all milks
HY: Fresh Mozzarella – 8 oz. or More (Balls or Shapes) – all milks

PLEASE NOTE: Sizes listed in HY refer to the size of the individual mozzarella ball, not the weight of the package.
HZ: Fresh Mozzarella – Under 8 oz. (Ovalini, Bocconcini, Ciliegine sizes) – all milks

PLEASE NOTE: Sizes listed in HZ refer to the size of the individual mozzarella ball, not the weight of the package.
HB: Burrata – Fresh mozzarella encasing a distinctly separate core made from softer curd and cream, or other soft cheese – all milks

I. FETA CHEESES
Excluded: Cheeses with any added flavors (Refer to Category KI)
IC: Feta – made from cow's milk
IG: Feta – made from goat's milk
IS: Feta – made from sheep's milk
IX: Feta – made from mixed, or other milks

J. LOW FAT / LOW SALT CHEESES
Each cheese entry must be labeled with one of the following terms:

- **Fat-Free**: less than 0.5 grams fat per labeled serving size & no added fat or oil
- **Low Fat**: maximum 3 grams total fat per serving for serving size if serving size is more than 30 grams or 2 tablespoons; and 3 grams of fat or less per 50 grams of product if serving size is less than 30 grams or less than 2 tablespoons.
- **Light or Lite**: if less than 50% of calories come from fat the cheese label must show a 33.3% reduction of calories than referenced amount or 50% reduction in fat. If more than 50% of calories come from fat, the cheese labels must show a minimum of 50% reduction of fat per reference amount.
- **Reduced Fat**: minimum 25% reduction in total fat per referenced amount.


Excluded: Cheeses with any added flavors(Refer to Category KJ), Smoked Cheeses (Refer to Category L)
JL: Fat Free and Low Fat cheeses – Limited to cheeses with 3 grams or less total fat per serving size – all milks
JR: Light/Lite and Reduced Fat cheeses – Limited to cheeses with 25 – 50% reduction of fat per serving size when 50% of calories in the serving size come from fat – all milks

K. FLAVORED CHEESES, BUTTER, AND CULTURED DAIRY PRODUCTS
Cheeses, butters, and cultured dairy products containing ingredients distinct from, and not included in, the dairy process itself. Ingredients are either blended internally or applied externally for the purpose of adding additional flavors not found in those dairy products themselves.

Entries are judged on the quality of the base cheese or dairy product and the complementary balance of its added flavors.

Excluded: Smoked Cheeses (Refer to Category L)
KA: Fresh Unripened Cheese with Flavor Added (Cream Cheese, Fromage Blanc, Fromage Frais, Impastata, Quark, etc.) – cow, sheep, mixed, and other milks (All fresh 100% goat milk cheeses, refer to Category KN)
KL: Cheese Curds with Flavor Added – all milks
KB: Soft-Ripened with Flavor Added – all milks
KD: International-Style with Flavor Added – all milks
KE: Cheddar with Flavor Added – all milks

(Cont.)
KF: Farmstead Cheese with Flavor Added (must conform to all guidelines in Category M) – all milks
KG: Hispanic-Style with Flavor Added – all milks
KI: Feta with Flavor Added – all milks
KJ: Reduced Fat Cheese with Flavor Added – all milks
KK: Rubbed-Rind Cheese with added flavor ingredients rubbed or applied on the exterior surface of the cheese only. Excluded: Washed-Rind cheeses, refer to Category T) – all milks
KM: American Originals with Flavor Added – all milks
KN: Fresh Goat Cheese with Flavor Added – aged under 30 days – 100% goat’s milk
KO: Sheep Cheese with Flavor Added – 100% sheep’s milk
(Cont.)
KQ: Yogurt and Cultured Products with Flavor Added (Set yogurts, Greek-style, dips, etc.) – all milks
KV: Yogurt and Cultured Products with Flavor Added (Drinkable, pourable, smoothie, etc.) – all milks
KR: Butter with Flavor Added – all milks
KS: Cold-Pack and Club Cheeses with Flavor Added – with a maximum moisture of 42% – all milks

OPEN CATEGORY – FLAVOR ADDED
This category is for cheese that does not belong in any of the above listed categories.
Excluded: Pasteurized Process Cheese of any kind
KC: Open Category - Cheeses with Flavor Added – all milks and mixed milks

L. SMOKED CHEESES
Information about the smoke source (i.e. natural and/or smoke flavorings) must accompany each cheese entry.
LM: Smoked Italian Styles (Mozzarella, Scamorza, Bocconcini, Ovalini, etc.) – all milks
LD: Smoked Cheddars – all milks

OPEN CATEGORY – SMOKED CHEESES
This category is for cheese that does not belong in any of the above listed categories.
LC: Open Category – Smoked Cheeses – made from cow's milk
LG: Open Category – Smoked Cheeses – made from goat's milk
LS: Open Category – Smoked Cheeses – made from sheep's milk
LX: Open Category – Smoked Cheeses – made from mixed, or other milks

M. FARMSTEAD CHEESES
In order for a cheese to be classified as “farmstead,” as defined by the American Cheese Society, the cheese must be made with milk from the farmer’s own herd, or flock, on the farm where the animals are raised. Milk used in the production of farmstead cheeses may not be obtained from any outside source. Farmstead cheeses may be made from all types of milk.
Excluded: Cheeses with any added flavors (Refer to Category KF)

Limited to cheeses and fermented milk products produced with:
- Milk obtained solely from the farmer’s own herds/flocks on the farm where the animals are raised
- Care and attention given to the purity, quality, and flavor of the milk
- Production primarily accomplished by hand
- Natural ripening with emphasis on development of characteristic flavor and texture, without the use of shortcuts and techniques to increase yield and shelf life at the expense of quality
- Respect for the traditions and history of cheesemaking regardless of the size of the production

MA: Farmstead Category – Aged less than 60 days – all milks
MC: Farmstead Category – Aged 60 days or more – 39% or higher Moisture – made from cow’s milk
ME: Farmstead Category – Aged 60 days or more – Less than 39% Moisture – made from cow’s milk
MG: Farmstead Category – Aged 60 days or more – made from goat’s milk
MS: Farmstead Category – Aged 60 days or more – made from sheep's milk
MX: Farmstead Category – Aged 60 days or more – made from mixed, or other milks
N. GOAT’S MILK CHEESES
Open to all shapes and styles of 100% goat’s milk cheeses; based on age at time of Judging & Competition.
Excluded: Cheeses with any added flavor (Refer to Category KN), Cheese Curds, Cottage Cheese, Cream Cheese, Fromage Blanc, Fromage Frais, Mascarpone, Quark, and Ricotta
NO: Fresh Rindless Goat’s Milk Cheese Aged 0 to 30 Days (vegetable ash coating permitted)
   Extruded shape, goat logs, goat cheese in cylinders, buche style, etc.
   Fresh goat cheese in containers, cups, tubs, cryovac bags
NS: Fresh Goat’s Milk Cheese Aged 0 to 30 Days – Hand-shaped, formed or molded into pyramid, disc, drum, crottin, basket or other shape (vegetable ash coating permitted)
NT: Goat’s Milk Cheese Aged 31 to 60 Days
NU: Goat’s Milk Cheese Aged Over 60 Days

O. SHEEP’S MILK CHEESES
Open to all shapes and styles of 100% sheep’s milk cheeses; based on age at time of Judging & Competition.
Excluded: Cheeses with any added flavors (Refer to Category KO)
OO: Fresh Rindless Sheep’s Milk Cheese Aged 0 to 30 Days
OT: Sheep’s Milk Cheese Aged 31 to 60 Days
OU: Sheep’s Milk Cheese Aged Over 60 Days

P. MARINATED CHEESES
Entries must identify the type of marinade (olive oil, safflower oil, vinegar, wine, spirits and liqueur, etc., including additional ingredients). Entries do not need to be in the marinade solution at the time of judging.
PC: Cheeses Marinated in Liquids and Ingredients – made from cow's milk
PG: Cheeses Marinated in Liquids and Ingredients – made from goat's milk
PS: Cheeses Marinated in Liquids and Ingredients – made from sheep's milk
PX: Cheeses Marinated in Liquids and Ingredients – made from mixed, or other milks

Q. PLAIN CULTURED MILK and CREAM PRODUCTS
Limited to Buttermilk, Yogurt, Sour Cream, Crème Fraiche, Kefir, Labneh, etc.
Excluded: Cultured products with any added flavors (Refer to Category KQ), Cultured products made with added oil (Refer to Category P)
QF: Crème Fraiche and Sour Cream Products – made from cow’s milk
QK: Drinkable Cultured Products, Kefir, Drinkable Yogurt, Buttermilk, or other drinkable cultured products – all milks
QL: Labneh, Greek Style Yogurt, and Other Strained Cultured Products – all milks
QY: Yogurts – Plain with NO Additional Ingredients – made from cow’s milk
QD: Yogurts – Plain with NO Additional Ingredients – made from goat’s milk
QS: Yogurts – Plain with NO Additional Ingredients – made from sheep's milk
QX: Yogurts – Plain with NO Additional Ingredients – made from mixed, or other milks

R. BUTTERS
Whey Butter, Salted Butter, Sweet Butter, Cultured Butter, etc.
Excluded: Butters with any added flavors (Refer to Category KR)
RC: Salted Butter with or without cultures – made from cow's milk
RO: Unsalted Butter with or without cultures – made from cow’s milk
RM: Butter with or without cultures – made from goat's milk
RS: Butter with or without cultures – made from sheep's milk
RX: Butter with or without cultures – made from mixed, or other milks
S. **COLD-PACK AND CLUB CHEESES**
Produced by grinding and mixing one or more natural cheeses, without the aid of heat and/or emulsifying salts. Cold pack cheese and cheese food, unflavored – Maximum Moisture 42%.
**Excluded:** Pasteurized Process Cheese of any kind. Cheeses with any added flavor (Refer to Categories KA, KC, or KS)
SC: Open Category – Cold-Pack and Club Cheeses – all milks

T. **WASHED RIND CHEESES**
Cheeses with a rind or crust washed in salted brine, whey, beer, wine, other alcohol, or grape lees.
**Excluded:** Blue Cheeses with a washed rind (Refer to Category F)

TB: Soft-Ripened Washed Rind – Cheese using soft ripened cheese-make recipes with these differences from white mold rinds: elevated pH and lower acidity or high moisture over 42% or exhibiting an obvious smeared or sticky rind or crust (*B-Linens/ Brevibacterium*) – all milks

**Examples of bacterial surface-ripened cheeses in the style of:** Alsatian Munster, Chimay, Epoisses, Italico, Langres, Limburger, Pont L’Eveque, Robiola/Taleggio, St. Nectaire, Vacherin Mont d’Or.

**Excluded:** Brined/washed rind cheeses with very firm texture and a moisture content less than 42%. (Please refer to the Open Category – Washed Rind Cheeses below.)
TR: Raclette-style – Aged over 45 days – Alpine-style cheese able to be scraped when warmed and melts without excess free oil release – all milks  **NOTE – All entries in this category will be cooked for judging.**

**OPEN CATEGORY – WASHED RIND CHEESES**
This category is for cheese that does not belong in any of the above listed categories and that have a moisture content up to 42%.

**Examples:** Appenzeller-style, Vignerons-style, Alpine-style, Monastery-style
TC: Open Category – Washed Rind Cheeses – made from cow's milk
TG: Open Category – Washed Rind Cheeses – made from goat's milk
TS: Open Category – Washed Rind Cheeses – made from sheep's milk
TX: Open Category – Washed Rind Cheeses – made from mixed, or other milks