



Wisconsin Ag News – Specialty Cheese

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Wisconsin Specialty Cheese Production Up 10 Percent

With 25 percent of the nation's total cheese production, Wisconsin maintained its ranking as the nation's top cheese producing state in 2021. At 877 million pounds, specialty cheese accounted for 25 percent of Wisconsin's total cheese production. This was an increase of 82.5 million pounds from 2020. Eighty-eight of the State's 115 cheese plants manufactured at least one type of specialty cheese during 2021.

Wisconsin cheese makers are known for offering a wide variety of high quality specialty cheeses. A specialty cheese is a value-added product which commands a premium price. According to the Wisconsin Specialty Cheese Institute, the nature of specialty cheese is derived from one or more unique qualities, such as exotic origin, particular processing or design, limited supply, unusual application or use, and extraordinary packaging or channel of sale. The common denominator is its very high quality.

Specialty Cheese Production – Wisconsin: 2020 and 2021

Type	2020 number of producers	2020 revised production (1,000 pounds)	2021 number of producers	2021 production (1,000 pounds)	Change in production from 2020 (percent)
Asiago.....	13	30,919	14	35,651	15
Cheddar ¹	40	36,652	37	38,931	6
Farmers.....	13	1,097	10	953	-13
Feta.....	10	92,150	10	107,410	17
Gorgonzola.....	7	13,531	7	15,789	17
Gouda.....	32	13,595	29	15,581	15
Italian Fontina.....	11	9,841	(D)	(D)	(NA)
Havarti.....	(D)	(D)	12	45,478	(NA)
Hispanic.....	19	105,068	22	111,209	6
Limburger.....	1	369	1	412	12
Monterey Jack ¹	16	17,093	(D)	(D)	(NA)
Parmesan Wheel.....	6	77,558	7	83,350	7
Romano Wheel.....	7	10,049	6	10,733	7
All Other ²	52	386,582	57	411,482	6
Total ³	90	794,504	88	876,979	10

(D) Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual operations.

(NA) Not available.

¹ Includes only specialty types of this variety.

² Combined to avoid disclosure of individual plant data. Includes: Alpine, American Grana, Auribella, Bel Paese, Blue, Brie and Camembert, Butterkase, specialty Colby, Edam, Fior di Latte, Fontinella, Gruyere, Havarti (2020 only), other specialty Italian, Italic, Italian Fontina (2021 only), Juustoleipa, Kasser, Krakow, Mascarpone, Middle Eastern cheeses, specialty Monterey Jack (2021 only), specialty Mozzarella, other specialty Parmesan, Pepato, Peperon, specialty Provolone, Quark, other specialty Romano, Soft-ripened, specialty Swiss, Tvarog Polish, and Yogurt cheese.

³ Total cheese plants producing one or more specialty cheeses.