

OFFICIAL JUDGE & ENTRANT MEDIA GUIDE

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

CHEESE



CONTEST





ABOUT THE CONTEST

The **World Championship Cheese Contest®**, hosted biennially by the Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association since 1957, is the **world's premier technical competition** for cheese, butter, cultured products, and dry dairy ingredients. The 2026 Contest will take place March 3-5 at the Monona Terrace Community & Convention Center in Madison, Wisconsin.

BY THE NUMBERS: ENTRIES

3,375 entries of cheese, butter, cultured products, and dry dairy ingredients across **150** entry classes including:



Open Class: Cheddar Styles; Cottage Cheese, Reduced or Low Fat; Gouda, Extra Aged (over 18 months); Raclette, Flavored; Butter, Cultured; Open Class: Cultured Products; Open Class: Shredded Italian Style Cheese; Whey Protein Isolate, Acidified; Sour Cream; and Cultured Dairy Dips

25 countries:

Argentina, Australia, Austria, Canada, China, Croatia, Denmark, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States

34 U.S. states and territories:

Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, and Wisconsin

TOP FIVE COUNTRIES BY NUMBER OF ENTRIES:

1. United States
2. Switzerland
3. Netherlands
4. Austria
5. Spain

TOP FIVE CLASSES BY NUMBER OF ENTRIES:

1. Cheddar, Aged One to Two Years
2. Cheddar, Sharp (6 months to 1 year)
3. Open Class: Hard Cheeses, Flavored
4. Cheddar, Mild (0 to 3 Months)
5. Open Class: Shredded Cheese Blends

BY THE NUMBERS: JUDGES

56 expert judges hailing from

22 countries:

Australia, Austria, Brazil, Canada, Croatia, Denmark, Ecuador, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, and the United States

13 U.S. states and territories:

California, Idaho, Illinois, Missouri, New Jersey, Oregon, Puerto Rico, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Washington, and Wisconsin



SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media can be a quick, effective way to reach members of the media and potential customers. It's easy - share content from the official Contest pages, or create your own using the hashtag **#CheeseContest!**

FOLLOW, TAG, AND SHARE!

Need inspiration? Here are some ideas:

Before the Contest:

- Share a picture of your product(s) with a short caption explaining why you chose to enter the Contest.
- If you have entered in the past, share a picture from a previous Contest with a short caption about what it means to you to enter once again in 2026.
- Share a news article you've seen about the Contest or your business.
- Share a post from our Facebook page.
- Post about your win!

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS (ALL TIMES CENTRAL)

Tuesday, March 3

9:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
Preliminary Judging

10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
Public Hours

Wednesday, March 4

8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
Preliminary Judging

10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
Public Hours

Thursday, March 5

9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
Championship Round Judging

2:00-2:15 p.m.
Livestreamed Announcement of
World Champion and Runners-Up

KEY MEDIA CONTACTS

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