

## D. CHEESE SALES & CONSUMPTION

### Cheese Sales & Consumption Overview

Cheese consumption continues to rise, continuing its three-decade march forward. More than 96.6 percent of American households purchase cheese (not including cream cheese) according to Information Resources Inc.

As consumers and foodservice vendors find new uses for old favorites and experiment with new varieties, 2009 cheese consumption was 32.9 pounds per capita, an increase of 10.2 percent per capita over 2000 and a 33.7 percent increase over 1990.

The industry estimates that there are now more than 300 varieties of cheese available in the U.S. marketplace. By far the two most popular single varieties of cheese in the United States are mozzarella (10.6 pound per capita) and cheddar (10.1 pounds per capita). A small but growing category is Hispanic cheese, which continued a decade-long upward climb in 2009; but consumption levels remain modest at 0.67 pounds per capita.

Per capita consumption of all Italian-type cheeses remained steady in 2009, at approximately 14 pounds. Mozzarella per capita consumption increased slightly in 2009 to 10.64 pounds over 10.59 in 2008. In the American-style category, cheddar increased a modest 0.3 percent over 2008, while consumption of other American varieties, which includes Colby and Monterey Jack, grew 6.5 percent to 3.3 pounds per capita in 2009.

In supermarkets, cheddar, mozzarella and American led volume sales in 2009, all three showing an increase over 2008 sales figures. Cheddar emerged as the leader with 593.7 million pounds sold, up 5.2 percent from 2008. American cheese, with 429 million pounds sold, increased by approximately 2.0 percent in 2009. Coming in third, was mozzarella at 306.7 million pounds sold, demonstrating an increase of 7.2 percent over 2008 sales.

*Note: The government provides figures on cheese consumption in per capita terms only; no total volume numbers are available. See the production chapter for total volume production numbers.*