

## D. CHEESE SALES & CONSUMPTION

### Cheese Sales & Consumption Overview

Cheese consumption continues to rise, prolonging its three-decade march forward. As consumers and foodservice find novel uses for old favorites and experiment with new varieties, 2007 cheese consumption reached a record high at 32.7 pounds per capita, a small (0.3%) increase over the previous record level set in 2006.

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 (10.9 pound per capita) and cheddar (10 pounds per capita). A small but growing category is Hispanic cheese, which continued a decade-long upward climb in 2007; but consumption levels remain modest at 0.63 pounds per capita.

Per capita consumption of all Italian-type cheeses grew by 2.5% in 2007 to 14 pounds. Mozzarella per capita consumption grew 4% in 2007. In the American-style category, cheddar decreased by approximately 0.5 pounds per capita consumption in 2007, while consumption of other American varieties remained almost the same.

In supermarkets, cheddar, mozzarella and processed American (primarily processed cheddar cheese) led volume sales in 2007. Cheddar emerged as the leader in 2007 with 571.3 million pounds sold, followed by processed American with nearly 515 million pounds sold. Coming in third, was mozzarella at 286.4 million pounds sold.

*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.*