

# Cheese - Ireland - April 2021

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## This report looks at the following areas:

- The impact of COVID-19 on consumer behaviour and cheese.
- The impact of Brexit and falling consumer prices on cheese.
- Opportunities in vegan/plant-based cheese.
- The opportunities for gut health claims in cheese.
- Opportunities in own-label products.
- Trends emerging from COVID-19.
- Eco and ethical issues affecting the cheese market.

The cheese market continues to grow every year, with cheese being a staple product in most Irish consumer homes. The current pandemic has also encouraged more indulgent behaviours, meaning consumers want to enjoy more luxury products such as cheeseboards. Gut health has become a big health concern that consumers are becoming more aware of due to COVID-19. This means consumers are seeking out more cheese products that contain ingredients such as probiotics, added calcium or added protein.

There is also a gap in the market for dairy-free/lactose-free cheese products as over a third of Iol consumers agree there should be more varieties of dairy-free/lactose-free cheese. With growing interest in vegan, plant-based or flexitarian diets, consumers are demanding more products to suit the needs of these diets. This leaves opportunities for companies to enter the Iol market with innovative cheese products to suit these dietary requirements.

Overall, the cheese category is forecasted to continue growing after being accelerated by the pandemic. Even though there are fears surrounding Brexit and how it is affecting demand for cheese across Iol, cheese is still a product that continues to be purchased by Irish consumers.



"Cheese usage has benefitted from the impact of COVID-19. Consumer prices have dropped and are predicted to continue to decline across Iol."

– **Natalie Magill, Market Research Analyst**

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