

Cheese - Ireland - 2022

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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
- The impact of the Russia-Ukraine conflict on the cheese market
- Trends emerging from COVID-19
- The opportunities for functional health claims in cheese
- Opportunities in cheese alternatives
- Ethical issues affecting the cheese market

As life returns to normal after the COVID-19 lockdowns and restrictions and the industry adapts to a post-Brexit market, cheese sales are expected to remain stable in the next few years. Increased cheese consumption at home meant that consumers were familiarising themselves with the product's versatility and cooking at home more often. This is likely to remain, even as consumers return to work and the hospitality industry reopens, as many of the behaviours adopted during the pandemic are likely to stick.

Several opportunities have been identified within the cheese market, including an interest in cheese alternatives (eg vegan/plant-based, dairy-free and lactose-free) as consumers have adapted to healthier and more ethical eating behaviours and shown a willingness to be more explorative and creative in their eating habits. This will add further momentum to ethical movements around the dairy industry, particularly regarding water usage, as the market continues to attend to its ethical issues in response to consumer attitudes and behaviours that are becoming increasingly invested in the sustainable practices of the companies/brands they buy from.

In summary, the cheese market is staying afloat amidst a number of disruptions in recent years and has identified windows of opportunity that can support the market's progression whilst supporting the planet.



“Cheese usage has increased amongst COVID-19 and Brexit, and sales are expected to remain stable amidst the impact of the conflict between Russia and Ukraine. Even if prices are due to increase, it is believed that cheese is a popular enough product in Irish households that consumers will continue to seek it out no matter the price”

– Rebecca Blenman, Market Research Analyst

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