

## Cheese - China - November 2012

Report Price: £2463.80 | \$3990.00 | €3129.79

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“Western fast food and desserts are becoming more popular. Sales of cheese have enjoyed robust growth, however growth in the cheese market in China is restricted by their limited knowledge of the product, its strange taste to the Chinese palate and a high retail price.”

– Nelly Mao – Senior Research Analyst

### In this report we answer the key questions:

- How can producers widen usage occasions for cheese?
- How can producers appeal to consumers using a positioning as healthy?
- How can domestic brands and small brands compete with foreign brands who are the market leaders in the cheese category?
- How can producers cater to the demand for premium cheese in the Chinese market?

Economic growth, reform and soaring consumption over recent years have driven rapid growth in Western restaurants and patisseries, particularly in large- and medium-sized cities. Western fast food and Western desserts such as pasta, hamburgers, pizza and cheesecake are becoming more and more popular, and are in large part responsible for stimulating Chinese people's interest in and taste for cheese. Against this background, sales of cheese at retail have recently enjoyed robust growth. However, per capita consumption in the category in China still trails far behind that in most Western nations. Growth in the cheese market in China is restricted by Chinese people's limited knowledge of the traditional Western dairy product, its strange taste to the Chinese palate and the high retail price of cheese due to supply shortages. The crux of the issue lies in how to incorporate cheese into Chinese people's daily diets. The gulf between per capita spending on cheese between China and Western countries highlights the considerable potential in the market.

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