Cheese-related patents focus on reducing cheese production's carbon footprint, improving the taste and nutrition of the end product, and on cheese-alternative NPD.

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Report Content

• At a glance
• Mintel’s perspective

WHAT CONSUMERS WANT AND WHY

- Graph 1: consumer behaviours related to cheese, 2022
• Consumers are aware of the nutritional benefits of cheese

PRODUCT INNOVATION TRENDS

• An opportunity exists to improve the nutritional profile of cheese
  - Graph 2: cheese and other dairy category launches, by selected claims, 2020-22
• Few cheese launches offer functional health benefits

THE PATENT LANDSCAPE

• Patents linked to dairy formulations have declined in recent years
  - Graph 3: patents related to dairy formulations, and those explicitly covering cheese, published each year, 2012-22
• China is leading with the majority of cheese patent grants
• The majority of granted patents related to cheese are owned by Asian dairy companies
  - Graph 4: top 10 organisations having granted patent families for cheese, 2022

Boost cheese’s nutritional profile

• Nutrient-fortified cheese launches can deliver healthy snacks for children
• Consumers seek cheese with health-boosting nutrition attributes
• Improve the probiotic content of cheese to provide various health benefits
• Look for ingredients that help to improve bone health
• Consumers recognise the need for lower-sodium products
• Opt for low-sodium cheese for health-conscious consumers
• Emerging innovations support salt reduction in cheese

Focus on taste and transparency

• Cheese launches promote clean-label and environmentally friendly attributes
• Attributes linked to taste, clean label and the environment are important to cheese consumers
• Look for techniques that improve the sensory profile of low-fat or high-protein cheese
• Innovative technologies can help to reduce the use of additives in cheese manufacturing
• Environmentally friendly cheese production can play a role in avoiding the ‘climate crisis’
• Techniques to reduce the time taken to produce cheese can help to increase productivity and thereby reduce cost

**Explore dairy-free cheese**

• Recent vegan cheese launches have improved taste and nutrition, and are free from certain allergens
• Consumers have the perception that plant-based cheese is healthier and ‘better for the planet’
• Fortification is key to enhancing the nutritional profile of plant-based cheese
• Improve the nutrition profile and sustainability of dairy alternatives with insect proteins
• Consumers seek dairy alternatives that taste as good as their traditional counterparts
  - Graph 5: dairy alternatives should resemble the taste and texture of dairy products as closely as possible, 2022
• Pay close attention to solutions that help to improve the organoleptic properties of plant-based cheese
• Lab-grown cheese could be the future
• Cheese ingredients made by novel tech such as lab-cultivation or precision-fermentation will prove competition to plant-based cheese alternatives

**THE IMPLICATION**

• Improved nutrition, taste and sustainability are the future of cheese

**APPENDIX**

• Research methodology
• Key cheese-related patent examples
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• Shape your future with Mintel bespoke patent analysis