

# Cheese...

## its nutrients offer health benefits

### Cheese can help fill nutrient gaps

- Cheese can provide calcium for people who don't meet daily recommendations and risk poor bone health.
- Cheese also provides protein, phosphorus, vitamin A and zinc to the U.S. diet.<sup>1</sup>
- Cheese not only tastes great, it's a convenient, portable and versatile food. When paired with fruits, vegetables and whole grains, it may help people eat more of these recommended food groups, including dairy.



### Cheese provides only 5% of the calories in the U.S. diet, but also:<sup>1</sup>

Calcium	21%
Phosphorus	11%
Protein	9%
Vitamin A	9%
Zinc	8%



Nutrient provided by cheese:	NUTRIENT'S ROLE IN THE BODY:
<b>Calcium</b>	Helps build and maintain strong bones and teeth; also important for nerves, muscle contraction and blood clotting.
<b>Phosphorus</b>	Helps strengthen bones and generate energy in the body's cells.
<b>Protein</b>	Builds and repairs tissues in the body while helping to balance fluids, transport nutrients and aid in muscle contraction.
<b>Vitamin A</b>	Helps maintain normal vision, skin and immune system; also important for bone growth.
<b>Zinc</b>	Supports the immune system, wound healing and ability to smell and taste.

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## Choose calories by the company they keep

Natural cheese is made with four simple ingredients, and process cheese is made from natural cheese. Cheese is a high-quality food rich in nutrients that has been, and continues to be, part of a healthy eating plan. Many cheeses are excellent sources of calcium and good sources of high-quality protein and phosphorus — providing three nutrients particularly important for helping to build and maintain healthy bones.<sup>2,3</sup> Some natural and process cheeses are fortified with vitamin D.

While nutrient profiles vary due to the large variety of cheeses, cheese contributes essential nutrients for good health to the U.S. diet, including calcium, phosphorus, protein, vitamin A and zinc. See chart to the left.



## What is a serving size of cheese?<sup>4</sup>

- 1 1/2 ounces of natural cheese or 2 ounces of process cheese.
- About four dice-size cubes is a visual reminder of a serving of cheese.



## Dairy industry working voluntarily to address sodium in cheese

Despite the fact that cheese contributes only 8 percent of the sodium to the U.S. diet, cheese makers are working together to proactively address public health as well as meet people's needs and lifestyles. Cheese makers continue to lead process control and product innovations as part of the solution to help lower sodium — all while maintaining strict expectations for food safety and taste.

## REFERENCES

- <sup>1</sup> Dairy Research Institute™, NHANES (2003-2006). Ages 2+ years. Data Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey. Hyattsville, Md.: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2003-2004; 2005-2006. Available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nhanes.htm>.
- <sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service. 2010. USDA National Nutrient Database for Standard Reference, Release 23. Nutrient Data Laboratory Home Page. Available at: <http://www.ars.usda.gov/ba/bhnrc/ndl>. Accessed March 9, 2011.
- <sup>3</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *Bone Health and Osteoporosis: A Report of the Surgeon General*. Rockville, Md.: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Surgeon General, 2004.
- <sup>4</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Agriculture. *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, 2010. 7th Edition, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, January 2011.

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