

A bright future for cheese-dairy professionals in France: consumers get to enjoy friendliness and diversity in a modern setting.

Survey conducted by the Cheese and Dairy Products Show

The results of a survey conducted in June 2019 of French cheese retailers who visited the Cheese and Dairy Products Show are now available. State of the market, cheese people in France are eating, cheese selections available in stores... here are the results of the survey.

Cheese retailers – a profession that is taking off in France!

A bright future for cheese retailers! That's what the results of this survey show – **69% of them reported stronger sales in 2018**, and 77% believe that the trend will continue over the next two years! A very satisfactory outlook, which is encouraging them to diversify, innovate and come up with new products, without compromising on the human side of things, which is so appreciated in the profession: **60% of cheese retailers make frequent changes to their selections, 58% organise events in their stores** (as opposed to 48% in 2015), 47% have original creations and 24% have a selection of non-food products on sale.

Cheese professionals are increasingly connected! Facebook and Instagram are the profession's two favourite social networks. **Indeed, 70% of them are active on Facebook, and 40% on Instagram.** They are ways for them to stay in contact with their customers, develop their loyalty and encourage them to pay them a visit.

With 50 new companies being set up and 30 stores being taken over every year in France*, cheese retailers is a job that has been gaining in popularity for several years now.

“The results of this exclusive study reassure us that our profession has a fine future. Indeed, thanks to our expertise and our knowledge of the products we sell, we are able to meet the needs of customers who are increasingly focused on quality and manufacturing methods. So, cheese retailers are open to new uses and consumer trends. The interest in foreign cheeses and the changes being made to the selections that we sell are evidence of this”

Claude Maret, President of the Federation of Cheeseretailers of France.

What are the consumer trends in France?

The French and cheese – a great love story that underpins everything in life! Although most cheese is eaten on cheese platters, 78% of professionals polled noted **an increase in cheese consumption as an appetiser, as well as meals comprised entirely of cheese** – which can certainly surprise guests (68%). And when French people are invited to other people's houses for dinner, they no longer bring wine or bouquets of flowers: instead, they prefer to delight their friends with cheese platters: 68% of cheese-dairy professionals have noted an increase in **cheese being given as a gift!**

Increasingly knowledgeable customers on the lookout for quality!



Although the French are big cheese consumers, **they are increasingly demanding when it comes to quality!**

According to cheese retailers, above everything else, consumers want products that are high quality and tasty, and which meet very specific criteria: **81% select products based on how they were manufactured** (raw or pasteurised milk) – 8% more than in 2015; 78% select their products based on the type of milk used (cow's, ewe's or goat's), whereas that was a criterion for fewer than 70% of them in 2015.

Customers are becoming more knowledgeable! In addition to traditional questions about production methods or type of milk, **80% of consumers ask about what wines go with particular cheeses**, 76% want to know how to make up a cheese platter, 72% ask about seasonality and **52% ask about the producer.**

The French also love foreign cheeses!

French cheese-dairy professionals sell around **16 foreign cheeses** – that's **12% of their products**. The five most popular foreign cheeses are: **Parmesan, Gorgonzola and Mozzarella** (Italy), **Blue Stilton** (UK) and **Manchego** (Spain)!

People in France appreciate diversity and enjoy trying foreign cheeses: **44% of customers ask for products not available in stores**, particularly Italian, British, Swiss and Spanish cheeses. To meet their expectations, **45% of cheese-dairy professionals are planning on expanding their range of foreign cheeses** – although the main obstacle is still purchase prices that are too high. A consumer trend that will be well represented at the 2020 Cheese and Dairy Products Show, which will be hosting more foreign producers.

Cheese but not just cheese. What else do cheese retailers sell?

Cheese retailers have an average range of **138 cheeses for sale**, giving customers a wide selection to choose from. But what else is available in their shops? **Dairy products**, obviously, such as butter, crème fraîche, yoghurts and *fromage blanc* (93%), as well as **eggs** (88%).

And more and more cheese retailers are encouraging their customers to try new taste experiences, by selling **wine** (93%, as opposed to 64% in 2015), **jams** (81%) and **honey** (68%). Some of the new products that many retailers are selling include **cooked meats** (51%) and **fruit juices** (42%) in a bid to cater to new consumer habits.

Visitors to the Cheese and Dairy Products Show will be able to find out about these consumer trends as well through events – such as workshops about unusual pairings – as well as being able to purchase fruit juices, jams and honey at the stands!



Comexposium survey conducted in June 2019. A total of 207 cheese retailers were interviewed. Survey conducted in 2011 and then again in 2015 based on the same questions.



About The Cheese and Dairy Products Show

The 16th edition of the Cheese and Dairy Products Show will run from **Sunday 23 to Wednesday 26 February 2020** at the Porte de Versailles Exhibition Centre (**France**). An exclusively **professional** international event for the cheese and dairy product sector, it will bring together 280 exhibitors (producers, manufacturers of equipment for trade, services, etc.) and 8000 purchasers from all over the world.

Note that as of the time of writing, 77% of the surface area has already been reserved.

Keep up-to-date with the latest news about the exhibition at www.salon-fromage.com



<http://bit.ly/2xf7KEI>



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