

MEDIA RELEASE

FEBRUARIE 2021



An initiative by the Consumer Education
Project of Milk SA

Cheese, full of goodness and a lunchbox favourite

Versatile and delicious, it's incredibly easy to make cheese one of your family's three-a-day dairy options, every day. Like other dairy, cheese is also a kid's top food favourite. Used as a tasty topping, an essential ingredient and a go-to sandwich filler, cheese also stands alone as a nutritious and satiating snack. Packed with protein, calcium, phosphorus and other essential nutrients, cheese, in all its many varieties, deserves its place as a healthy food item in your family's diet.

Understanding the benefits of cheese, how to choose it and how to use will help you to plan, shop and enjoy including cheese across breakfast, lunch and supper, and the snacks in between. Natural cheese is a fermented food, and while its exact origins are unknown, there is evidence from Ancient Rome and Ancient Egypt that the goodness of cheese has been recognised for thousands of years. Cheesemakers use milk, salt, beneficial bacteria and a natural enzyme known as rennet as the foundations for producing a vast array of cheeses. Different formulae and ageing processes result in different textures, flavours and colours that are all packed with goodness.

Maretha Vermaak, the registered dietitian at Rediscover Dairy says, "Cheese can make a significant contribution to your daily nutrient requirements – from the protein that supports healthy bone and muscle development and repair of body tissue; to the dental protection we get from the calcium and phosphorus by having cheese directly after a meal. As parents who are concerned about good nutrition for our growing children, it is great that cheese is also so completely delicious."

When it comes to choosing the cheeses we include in our family's meals and snacks, value for money is often top of mind. Luckily, today's cheese options range all the way from luxury to everyday prices and there's something to fit every budget. Proper storage of cheese also impacts on affordability because you want to avoid any food waste. Many cheeses freeze well, enabling you to buy specials or cheaper bulk options and safely freeze for later use. It often works well to buy a big block of a harder cheese such as cheddar or gouda, grate it all before its use-by-date and freeze the surplus for quick and easy use. Processed cheese spreads can be stored in the pantry until they are opened, and some varieties of cheeses, including sliced processed cheese, have longer shelf lives in the fridge. It's always important to check the labels when it comes to storage and the nutrient content of a food item. Proper meal planning, and shopping for value for money can help you to include more cheese, more often.

Another factor for many busy parents is convenience. The reality of our daily lives is that we often need fast solutions and time-savers. It helps to have nutritious options such as cheese on hand so that we can quickly prepare daily meals, snacks and lunchboxes. A good example of this is glass jar cheese spreads which are healthier options than many other bread spreads, or sliced or portioned cheese products that are grab-and-go, and a great way to control portions.

When it comes to lunchboxes, cheese is always a winner, some tips include:

Plan for lunchboxes – plan before you shop, and pack lunchboxes before the morning rush

Involve your children - in preparing their school snacks and lunches. They learn about nutrition and how to share chores, and you can have fun together

Keep it different – it may seem easier to keep doing one thing but embracing a variety of lunchbox foods encourages your children to try new foods as they develop and prevents boredom and lack of interest in eating their school lunches

Aim for balance – growing children benefit from a variety of nutrients, even when it comes to snacks and lunchbox meals. Make sure you are including protein sources like cheese, milk and yoghurt as well as carbohydrate sources like bread and crackers. Don't forget to add fresh fruit and veg too.

Hydration is essential – dehydration can have adverse effects on your child's performance at school. Water and milk are top choices. Rather avoid sugary drinks.

For more dairy ideas join the Rediscover Dairy Facebook page: www.facebook.com/RediscoverDAIRY

ENDS

**Nutritional composition of hard cheese (Gouda/Cheddar);
processed cheese slices and processed cheese spread.**



Cheese (Cheddar/Gouda)		
	Per serving (per 40 grams)	Per 100 grams
Energy	635,7 kJ	1589,3 kJ
Protein	9,6 g	24,0 g
Carbohydrates	0,6 g	1,4 g
Total Fats	12,5 g	31,3 g
Of which saturated fats	9,1 g	22,7 g
Sodium	247,7 mg	619,1 mg
Calcium	310,9 mg	777,1 mg

Processed Cheese Slices		
	Per serving (per 40 grams)	Per 100 grams
Energy	436,6 kJ	1091,4 kJ
Protein	5,3 g	13,2 g
Carbohydrates	2,3 g	5,8 g
Total Fats	8,2 g	20,6 g
Of which saturated fats	5,9 g	14,7 g
Sodium	519,3 mg	1298,3 mg
Calcium	164,8 mg	411,9 mg

Processed Cheese Spread		
	Per serving (per 40 grams)	Per 100 grams
Energy	364,5 kJ	911,3 kJ
Protein	3,8 g	9,6 g
Carbohydrates	2,6 g	6,5 g
Total Fats	6,9 g	17,2 g
Of which saturated fats	5,6 g	14,1 g
Sodium	384,7 mg	961,8 mg
Calcium	134,3 mg	335,9 mg

