

2009 UNITED STATES CHAMPIONSHIP
CHEESE CONTEST

HOSTED BY WISCONSIN CHEESE
MAKERS ASSOCIATION

MARCH 17 - 19, 2009

LAMBEAU FIELD ATRIUM
GREEN BAY, WISCONSIN

WEBSITE
WWW.USCHAMPIONCHEESE.ORG
WWW.WISCHEESEMAKERS.ORG



PRESS RELEASE

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Record-Setting Entry Numbers for 2009 United States Championship Cheese Contest Set for March 17-19

GREEN BAY – A record-setting number of cheeses and butters will vie to be named the nation’s best in the 2009 United States Championship Cheese Contest. The biennial event is held March 17 - 19 at the Atrium in Lambeau Field, Green Bay, Wis.

The 1,315 entries in this year’s contest represent a 13 percent increase compared to the previous U.S. Contest, held in 2007.

“We’re pleased to see significant growth in total entries, as well as the good response to newly added classes,” said John Umhoefer, executive director of the non-profit Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association, the Contest host.

Entries in the six Cheddar classes grew 25 percent to a total of 179 entries. In addition, the Goat’s Milk Cheese entries saw a 45 percent growth to 100 total entries across six classes. Individual cheese classes with strong growth include the Smoked Cheeses, Bandaged Cheddar and Parmesan classes.

With roots back into the 1890s, this cheese competition is the Superbowl of dairy product contests, according to Umhoefer. “This three-day event will be the largest collection of cheeses and butters in U.S. history, all competing for gold medals in 64 product classes,” Umhoefer said.

On Tuesday and Wednesday, March 17 and 18, twenty-four judges from 12 states will work in pairs, examining each cheese and butter entry for flavor, body, texture and appearance. Each product receives a technical evaluation, meaning these trained experts are seeking slight defects in the attributes of each entry, according to contest chief judge Robert Aschebrock. Deductions from a “perfect” 100 points are taking in tenths of a point. “A gold-medal cheddar, for example, may

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score in the 98 to 99 point range,” Aschebrock said. Mr. Aschebrock was a career cheese grader for the U.S. Department of Agriculture and upon retirement took on the leadership of this all-volunteer event.

By Thursday, March 19, judges will have tasted all 1,315 products and the highest scoring product in each class, such as cheddar, blue cheese or gouda, will earn a gold medal. The contest also awards silver and bronze medallions, as well as certificates for fourth place and fifth place finishers.

On Thursday morning, March 19, the gold medal cheeses will be judged a second time by the entire panel of judges. This Championship Round will determine a single United States Champion Cheese and two runners-up.

Contest images and judging results will appear in real-time on the United States Championship Cheese Contest website. Visit www.uschampioncheese.org to follow the highlights of the nation’s largest cheese and butter competition. The website can also be accessed through the WCMA website: www.wischeesemakers.org and click on the US Contest logo.

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Note to editor: 2009 U. S Championship Cheese Contest Entry Number Graphic follows and Entries per Class Graphic attached.

Dairy Product Entries: 2009 U.S. Championship Cheese Contest

