

NZ Champions of Cheese Awards 2023 *celebrating 20 years*

ENTRY INFORMATION



CONTENTS

Why Enter?	2
Important 2023 Dates	3
2023 Notes	4
Entry Instructions	5 – 6
Use of NZ Champions of Cheese Medal and Award stickers	7
Category Definitions	8 - 9
Categories with Class Code (reference only)	10 - 14

WHY ENTER?

Each year the NZ Champions of Cheese Awards celebrate the country's finest cheese. In 2023 New Zealand's only national cheese competition celebrates 20 years evaluating cheesemaking excellence and promoting NZ cheese to consumers.

Producers throughout New Zealand are encouraged to submit their cheese for consideration with the assurance judging is objective and transparent, conducted by an independent panel of experts.

'A money can't buy' quality endorsement

The NZ Champions of Cheese Awards provide a quality endorsement to support marketing. Medal and champion logos and stickers are available for use on products which reach judging benchmarks.

Brand exposure and awareness

Excellent publicity for medal and trophy winners, supported by www.nzscsca.org.nz; www.cheeseloversnz.co.nz, coverage on Cheese Lovers NZ Facebook and Instagram pages and by the NZ Champions of Cheese Awards sponsors.

Winner marketing opportunity

All medallists and trophy winners have a strong message to share with distributors, store owners and customers using one on one discussions, newsletters, social media and publicity

Authoritative judging process

Created for the New Zealand cheese industry by the industry, these independent awards are professionally run. Cheese is judged without identifying marks or labelling to assure independence.

Feedback

All entrants receive feedback on their entries. Feedback is provided with confirmation of any medals won.

2023 IMPORTANT DATES

1 January 2023

Online entries open through <https://nzzca.org.nz>

(Note entries processed and labels with judging codes sent out after Monday 16 January 2023)

Monday 20 February 2023

Entries close

Wednesday 1 and Thursday 2 March 2023

Judging samples to arrive between 9am and 4pm to:

Keith Clark

For NZ Champions of Cheese Awards

c/- Wintec Hospitality

L Block

51 Akoranga Road

Avalon

Hamilton 3200

Waikato

Ph: 027 497 4706

Saturday 4 March 2023

Export & Bulk Cheddar Judging

Sunday 5 March 2023

Judging at Wintec Hospitality School, L Block, Rotokauri Campus, Hamilton

From week starting Monday 6 March 2023

Audit of results

Week starting Monday 20 March

Individual medal results sent to entrants via email

Tuesday 28 March 2023

Medal results announced to media and live on <https://nzzca.org.nz> and

<https://www.cheeseloversnz.co.nz/>

Thursday 4 May 2023

Cheesemakers Seminar 10.00am to 3.00pm at Venue TBC

Gala Awards Dinner at The Atrium Wintec, 125 Ward Street, Hamilton 6pm to 11pm.

Cost TBC in early 2023.

Friday 5 May 2023

Sponsors Breakfast 8.00am to 9.00am

2023 NOTES

The AGM will be held as a Zoom meeting to ensure all members have the opportunity to attend. The date of this will be advertised next year.

New Product

Limited to one entry per company/manufacturing site. No medals will be awarded for this category. However the producer will be given marks and judges' comments.

Sustainability Award – second year of this award

The Countdown Sustainability Award showcases New Zealand's best sustainable cheesemaking. This Award is presented to the cheese producer that has gone above and beyond to positively impact their community and environment.

It will be judged from a written entry by representatives from Countdown and the NZ Champions of Cheese Master Judge, Jason Tarrant.

Flavoured Added Category

To ensure we're judging like with like this became two categories in 2022; fresh cheese and aged cheese. Fresh Flavour Added Cheese includes cream cheese and feta. Aged Flavour Added Cheese includes cheddar and Havarti.

Amateur Cheesemaker

This is now judged in September, with the winners announced during Cheese Month. The winner from October 2022 will be invited to the NZ Champions of Cheese Gala Awards Dinner to collect the trophy.

Champion Cheesemaker

Cheeses are entered and SENT for judging specifically for this category. Each cheesemaker enters **three different styles of cheese**. These three cheeses are one single entry. There are no medals, only one winner. The judges will consider all three products and score each of the three products with the highest total score being the winner. Duplicates are permitted.

Chefs' Choice

This is judged by a panel of chefs, with one winner chosen. There are no medals assigned in this category. Duplicates are permitted in this category as it is judged by chefs under different criteria, reflecting use of the cheese in their restaurants.

Sheep milk and goat milk cheese apart from their respective categories, may be entered in the Export, Chefs' Choice, Farmhouse, and the Champion Cheesemakers awards.

Aspiring Cheesemaker 2023

If you want to nominate an employee for the biennial Aspiring Cheesemaker Award please email admin@nzzca.org.nz for an entry form.

Butter and Yoghurt

These are no longer included in these awards.

IMPORTANT NOTES

There are three supreme NZ Champion of Champions Awards and each carries equal status:

- Less than 10 tonnes (Boutique)
- 10-100 tonnes (Medium-sized cheese company)
- 100+tonnes (Commercial or Large cheese company)

ENTRY INSTRUCTIONS 2023

Congratulations on your decision to enter the 2023 NZ Champions of Cheese Awards. If you make great New Zealand specialty cheese this is your opportunity to present it to our expert judging panel for assessment.

All the important dates, and competition details are contained in this document, so please read this carefully before entering.

Check the NZSCA website for the most up to date information www.nzscsca.org.nz

All entries must be completed online at www.nzscsca.org.nz

Good luck!

The fee is \$75.00 + GST (\$86.25) per entry for members and \$150.00 +GST (\$172.50) per entry for non-members. Entry fees are non-refundable.

To enter, your cheese must be made in New Zealand. All products entered must be available for sale to the public. Public sales can be in a retail shop, via food service, farmers or produce market, online, and a factory shop or market.

Products entered must meet the requirements of the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code, The Fair-Trading Act 1986 and either the Animal Products Act 1999 or the Food Act 2014. All entrants, must make safe and suitable food.

A separate online form must be completed for each entry.

When you click submit you will be taken to our secure payment page where you can pay the \$75.00 +GST (\$86.25) entry fee using a credit card. You will be returned to this website after completing payment. Entries without payment will not be accepted.

When filling out the online entry form, complete an answer in ALL boxes. If the question is not relevant put 'not applicable'. If you are unsure of which category your product should be entered under, please write **TBC** and we will categorise it for you.

All entries become the property of NZSCA. By submitting an entry, you give permission for your details to be shared with NZ Champions of Cheese Awards partners.

Entry ID numbers will be sent to you electronically when all entries have been processed. Please ensure that each product you send for judging is labelled with the correct ID number.

You may enter any number of different cheeses, but each cheese can only be entered in a class and category once (apart from Chefs' Choice, Export, New Cheese and Champion Cheesemaker categories). **Cheese judging samples must be sent for each entry.**

Entry of a cheese that has been bored or sampled with a cheese trier is not allowed. Any such cheeses will be judged but will be ineligible for any medals or awards.

All producers agree not to hold the organisers responsible in the event of any accident, loss or damage from whatever cause, arising to any cheese or non-delivery of cheese.

The organisers and judges reserve the right to cancel or alter categories/classes without notification. All entries become the property of New Zealand Specialist Cheesemakers Association.

The Master Judge may elect to transfer an entry from one category to another if it is considered to be in the wrong category.

Product Size

The following are recommendations on the amount of cheese to send for judging:

Small cheesemakers (Boutique Cheese Company Category)

- Enough product must be entered to judge over 2-3 rounds, firstly the medal judging, then assuming it is a high gold medal or wins the category, it will then be judged again for the Champion of Champions, and a further sample will be tried.
- If a sample of insufficient size is submitted, it may not be possible to be judged for the final Champion of Champions round.
- A minimum of 1 kg should be submitted from the same production batch. All cheeses under 1 kg should be entered whole and uncut without any brand identity.

Medium and Large Cheesemakers

- Whole cheeses are preferred but if this is not possible the recommended minimum is 5kg without any brand identity.
- If a whole cheese is 1 kg or under, a minimum of 1kg should be submitted from the same production batch. All cheeses under 1kg should be entered whole and uncut without any brand identity unless the conditions state otherwise. (see Retail Cheddar category)

Judging consists of two rounds

1. Medals judging round; gold, silver and bronze medals.
2. Championship judging round; a senior panel judge will review the highest scoring medal winners to decide and confirm Category Champions as well as the three Champion of Champions Awards (0-9.99 tonnes, 10-100 tonnes, 100+tonnes).

On arrival cheeses will be held in chilled storage. On the day prior to judging cheeses will be brought to as close as 10 -12°C as possible overnight and be at 12 – 14°C for judging.

The judges' decision is final. No correspondence will be entered into.

The cheeses will be re-wrapped after their category has been judged with re-labelling of the unique entry number if necessary. The cheeses will be kept together as a category throughout their movement from storage to judging room and back to storage.

All cheese must be delivered to:

Judging samples to arrive between 9am and 4pm to:

Keith Clark

For NZ Champions of Cheese Awards

c/- Wintec Hospitality

L Block

51 Akoranga Road

Avalon

Hamilton 3200

Waikato

Ph: 027 497 4706

Delivery is required - Wednesday 1 and Thursday 2 March 2023

Use of NZ Champions of Cheese Medal and Award sticker labels

The official NZ Champions of Cheese Award logo and gold, silver, bronze, and trophy medal awards stickers are the intellectual property of the NZSCA.

No person or entity has the right to reproduce these award stickers other than the official supplier, Kiwi Labels unless the person or entity has a specific Licensing Agreement with the NZSCA.

For practical application for large volume sales, the award label image can be incorporated into a product label if it forms part of a single label on a product pack.

ALL artwork for on package medals must be approved by NZSCA before printing. A Brand Manual is available which provides guidelines for correct uses, colours, sizes etc. Contact Carmel Clark if you would like to pre-print your medal stickers on pack.

Medal award stickers may be purchased from Kiwi Labels. Authorisation for this and use of a label supplier other than Kiwi Labels is required in writing from the NZSCA.

The official artwork of the award logo and labels remain the exclusive property of the NZSCA. It cannot be reproduced off existing labels or logos, reproduced directly on pack or as part of general packaging without permission.

Any producer found using NZ Champions of Cheese Awards medals on any cheese other than that which received the medal, will risk disqualification from future entry. This applies to cheeses which are marketed under another brand/home brand post awards i.e. the medal awarded applies only to the cheese named and entered into the competition.

The price charged by the official label supplier includes a copyright fee that is paid to the NZSCA to help contribute to the cost of running the Awards. Order forms for labels will be sent to all medal and champion trophy winners ahead of results being announced. Any questions relating to the use and reproduction of labels must be addressed in writing to Carmel Clark, Secretary, NZSCA.

You may use medals for no longer than three (3) years. This means following the Champions of Cheese Awards 2023, your cheeses should only carry medals from 2021, 2022, 2023. Please ensure you adhere to these medal rules.

CATEGORY DEFINITIONS

A. Fresh Unripened Cheese (Cow milk)

Prepared for consumption without the flavour enhancement of ripening or curing or the addition of moulds. Usually not brined or washed and not stored at specific humidity or temperatures for the purpose of added flavour or character development; Fresh cheese ranging between mild to high acidity, e.g. Fromage Frais, Quark, Paneer, Labna.

B. Blue Cheese (Cow milk)

Mild blue cheeses inoculated with *Penicillium Roqueforti* or *Penicillium Glaucum* and finished with a coating of *Penicillium Candidum*.

Brined, Brushed, Pressed or Natural Rind cheeses that display interior veining achieved through inoculation with *Penicillium Roqueforti* or *Penicillium Glaucum*, natural curing, and/or cave-ripening methods.

C. Bulk or Large Block Cheddar

Cheeses that are traditionally milled and 'cheddared' to achieve correct Cheddar acidity, moisture and texture or stirred curd cheddar which is unable to be separated from the original. MUST be a whole cheese of 5kg to 20kg nominal size.

D. Dutch-Style Cheese (Cow milk)

Entries that generally follow the original recipe for those cheeses internationally recognized as originating from The Netherlands: Edam, Gouda, Leyden, Maasdammer, Leerdammer, Smoked Gouda etc.

E. European-Style Cheese (Cow milk)

Entries that generally follow the original recipes for those cheeses internationally recognized as originating from Old World/European countries.

Exempt: Feta, Halloumi Dutch styles, Cheddars, Blue Veined, Fresh Unripened, Soft Ripened/White Mould and Washed Rind Cheeses.

F. Greek/Cypriot-Style Cheese (Cow milk)

Fresh cheeses prepared for consumption with flavour enhancement through minimal curing / ripening and brining. Typically, Feta and Halloumi but may include other varieties.

G. Goat milk Cheese

Any style of cheeses made from Goat milk only.

H. Sheep milk Cheese

Any style of cheeses made from Ewe milk only.

I. Fresh Flavour Added Cheese

Fresh cheese younger than three months, including cream cheese or Feta, with added flavouring ingredients. e.g. nuts, herbs, seeds etc.

J. Aged Flavour Added Cheese

Aged cheeses including Camembert, cheddar, Havarti, parmesan with flavouring ingredients. e.g. nuts, herbs, seeds etc.

L. Farmhouse Cheese (all species milk)

- Cheese must be entered and sent for judging specifically for this category. This category is NOT a tick the box as in previous years.
- To be eligible for the Champion Farmhouse Cheese you must source milk from your own farm animals and produce and market your own cheese.
- Cheeses entered here must NOT be entered elsewhere.

M. Fresh Italian-Style Cheese (Cow milk)

All Ricotta, Mozzarella, Mascarpone and fresh Italian cheeses must be entered in this category.

N. New Cheese (all species milk)

Cheeses entered here may be entered elsewhere. They must be launched between July 2021 and January 2023. (18 months in the market)

O. Original Cheese (all species milk)

- Cheeses entered here must NOT be entered elsewhere.
- This category is open to any New Zealand cheese that complies with three criteria:
- Of an original NZ recipe or process. Explain why or how this is unique.
- The cheese must display a local character or unique local quality that is distinctly New Zealand.
- The cheese must be distinguished with a unique name.

Examples of New Zealand original cheese from past competitions are Egmont, Ahjette, Kikorangi, Mirandale, Arani, Sting, Mt. Hector, Aged Deer Gouda.

If a cheesemaker and the NZ Champions of Cheese Awards secretary cannot be reached regarding the eligibility into this category, the Master Judge will make the final decision.

R. Retail Cheddar Cheese (Cow milk)

Cheeses entered here must NOT be entered elsewhere.

Cheeses submitted in retail branded packaging. Stewards will remove packaging prior to judging. Includes Cheddar and Cheddar styles: Cheddar, Colby, Red Leicester, Gloucester, Cheshire etc

S. Soft Ripened Cheese – White Mould Rind (Cow milk)

From moulds such as Penicillium Candidum and Geotrichum Candidum. Ripening occurs from the rind toward the centre.

T. Chefs' Choice Award (all species milk)

This category will be judged by a panel of chefs and as such cheeses entered here MAY be entered elsewhere. Note that duplicates are permitted in this category.

U. Champion Cheesemaker (all species milk)

- One exhibit consisting of three separate cheeses. The winner is the cheesemaker that made the three cheeses submitted.
- Entrants **MUST** submit three cheeses of different styles which will be judged, and the three scores added to decide the highest score. To assist the judges, identification of the styles of the 3 cheeses must be specified and accompany the cheese.
- No medals will be awarded, only the title of Champion Cheesemaker.

W. Washed Rind Cheese (Cow milk)

Cheeses rubbed, brushed or washed in a liquid while curing. Liquid can be brine, whey, wine or spirits and may contain surface colonising bacteria such as Brevibacterium linens.

X. Export Cheese

Cheeses entered here may be entered elsewhere. Limited to cheeses produced for and sold internationally.

Y. New Product

Limited to one entry per company/manufacturing site. No medals will be awarded for this category. However the producer will be given marks and judges' comments.

FOR REFERENCE ONLY

Categories	Class	Class Code	
A. Fresh Unripened (cow milk) [in brine or wrapped but not in oil]	Cottage Cheese	AA	
	Crème Fraiche	AB	
	Paneer	AC	
	Lactic curd	AH	
	Labna	AS	
	Cream Cheese & Neufchatel	AZ	
B. Blue Cheese	Natural Rind Blue – cow milk	BA	
	White Mould Rind Blue– cow milk	BB	
	Blue Cheese – added cream	BC	
	Open Class – blue cheese from mixed milks or buffalo milk	BW	
C. Bulk or Large Block Cheddar Cheese	American Originals – cheddar -style: Colby, Monterey Jack etc	CN	
	No retail branding to be associated with these products. Retail brands to be entered into category R	Mild Cheddars aged less than 6 months	CA
		Cow milk Cheddars aged less than 12 months	CB
		Cheddars aged up to 19 months	CE
		Cheddars aged up to 25 months	CG
		Cheddars aged between 26 and 36 months	CH
		Mature Cheddars aged over 37 months	CM
D. Dutch-Style Cheese	Gouda Cheese aged over 9 months	DA	
	These entries may be full or part wheel or retail packs. 3 retail portions of a minimum of 1kg, wheels also accepted but not required	Edam cheese aged over 9 months	DB
		Edam Cheese – cow milk	DE
		Flavour added Dutch style cheese, includes Leyden	DF
		Gouda Cheese – cow milk	DG
E. NZ made European-Style Cheese [exempt – Feta, Halloumi Dutch styles, Cheddars, Blue Veined, Fresh Unripened, Soft Ripened/White Mould and Washed Rind Cheeses]	British Style – Cheshire, territorials	EB	
	Danish Style – Havarti	ED	
	French Style – Comte, Tomme de Savoie,	EF	
	Grana Style – Parmesan, Aged Asiago, Montasio	EG	
	Mediterranean Style – Spanish Manchego, Italian Asiago Style	EM	

	Pasta Filata Style – Provolone, String Cheese	EP
	Swiss Style – Raclette, Emmental, Sbrinz, Gruyere etc.	ES
F. Greek/Cypriot-Style Cheese	Feta – cow milk	FC
	Feta – Low salt open class all milks	FL
	Feta – made by ultra-filtration	FU
	Feta – mixed milk or buffalo milk	FW
	Halloumi - cow milk	FM
	Halloumi Flavoured	FF
	Other (specify type)	FT
G. Goat Milk Cheese	All fresh goat cheeses, all shapes, aged up to 10 weeks	GA
	Mature, aged Goat cheeses – all cheeses aged over 10 weeks	GM
	Feta – Goat Milk	GF
	Goat Milk Cheddars aged less than 12 months	GC
	White Mould Rind Blue – Goat milk	GB
	Goat Milk Cheese Marinated in Oil	GO
	Smoked Goats’ Milk Cheese	GS
	Natural Rind Blue Cheese – Goat Milk	GN
	Halloumi – Goat Milk	GH
	Washed Rind Cheese – Goat Milk	GW
	Other (specify type)	GX
H. Sheep Milk Cheese	All Fresh Sheep milk Cheeses	HA
	All Aged Sheep milk Cheese – Romano, Pecorino, Manchego Styles	HE
	Feta – Sheep milk	HF
	Sheep milk Cheddars aged less than 12 months	HC
	Natural Rind Blue Cheese -Sheep milk	HB
	Halloumi – Sheep milk	HH
	White Mould Rind Blue- Sheep milk	HM
	Sheep milk Cheese Marinated in Oil	HO
	Smoked Sheep milk Cheese	HS
	Washed Rind Cheese – Sheep milk	HW
	Other (specify type)	HZ
I. Fresh Flavour Added Cheese (includes cream cheese and Feta)	Cheeses Flavoured with Peppercorns or Seeds	IA
	Cheeses Flavoured with Capsicums, Chilli Peppers and Garlic	IB

	Cheeses Flavoured with Herbs, Flowers or Fruits	IC
	Cow milk Cheese Flavoured with Herbs and Garlic	ID
	Feta with Flavour Added – all milks or milk blends	IG
	Open Class for all soft white mould ripened cheeses with added flavours	IS
	Open Class for all Un-ripened Cheeses with Added Flavours	IU
	Open Class for all Smoked Cow milk Cheese	IT
	Cow milk Cheese Marinated in Oil	IV
	Buffalo or Mixed Milk Cheese Marinated in Oil	IW
J. Aged Flavour Added Cheese (include cheddar, Havarti, parmesan)	Cheeses Flavoured with Peppercorns or Seeds	JA
	Cheeses Flavoured with Capsicums, Chilli Peppers and Garlic	JB
	Cheeses Flavoured with Herbs, Flowers or Fruits	JC
	Cow milk Cheese Flavoured with Herbs and Garlic	JD
	Firm Cheese with Flavour added e.g. Cheddar with Port Wine, Beer or Whisky	JH
	Open Class for all Smoked Cow milk Cheese	JT
L. Farmhouse Cheese	Cow milk Cheese	LA
	Sheep milk Cheese	LB
	Goat Milk Cheese	LC
	Buffalo Milk Cheese	LD
M. Fresh Italian-Style Cheese	Mozzarella – Fresh in Brine	MA
	Mozzarella -Burrata Style	MB
	Mozzarella – Fresh in Brine Buffalo milk	MM
	Pasta Filata – Mozzarella (pizza type)	MC
	Ricotta	MD
	Ricotta Buffalo Milk	MR
	Mascarpone	ME
	Stracchino	MF
	Scarmorze	MG
	Squacarone	MH
	Italian-Style Smoked Cheese – Scarmorza, Stracciatella, Mozzarella etc.	MI
	Stracciatella	MJ

N. New Cheese	New Unripened Fresh cheese	NA
	New Blue Cheese	NB
	New Cheddar	NC
	New Cheddar Aged Over 13 Months	ND
	New Sheep milk Cheese	NE
	New Flavoured Cheese – All Milks	NF
	New Goat Milk Cheeses	NG
	New Firm Cheese – All Milks	NH
	Open Class – All Milks or Milk Blends	NI
	New Soft Ripened Cheese – White Mould Rind	NW
	New other (specify type)	NZ
O. Original New Zealand Cheese	Original Blue Style Cheese	OB
	Original Cow milk Cheese	OC
	Original Sheep milk Cheese	OE
	Original Goat Milk Cheese	OG
	Original Deer Milk Cheese	OD
	Original Buffalo or Mixed Milk Cheese	OH
	Original Cheese with Added Flavours -All Milks	OK
	Original Soft Ripened Cheese [white mould rind]	OS
	Original Washed Rind Cheese	OW
	Original Fresh Un-ripened Cheese	OA
	Other (specify type)	OZ
R. Retail Cheddar Cheese		
	Mild Cheddars Aged Less Than 6 Months	RA
	Cow milk Cheddars Aged Less Than 12 Months	RB
	Cheddars Aged Up to 19 Months	RC
	Cheddars Aged Up to 25 Months	RD
	Cheddars Aged Between 26 and 36 Months	RE
	Mature Cheddars Aged Over 37 Months	RO
	Flavour Added	RF
	Smoked	RS
	American Originals – Cheddar-Style: Colby, Red Leicester, Gloucester, Cheshire etc	RU
S. Soft Ripened Cheese:	Camembert Style – Cow milk	SC

White Mould Rind	Open Class for Cream Added Cheeses	SD
(excluding Soft Ripened Blue Cheeses	Open Class for Milk Blends (specify blend)	SF
T. Chefs' Choice	Open Class for all Milks and Cheese Types	TA
U. Champion Cheesemaker	Open Class for All milks And Cheese Types – enter 3 individual cheeses	UA
W. Washed Rind Cheese	Washed Rind Cheese – Cow milk	WC
	Open Class – all milk blends (specify blend)	WO
X. Export Cheese	Blue Style Cheeses	XB
[cheeses made for export]	Cheddar Style Cheeses	XC
	Dutch Style Cheeses	XD
	European Style Cheeses	XE
	Feta Style Cheeses	XF
	Goat Milk Cheeses	XG
	Sheep Milk Cheeses	XH
	Fresh Flavour-Added Cheeses	XK
	Aged Flavour-Added Cheeses	XL
	Buffalo or Mixed Milk Cheeses	XM
	NZ Original Cheese	XO
	Soft Ripened – White Mould Rind Cheese	XS
	Washed Rind Cheese	XW
	Fresh Un-ripened Cheese	XA
Y. New Product Under Development	All styles – please describe for judges to evaluate	YA