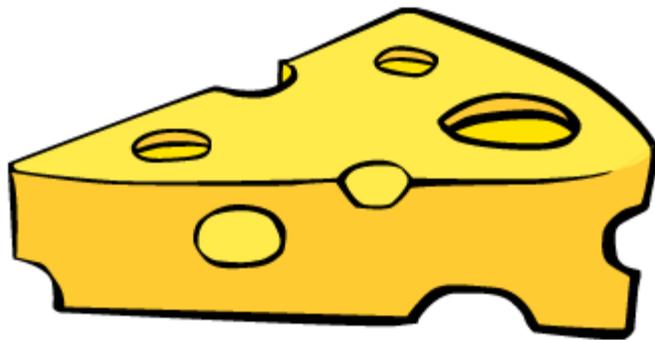


Say . . .

CHEESE



and Smile!

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CHEESE

Nutrients: Calcium, Protein, Vitamin A, Riboflavin, B12, Phosphorus, Zinc.
Cheese is high in fat. Choose low fat cheeses. Hard Cheeses that are excellent source of calcium: Cheddar, Colby, Swiss, Provolone.

Amount of cheese equal to 1 cup of milk:

1 ½ oz hard cheese
1/3 cup shredded cheese
2 oz. processed cheese
½ c ricotta cheese
2 c cottage cheese

Selection: When purchasing cheese, check the expiration date on the package and avoid cheeses that have been stored at room temperature. Any cheese showing signs of defect should be avoided.

Storage: Refrigerate at 40° degrees F or below in the original wrapper or container, transparent wrap, aluminum foil or plastic wrap.

Hard cheese (low moisture) will keep longer than soft cheese (high moisture). Cheese will continue to ripen no matter how carefully it is stored.

Hard cheese – several months

Soft cheese – one to three weeks

Food Safety: Not recommended to eat unpasteurized cheeses which could contain harmful bacteria causing serious food-borne illnesses.

Is moldy cheese safe? Most molds are harmless. To be safe cut away one inch of cheese on all sides of the visible mold and cover the cheese with fresh piece of wrapping. Discard fresh and soft cheese that contain mold, as they could cause food poisoning.

Preparation: Melting Cheese-Use low temperature for a short time. American cheese (process) melts well. Dry cheese, like Parmesan, if finely grated, melts better than higher moisture cheese. Low fat cheese is more suitable for serving cold than using in cooked dishes. Shred, grate or cut cheese in small pieces. Add cheese topping to food at the end of baking or broiling, just heat long enough to melt. When making sauce, add cheese as the last ingredient and heat just until melted.

Cooking Equivalents: When cooking with shredded, crumbled or grated cheese, 4 oz. equals 1 cup.

Serving Tip: Remove cheese from the refrigerator at least 30 minutes before serving to bring out the fullest flavor.

Gourmet On The Go



OKLAHOMA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

Creative Ideas for Cheese

- Cheese, although a good source of calcium, should be eaten cautiously because of its high fat content. Always consider using fat-free or reduced-fat cheeses. In recipes reduce the amount by half if you are not using fat-free. Cheese like all high fat foods should be eaten occasionally not everyday.
- Team chunks of cheese with your favorite fruits and serve on short skewers for a crowd-pleasing appetizer kabob
- Enjoy cheese with fruit or crackers as a snack or dessert
- Discover the fun of string cheese for a snack. It is clean to eat, not oily on your fingers and loved by kids and adults alike.
- Liven up ordinary breakfast foods by melting a small amount of shredded sharp or reduced fat cheese on top of omelets and frittatas, bagels, English muffins or toast.
- Spoon small amount shredded cheese over baked potatoes and top off with other favorite ingredients, such as salsa or broccoli. For a new twist try cottage cheese on the potato.
- Cheeses with more distinctive flavors like nippy Cheddars, Swiss and Edam may be used with breads, especially if the bread is made from whole grains.
- Roll up a slice of low-fat cheese with your favorite low-fat luncheon meats in a tortilla for a delicious twist on the all-American sandwich.
- Slice cheese for sandwiches or hamburgers. Experiment with varieties and types.
- Occasionally grate small amounts of cheese in salads, cooked vegetables, casseroles and scrambled eggs or on top of soups, tacos and Italian foods. Cheeses with stronger flavors can be used in small amounts and still achieve the taste you are looking for with out adding extra fat.

Make your own cheese . . .

Cottage Cheese

“Curds & Whey”

2 c milk (whole or 2%)

1 T white vinegar

Dash of salt

1 T cream

Heat milk in the saucepan over medium heat until the milk begins to bubble. Take the pan off the stove and stir in the vinegar. Let it sit for a few minutes and the milk will curdle. Pour mixture into the strainer and let the liquid (whey) drain off the curds. Chill the curds in the refrigerator. Sprinkle with salt and eat as is or spread on toast.

If you like creamy cottage cheese, like the kind we buy in stores today, stir in a tablespoon of cream before chilling the curds.

Ricotta Cheese Yield: about $\frac{3}{4}$ cup

1 quart skim milk

4 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp white vinegar

Cheesecloth and sieve

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt

Mix milk and vinegar in a saucepan. Over low heat, bring slowly to simmer till tiny bubbles foam around the edge. Remove pan from heat, and cover it. Set it aside in an enclosed place where temperature remains between 80° and 100°F. Let stand undisturbed about 6 hours or until curds and whey separate. Line sieve with double layer of cheesecloth and set over a bowl. Pour curds and whey into sieve. Allow whey to drain through cheesecloth for 1 hour. Turn cheese out of cheesecloth into a bowl. Add salt; stir. Cover and refrigerate for 24 hours before serving.

Per serving: ($\frac{1}{4}$ c), Calories: 115, total fat: 1g, Saturated Fat: trace, Cholesterol: 6 mg, Sodium: 257 mg, Total carbohydrate: 16g, dietary Fiber: 0, Sugars: 16g, Protein: 11g, Exchanges: 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ milk.



Puff Pastry Wrapped Brie

Ingredients

- 1/2 (17.5 ounce) package frozen puff pastry, thawed
- 1 (8 ounce) wheel Brie cheese
- 1/4 cup sliced almonds

Directions

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degree C). Lightly grease a 9 inch pie pan.

Slice the wheel of Brie in half, horizontally, so that the halves are two, flatter wheels of Brie. Lay the puff pastry in the pie pan. Place half of the Brie (rind-side down) onto the pastry dough. Sprinkle almonds evenly over the top. Place the other half of the Brie (rind-side up) over the almonds. Bundle the pastry dough around the Brie. Wrap the dough all around the cheese. The cheese is going to melt faster than the bread can bake, so if you don't wrap the dough all around to keep the melting cheese inside the crust.

1. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes. Let cool for 5 minutes before serving.

Amount Per Serving Calories: 250 | Total Fat: 18.7g | Cholesterol: 25mg

Spinach Feta Bites **Servings:** 12 **TIP:** Filling can be made a day in advance.

1/2 package (10 oz.) frozen chopped spinach (thawed)
6 oz. feta cheese (crumbled or divided)
1/4 cup reduced-fat ricotta or cottage cheese
2 tablespoons green onions (finely chopped)
1/2 tablespoons dried oregano leaves
Salt & Pepper
1 egg
24 mini pastry shells

Drain spinach well and mix with 4 oz. feta, ricotta, onions and oregano; season with salt and pepper. Stir in egg. Fill pastry shells with mixture; sprinkle with remaining feta cheese. Bake on cookie sheet at 325° F until browned, about 20 minutes.

Nutritional Information: Per Serving: 96 Calories; 5.6 Fat; 4.3 Protein; 24g Carbohydrate.

Pepper Cheese Puffs PREP & BAKE TIME: 30 minutes, YIELD: 20 appetizers

- ½ package (17-1/4 ounces) frozen puff pastry dough, thawed
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- ½ cup (2 ounces) finely shredded Cheddar cheese
- 1 teaspoon cracked black pepper
- 1 egg
- 1 tablespoon water



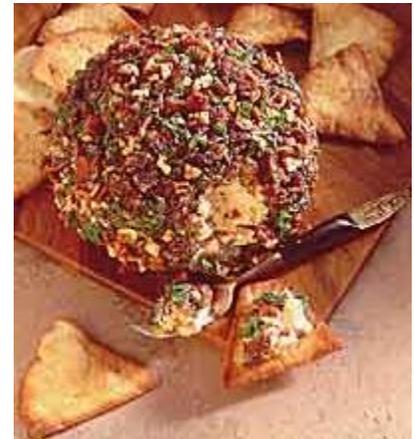
1. Preheat oven to 400°F. Grease baking sheets.
2. Roll out 1 sheet puff pastry dough on well floured surface to 14x10-inch rectangle. Spread half of dough (from 10-inch side) with mustard. Sprinkle with cheese and pepper. Fold dough over filling; roll gently to seal edges.
3. Cut lengthwise into 3 strips; cut each strip diagonally into 1-1/2-inch pieces. Place on prepared baking sheets. Beat egg and water in small bowl; brush onto appetizers.
4. Bake appetizers 12 to 15 minutes or until puffed and deep golden brown. Remove from baking sheets to wire rack; cool.

Tip Work quickly and efficiently when using puff pastry. The colder puff pastry is, the better it will puff in the hot oven. This recipe can be easily doubled.

Nutty Bacon Cheeseball

YIELD: Makes about 24 servings

- 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened
- ½ cup milk
- 2 cups (8 ounces) shredded sharp Cheddar cheese
- 2 cups (8 ounces) shredded Monterey Jack cheese
- ¼ cup (1 ounce) crumbled blue cheese
- 10 slices bacon, cooked, crumbled and divided
- ¾ cup finely chopped pecans, divided
- ¼ cup finely minced green onions (white parts only)
- 1 jar (2 ounces) diced pimiento, drained
- Salt and black pepper
- ¼ cup minced fresh parsley
- 1 tablespoon poppy seeds



1. Beat cream cheese and milk in large bowl with electric mixer at low speed until blended. Add cheeses. Beat at medium speed until well mixed. Add half of bacon, half of pecans, green onions, and pimiento. Beat at medium speed until well mixed. Add salt and pepper to taste. Transfer half of mixture to large piece of plastic wrap. Shape into ball; wrap tightly. Repeat with remaining mixture. Refrigerate at least 2 hours or until chilled.
2. Combine remaining bacon and pecans with parsley and poppy seeds in pie plate or large dinner plate. Remove plastic wrap from chilled cheese balls. Roll in bacon mixture until well coated. Wrap each ball tightly in plastic wrap; refrigerate until ready to serve, up to 24 hours.

Cheesy Snack Squares YIELD: Makes about 15 appetizers

1-1/4 cups all-purpose flour	1/4 cup vegetable oil
3/4 cup cornmeal	1 egg
2 medium green onions, thinly sliced	1 cup (4 ounces) shredded Cheddar cheese
4 teaspoons sugar	1/4 cup finely chopped green bell pepper
2 teaspoons baking powder	1/4 cup finely chopped red bell pepper
1 teaspoon Italian seasoning	2 slices crisp-cooked bacon, crumbled
1/4 teaspoon salt	
1 cup milk	

Preheat oven to 400°F. Grease 11X7-inch baking dish.

1. Combine flour, cornmeal, green onions, sugar, baking powder, Italian seasoning and salt in large bowl; mix well. Combine milk, oil and egg in small bowl. Add to cornmeal mixture; mix just until moistened. Spread evenly in prepared dish. Combine cheese, bell peppers and bacon in medium bowl. Sprinkle evenly over cornmeal mixture.
2. Bake 25 to 30 minutes or until wooden toothpick inserted into center comes out clean. Let stand 10 minutes before cutting.

Note Also great as a side dish to fish, chicken or pork. Just cut into 8 squares.

Cheese Lover's Pizza Squares

Servings: 10

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cook Time: 18 minutes

1 (13.8 ounce) can refrigerated pizza dough	2 ounces turkey pepperoni, diced
1 cup part-skim Ricotta cheese	2 plum tomatoes, thinly sliced
2 cups (8 ounces) shredded part-skim Mozzarella cheese	1 yellow pepper, sliced
	1 teaspoon oregano
	2 tablespoons chopped parsley

Preheat oven to 400° F. Press pizza dough into 15x10 inch jelly roll pan. Bake for 12 minutes, remove from oven and spread Ricotta cheese over crust. Top with Mozzarella, pepperoni, tomatoes, yellow pepper and oregano. Return to oven and bake for 6 minutes and until cheese is melted. Sprinkle with parsley, cut into squares and serve.

Nutritional Information: Per serving: 180 Calories; 7g Total Fat (3.5 Saturated Fat); 30mg Cholesterol; 470mg Sodium; 25 % Daily Value Calcium; 13g Protein; 17g Carbohydrates; 1g Dietary Fiber.

Spicy Herb and Cheese Frittata Wedges Servings: 12

(4 oz) shredded white or yellow Cheddar cheese
(4 oz) shredded Colby cheese
(4 oz) shredded feta cheese

(4 oz) chopped jalapenos, drained
10 eggs, beaten
¼ cup finely chopped basil (or 2 tsp dried)
½ tsp salt

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a small bowl, mix cheeses together, set aside. Lightly butter a 12x8 inch rectangular pan or a 10-inch oven proof skillet. Scatter jalapenos on bottom of pan. Top with cheeses. In a medium sized bowl, combine eggs, herbs and salt. In a medium-sized medium speed for 4 minutes, or until very light and airy. Pour eggs over cheese and bake for 25 to 30 minutes or until set. Cool 10 minutes.

Nutritional Information: Per Serving: 126 Calories; 8g Total Fat (4g Saturated Fat); 189mg Cholesterol; 2g Carbohydrates; 1g Dietary Fiber; 12g Protein; 280 Sodium; 179mg Calcium; 2mg Iron.

Cheesy Broccoli Potato Soup Servings: 12 (1 cup/serving) Cook Time: 15 min.

4 tablespoons butter
1 cup chopped onion
½ cup flour
4 cups low-sodium chicken broth
4 cups fat-free milk
2 cups frozen broccoli, chopped

2 cups potatoes, peeled and diced
1 ½ cups Cheddar cheese, shredded
1 Tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
1 teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon pepper

Melt butter in large saucepan over medium heat, add onion and cook until tender. Add flour; stir until blended. Gradually stir in broth. Heat until slightly thickened. Add milk, broccoli and potatoes. Cook over low heat about 15 minutes or until broccoli and potatoes are tender. Stir in cheese and seasonings.

Nutritional Information: Per Serving: 190 Calories; 9g Total Fat (6g Saturated Fat); 25mg Cholesterol; 390mg Sodium; 25% Daily Value Calcium; 10g Protein.