

**Wisconsin may be America's Dairyland, but cheese is loved across the country.** Whether it's topping a pizza or burger, stirred into a dip, or starring in a dessert, cheese is a menu mainstay and consumer favorite. Beyond cheese, the landscape around is other dairy is nearly as promising. Styles of yogurt continue to proliferate, sour cream is riding the wave of Mexican food, and even non-dairy alternatives are establishing an ever-larger footprint. Datassential's Cheese & Dairy Keynote covers varieties, applications, menu trends, and more. **Learn about the whys as well as the wheys.** 



### Topics covered

### understand how consumers feel about cheese

- o learn which hard, soft, fresh and processed cheeses are consumers' favorites
- o discover which foods are considered must-haves with cheese

### explore cheese consumption patterns of 1,500 consumers

- o quantify how often consumers eat cheese both at home and away
- o get a read on which dayparts and mealparts are most common cheese choices
- o identify behavioral differences among numerous demographic slices, such as age, gender, and parental status

### track cheese menu trends by segment, menupart and cuisine

- o see which cheeses have the highest menu penetration and where
- o become a trend expert on which cheeses are growing fastest
- o look at the applications in which operators are using cheese most, and most creatively

### learn the dynamics of other dairy categories

- o decide how best to leverage secondary products like milk, yogurt, sour cream and other cultured foods like buttermilk, and non-dairy milks, yogurt and cheeses
- o see consumer consumption patterns and affinity
- o Find out which operators are increasing their use of these products and how

## From the report

- CONSUMERS
  - **94%** of consumers or more have cheese with pizza, burgers, and sandwiches
  - **46%** look forward to signature cheese dishes at restaurants
  - **44%** agree cheese is usually a good value
- OPERATORS
  - **60%** of operators say adding cheese to an item helps it sell better
  - **44%** are interested in cheese recipes and menu ideas
  - **73%** purchase ready-to-use products featuring cheese

1,508 consumers demographically balanced to the general population

317 restaurant, retail, and on-site operators







**DOWNLOAD TODAY.** Please contact Brian Darr at 312-655-0594 or brian@datassential.com.





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# EDITOR'S NOTE

This Keynote Report's consumer and operator surveys were fielded in early February. In mid-March, the world changed, as the World Health Organization declared a global pandemic and the Trump administration declared a national emergency, which intensified the sense of crisis around COVID-19, or "Coronavirus," and brought about widespread social distancing.

While Coronavirus will have drastic, complex effects on foodservice overall, this report was fielded at such a time as to provide the best baseline of sentiment and attitudes toward dairy. The insights are sound, based on normal, pre-crisis responses, and are suited to long-term planning and strategy by those trying to understand consumers' attitudes toward dairy.



# **METHODOLOGY**

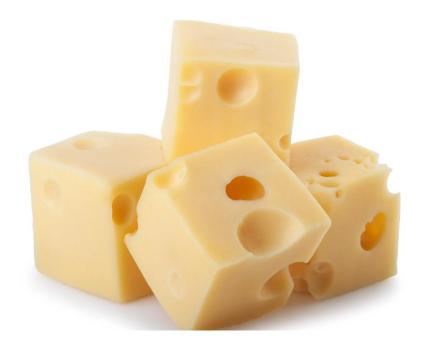
fielded online February 2020

1,508 consumers were surveyed overall

317 operators via the Datassential panel

- 149 restaurant operators
- 133 on-site operators
- 35 retail foodservice operators

full demographic info is available in the appendix



# **OBJECTIVES**

- identify consumer cheese and dairy consumption habits and preferences
- understand motivations for and attitudes toward cheese and dairy consumption at home and away from home
- analyze operator motivators, preferences, and challenges with menuing cheese and dairy
- in-depth analysis of new menu items featuring cheese and dairy
- Identify supplier opportunities for consumer and operator engagement around cheese and dairy

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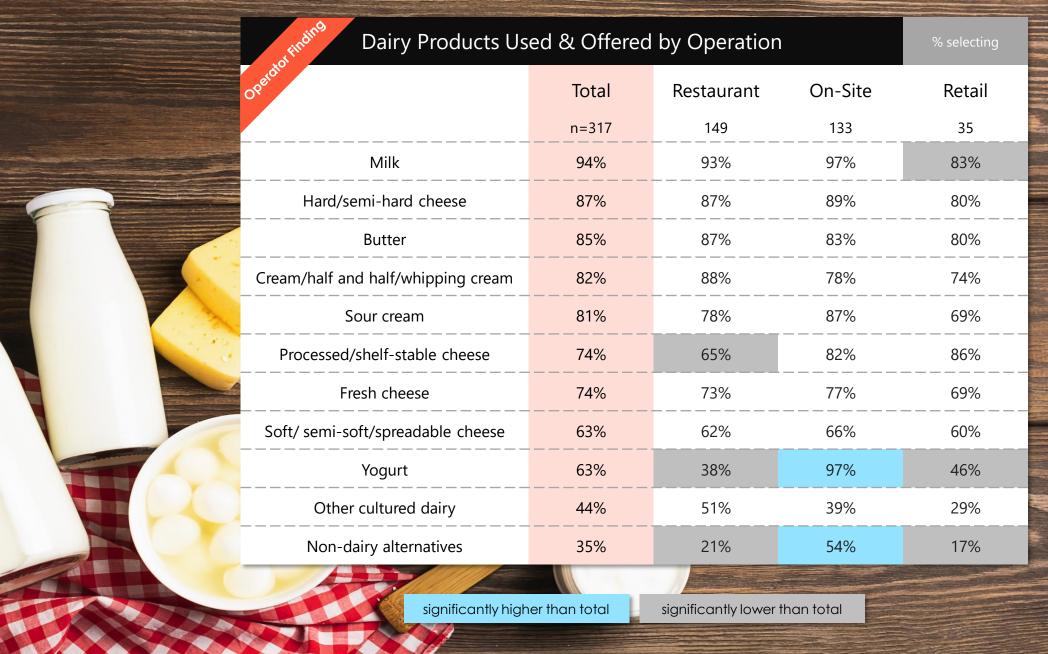
In addition to custom research, this report taps into Datassential's SNAP! platform. Refer to the stripe on the left side and the icon on the bottom right corner to learn the source of the slide's data.

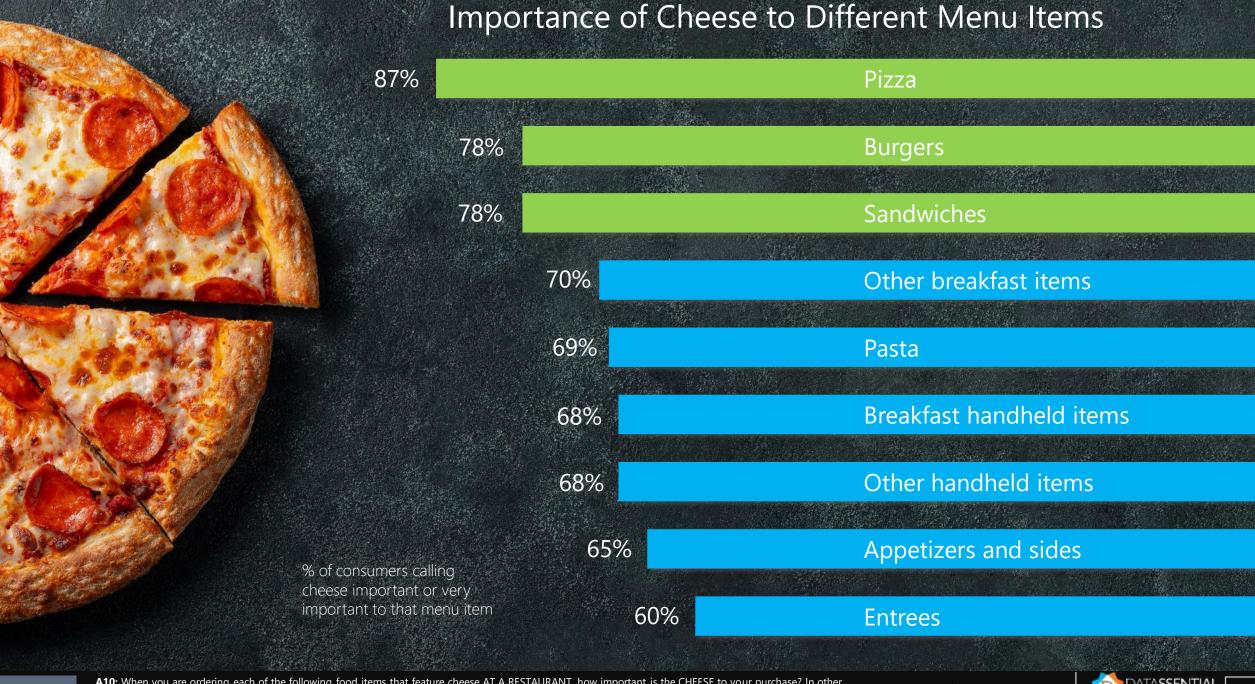






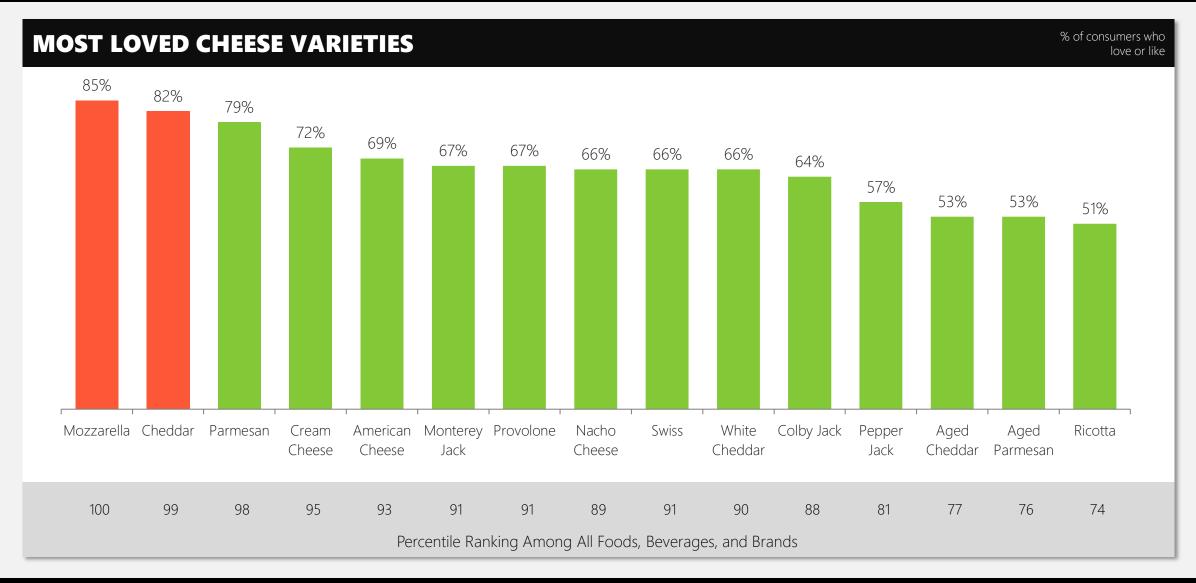




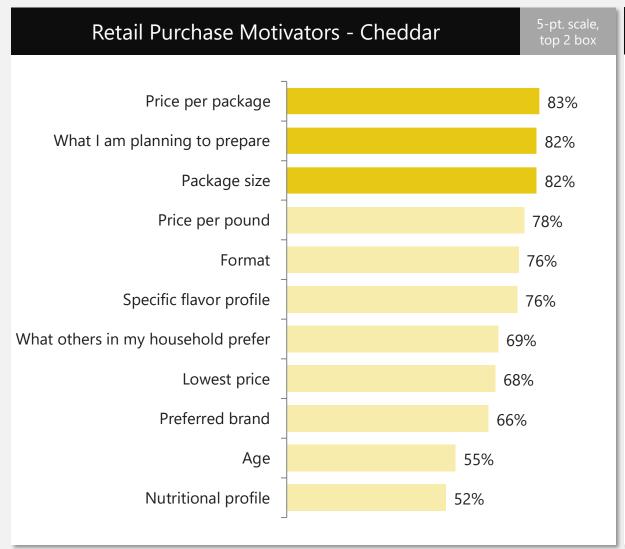


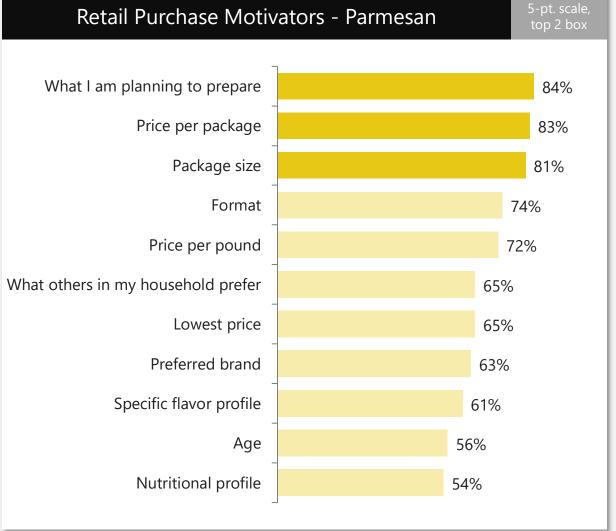


Consumers' favorite cheeses are a varied mix of styles, with mozzarella and cheddar Several Italian cheeses rank among the most admired varieties. Modified versions of classic cheeses, like white Cheddar and aged Cheddar, also rank highly with consumers.

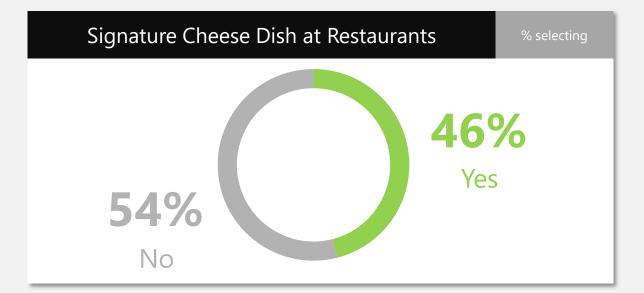


Cheddar and parmesan purchase motivations are relatively consistent, though consumers factor price more with the cheddar. In general, purchase motivators among hard cheeses are relatively consistent.





## Which signature items with cheese do you look forward to when visiting a restaurant? Select consumer verbatims.



"I really like the cheese sauce that comes with Taco Bell's nacho fries.

I realize that it's the same as they use in some of their foods, but I like having the dipping cup of it."

"My local pizza joint uses this amazing blend cheese."

"At Rally's they have a caramel cheesecake stacker [sundae]. It has a lump of cheesecake, caramel ice cream, and nuts."

"At Panera, I like the asiago cheese bagels a lot ."

"I love Another Broken Egg—they have the best grits in the world. It has gouda cheese in it."

"Spinach dip from Cheddar's Scratch Kitchen, with 5 different cheeses and does not have artichokes like others' spinach dip."

"Cheddar bacon king from Burger King, because I'm a big fan of cheddar."

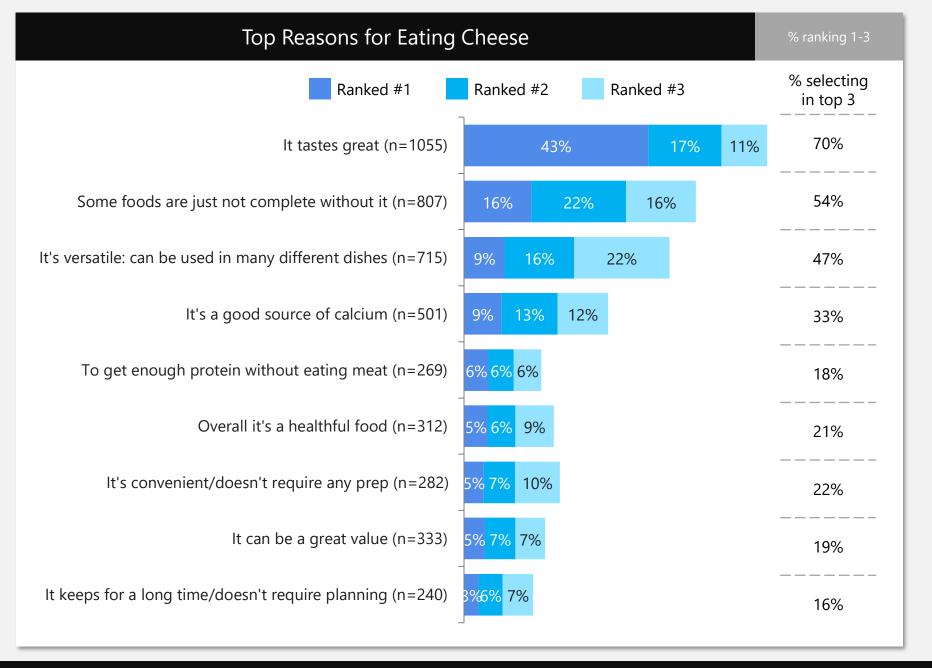
"Steak & Ale's escargot with garlic butter & provolone is delicious & a special treat!"

"I enjoy alfredo pasta at a restaurant near where I live, where the sauce is much thicker and almost meatier than most creams."

"Mozzarella sticks, omg, they are amazing from Sonic."

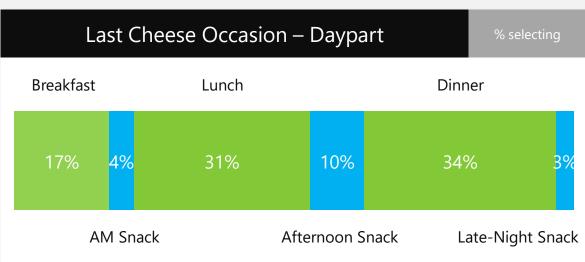
Above all, cheese appeals to consumers based on flavor and is considered a must-have ingredient for some dishes.

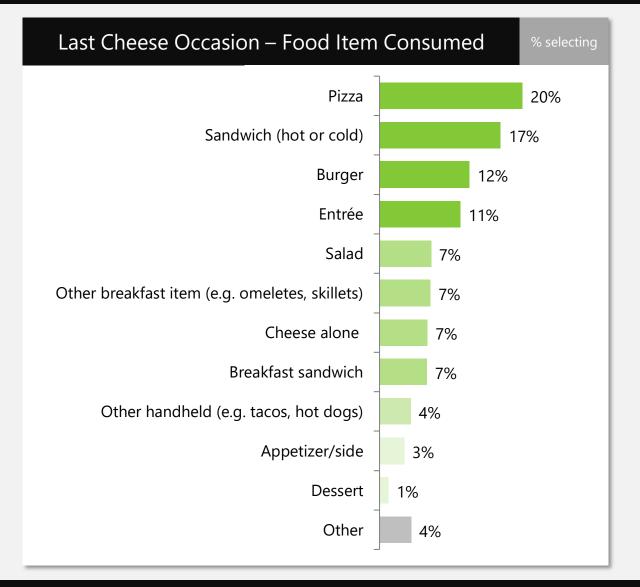
Health or nutrition factors fall much lower as reasons for eating cheese, as does convenience (in relation to ease of use and long shelf life.)



Pizza was the most common carrier for consumers' most recent cheese occasion, closely followed by sandwiches, but overall choices ranged from burgers to dessert. Occasions were split between lunch and dinner; snack times show room for growth.

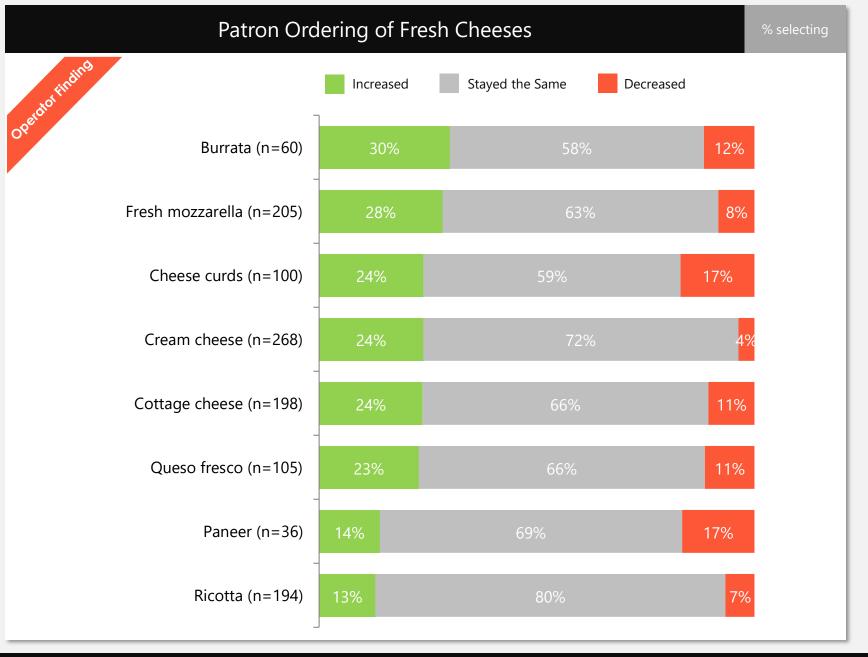




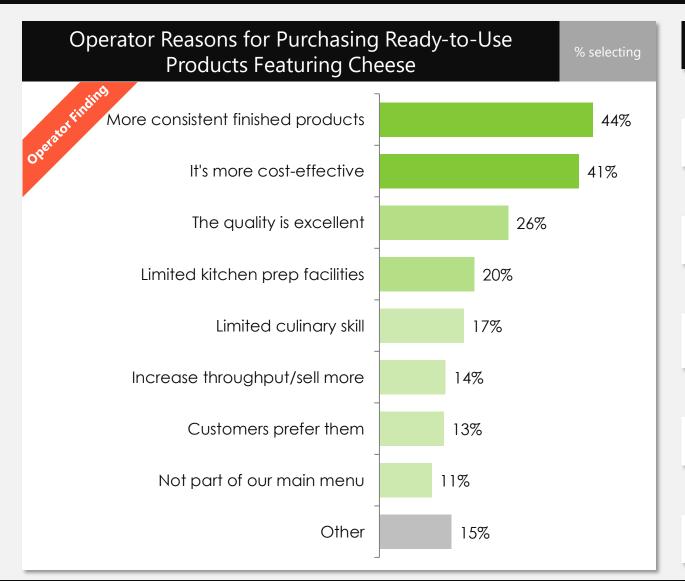


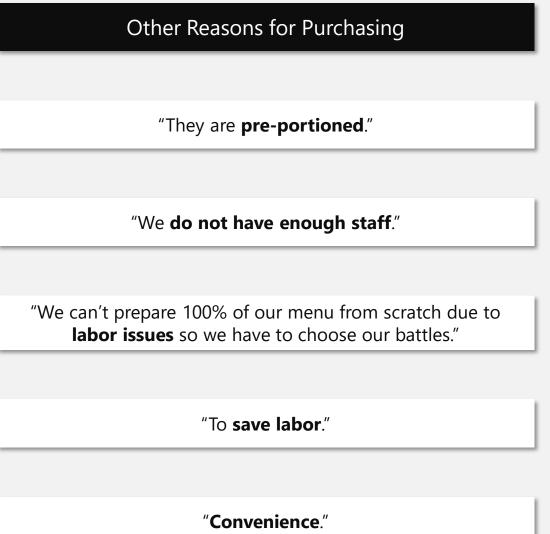
Ordering of dishes featuring fresh cheese is experiencing substantial increases for most operators, although specialty varieties like cheese curds and paneer are slightly less likely to show growth.

Trendy burrata and fresh mozzarella are seeing the greatest increase (although burrata is menued by far fewer operators.)



Consistency and good value are the top reasons operators buy ready-to-use products with cheese; one in four also point to excellent quality. Labor challenges also increase their appeal, with one operator describing the choice as "choosing our battles."





Five varieties of cheddar are among the fastest-growing cheeses on burgers, while regular cheddar is available as an option on nearly half of all burgers. Burgers are also a platform for global cheeses like Danish havarti, Dutch smoked gouda, and Mexican queso.

	TOP CHEESE VARIETIES ON BURGERS						
<b>TOP</b> ranked by penetration	PENETRATION	1-YEAR GROWTH	4-YEAR GROWTH	TRENDING ranked by 4-year growth	PENETRATION	1-YEAR GROWTH	4-YEAR GROWTH
Cheddar	46.2%	-	+9%	Pimento Cheese	1.9%	+1%	+73%
American	35.0%	+5%	+14%	Tillamook Cheddar	1.4%	-2%	+65%
Swiss	28.3%	-	-4%	Muenster	1.0%	+5%	+60%
Bleu Cheese	20.2%	+2%	-5%	Havarti	1.2%	+1%	+56%
Pepper Jack	15.5%	+3%	+10%	Fresh Mozzarella	1.4%	-5%	+52%
Mozzarella	9.5%	+1%	-	White Cheddar	4.1%	+12%	+51%
Provolone	9.0%	-3%	-9%	Smoked Gouda	2.8%	+9%	+47%
Monterey Jack	4.2%	-8%	-11%	Smoked Cheddar	1.3%	-8%	+41%
White Cheddar	4.1%	+12%	+51%	Queso	2.4%	+20%	+27%
Feta	3.9%	-6%	-2%	American	35.0%	+5%	+14%
Smoked Gouda	2.8%	+9%	+47%	Aged Cheddar	2.3%	-15%	+13%
Parmesan	2.5%	-2%	-24%	Pepper Jack	15.5%	+3%	+10%
Queso	2.4%	+20%	+27%	Vermont Cheddar	1.1%	+5%	+9%
Gorgonzola	2.4%	-13%	-7%	Gruyere	2.2%	-1%	+6%
Gruyere	2.2%	-1%	+6%				

Smoked cheese paired with popular proteins such as bacon, brisket, or shrimp appeal to consumers. Atypical combinations, such as breadsticks with bacon or mac and cheese with lobster, score very high in terms of their uniqueness.

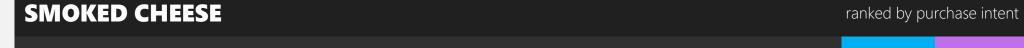
ITEM

Naturally Pit-Smoked

Smoked Mozzarella Shrimp

Rigatoni





DESCRIPTION

Brisket that's naturally slow smoked for at least 13 hours topped with **smoked** 

Shrimp, smoked mozzarella, and toasted breadcrumbs with rigatoni pasta

baked in creamy seafood alfredo with spinach.



– Sep 2019	Subway	Brisket Sandwich	Cheddar cheese and zesty barbecue sauce — our Pit-Smoked Brisket sandwich packs layer after layer of delicious smoky flavor on our signature Italian bread.	96
Oct 2019	Fazoli's	Smoky Bacon Breadsticks	This snack is a cheesy pull-apart pizza made from our famous breadsticks! It starts with our garlic-buttery breadsticks. We serve it with a delicious cheese sauce made with smoked Gouda. Gouda is a Dutch cheese named after the city, Gouda, in the Netherlands. We use smoked Gouda to prepare our Smoky Bacon Breadsticks. Smoked gouda is known for its edible brown rind, creamy yellow interior, and smoky flavor.	95



	May 2019	Schlotzsky's	Chicken Bacon Smokecheesy	Shaved chicken, bacon, <b>smoked Cheddar</b> , chipotle mayo, red onions, lettuce and tomatoes on sourdough bun.	92	52
7	Apr 2019	Panera Bread	Maple Bacon, Egg & Cheese Wrap	Bacon glazed with sweet maple, scrambled egg, smoked gouda cheese, salt and pepper in a whole-grain wrap.	79	88
	- Mar 2019	Ledo Pizza	Greek Calzone	Tzatziki sauce with roasted grape tomatoes, carved gyro meat, <b>smoked provolone</b> and feta cheese.	77	67
	Jan 2019	Ninety Nine Restaurant & Pub	Baked Lobster Mac & Cheese	A comforting classic. Cavatappi noodles tossed with <b>smoked gouda cheese sauce</b> , Parmesan cheese and crowned with North Atlantic lobster meat and seasoned crumbs. Oven-baked to perfection.	75	94

PURCHASE

95

UNIQUE

57

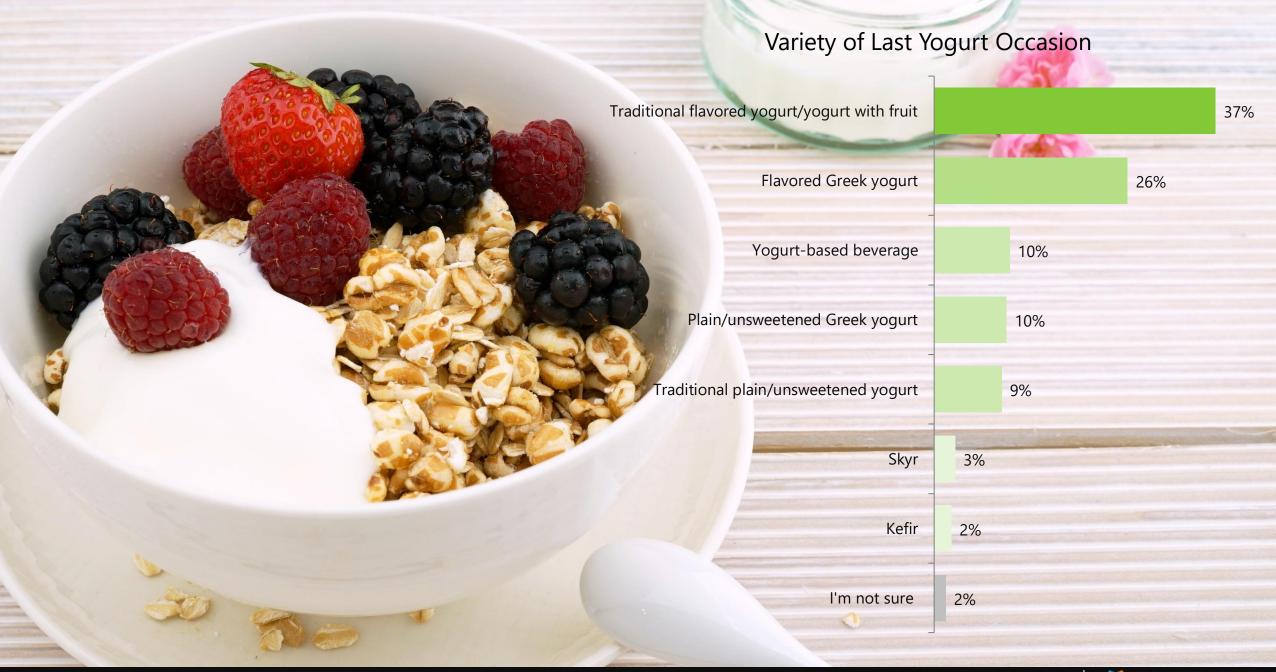
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CHAIN

Olive Garden

DATE

Nov 2019

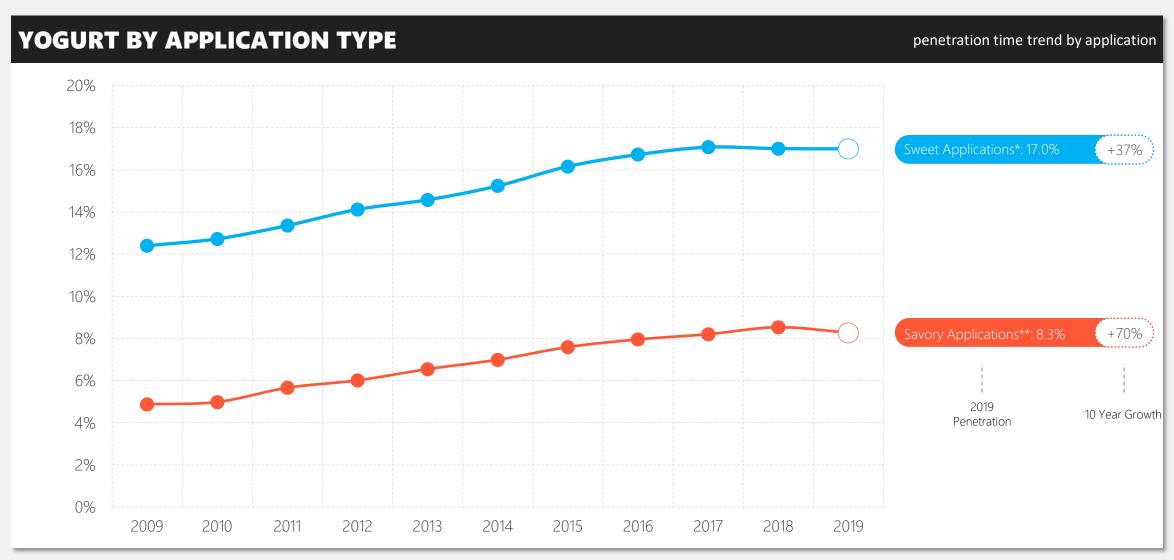


Single-flavor case packs are the most common format purchased, but more variety could drive sales, especially during well-established breakfast routines for consumers who otherwise might get bored. Bulk sales are secondary except for plain Greek yogurt and traditional/plain varieties.

perator find

Operator Yogurt Purch	% selecting			
	Single-flavor cases of individual servings	Multi-flavor cases of individual servings	Bulk tubs/ containers	Bulk pouches
Traditional flavored yogurt	56%	34%	33%	8%
Flavored Greek yogurt	55%	30%	24%	3%
Yogurt-based beverages	42%	25%	29%	8%
Kefir	37%	37%	22%	11%
Plain Greek yogurt	33%	16%	60%	4%
Skyr (Icelandic yogurt)	32%	45%	23%	5%
Traditional plain/unsweetened yogurt	27%	10%	66%	10%

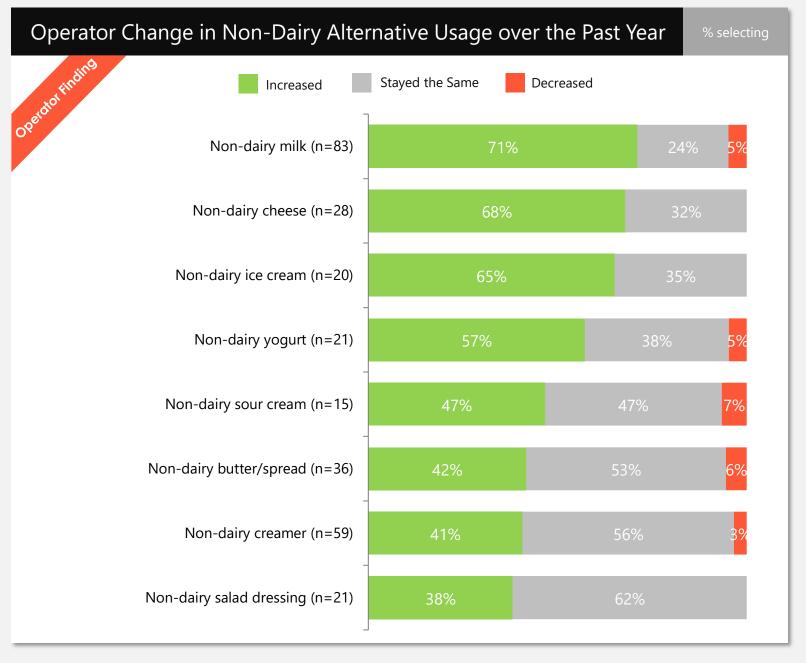
Yogurt used in savory applications has experienced nearly double the long-term growth of that for yogurt found in sweet applications. Menu growth for both has remained relatively flat since 2016.



\*includes traditional yogurt applications like parfaits, fruit with yogurt, standard sides of yogurt such as Greek Yogurt, smoothies, and desserts. \*\*includes savory yogurt applications such as tzatziki and raita

Not only have operators embraced non-dairy milks, a full three-quarters of them say their purchasing is increasing.

(Other categories show similar upticks, although users comprise a small base that renders those findings as directional.)



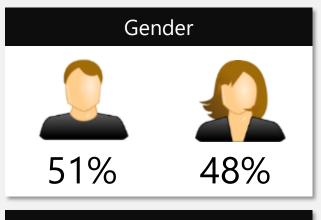
Again, likely due to the versatility of the main variety, half of operators say butter and related products are important to the front and back of the house equally.

14% say Front of the House Where do you consider butter and butter-like products to be more 32% say Back of the House important in your operation? 52% say they matter equally to FOH and BOH

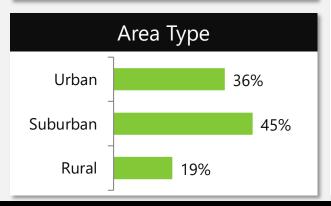
# appendix: 1 demographics

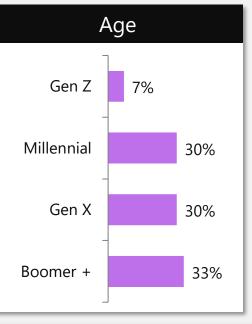


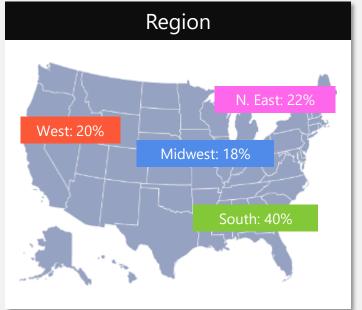
# 1,508 consumers

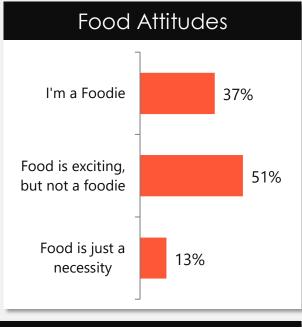


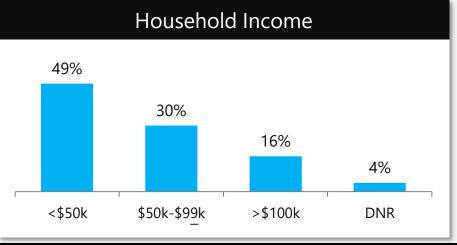
Ethnicity					
White	50%_				
Black	21%_				
Hispanic	17%				
Asian	6%				
Other	6%				

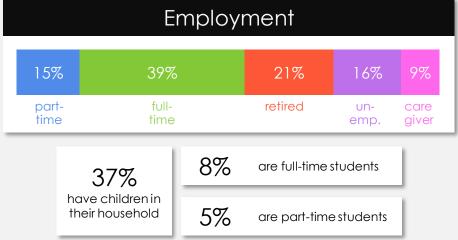




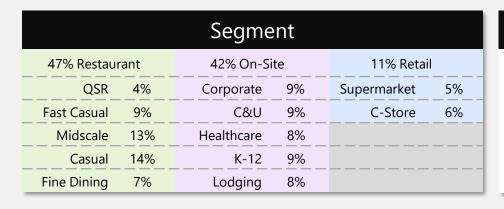








# 317 operators





32%

25%

25%

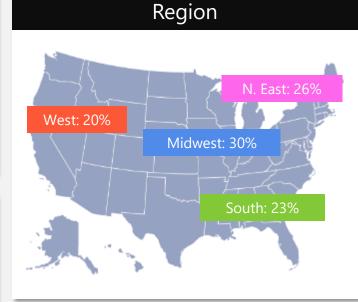
18%

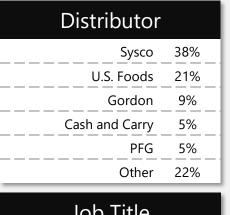
Sodexo

Aramark

Compass

Other





Restaurant Chain Affiliation	
franchise owned  21% company owned	not ma



Contract MGRs Used

An	Annual F&B Purchasing						
30%	26%	27%	17%				
<\$250k	\$250k- \$500k	\$500k- \$1m	>\$1m				

Job Title	
Owner/Operator	28%
General Manager	22%
Manager	15%
F&B Director	13%
Exec. Chef/Chef	11%
Other	11%

Skill Level

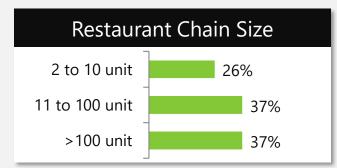
**Majority Scratch** 

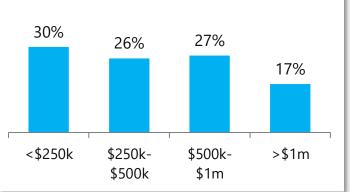
Half Scratch/

Half Pre-Made

All/Almost All Scratch

All/Almost All Pre-Made





33%

44%

10%

# appendix: 2 exhibit guide



# exhibit guide

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a **Datassential** solution

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