

2011 UNITED STATES CHAMPIONSHIP  
CHEESE CONTEST

HOSTED BY WISCONSIN CHEESE  
MAKERS ASSOCIATION

MARCH 8 - 10, 2011

LAMBEAU FIELD ATRIUM  
GREEN BAY, WISCONSIN

WEBSITE  
WWW.USCHAMPIONCHEESE.ORG

**News for Release**  
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## Record-Setting U.S. Championship Cheese Contest Returns to Lambeau Field

Another Champion is returning to Lambeau Field in Green Bay, Wisconsin.

On March 8-10, 2011, a record-setting United States Championship Cheese Contest will fill the Atrium at Lambeau with the game plan of finding one United States Champion Cheese among 1,602 contest entries.

Cheesemakers and buttermakers in 30 states have submitted their finest products to this year's Contest – the largest dairy product competition in U.S. history. Over three days, 26 experts will examine, sniff and taste more than 30,000 pounds of cheese and butter.

The United States Championship Cheese Contest is free and open to the public. In addition to watching these tasting experts in action, visitors to Lambeau Field can taste gold medal cheese varieties from the most recent Contest (held in 2009) and watch artist Sarah Kaufmann carve a masterpiece in 640 pounds of cheddar.

This competition is rooted in more than 120 years of history, beginning when Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association held its first cheese contest in 1891. In recent years, the United States Championship Cheese Contest has flourished, more than doubling in size (141 percent growth) since 2001.

“Growth in this competition mirrors both a renaissance in artisanal cheesemaking and consumers’ growing desire for new, adventurous cheese varieties and flavors,” said John Umhoefer, executive director of the Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association, the event host.

In all, 221 locations, from farmstead cheese sites to commercial cheese and butter facilities entered products this year.

This competition, through decades of refinement, has set the standard worldwide for professional, objective evaluation of cheese and butter, according to Robert Aschebrock, Chief Judge for WCMA's Championship Cheese Contests. “We select judges – cheese buyers, food scientists and licensed graders – from across the United States to evaluate entries on a strict numeric system,” Aschebrock said. Before his volunteer service to the Contest, Mr. Aschebrock was a career cheese and butter grader with the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

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Cheese and butter varieties entered in the Contest are divided into 'classes' such as Aged Cheddar, Blue-Veined Cheese and Soft Goat's Milk Cheeses. The 2011 Contest will feature a total of 73 classes for cheese and 3 classes for butter.

On March 8 and 9, expert judges will work in teams of two, selecting gold medalists in each class. These gold medal cheeses then compete in a final, Championship Round to determine one U.S. Champion Cheese and two runners-up. The Championship Round will convene on the final morning, March 10.

The contest gained 236 entries this year, reflecting broad growth in types of cheese produced in the United States. "This year, entries of hard cheeses made from goat's milk doubled, Aged Cheddar entries doubled and the total number of sheep's milk cheeses more than doubled," Umhoefer explained.

Other growth in the competition included a 50 percent increase in Fresh Mozzarella cheeses, 50 Gouda cheese entries (up from 30 cheeses in 2009), a doubling of soft, cow's milk cheeses with added flavors and a 50 percent increase in pepper cheeses. WCMA added classes for reduced sodium cheese and reduced-fat and low-fat cheeses, gathering a total of 75 cheeses in these classes.

The following states have submitted entries to the 2011 United States Championship Cheese Contest: California, Connecticut, Iowa, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Vermont, Washington and Wisconsin.

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Editor's Note: A Public & Media Agenda is attached.



# 2011 United States Championship Cheese Contest

## PUBLIC & MEDIA AGENDA

Date: **March 8, 9 & 10, 2011**

Location: **Lambeau Field Atrium**, 1265 Lombardi Avenue, Green Bay, WI 54304

Phone: 920-569-7500; Website: [www.lambeaufield.com](http://www.lambeaufield.com)

**\*\* This event is FREE and OPEN to the public \*\***

### **Tuesday, March 8**

8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Contest First Round Judging – Lambeau Field Atrium

*Judges will work in teams of two at 12 tables, each tasting one cheese or butter at a time. One entire cheese class will also be on public view. Samples of award-winning cheeses from the 2009 Contest will be available free for public tasting.*

### **Wednesday, March 9**

8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Contest First Round Judging Continues – Lambeau Field Atrium

*Judges will work in teams of two at 12 tables, each tasting one cheese or butter at a time. One entire cheese class will also be on public view. Samples of award-winning cheeses from the 2009 Contest will be available free for public tasting.*

### **Thursday, March 10**

10:00 a.m. – Noon

Championship Round of Judging – Lambeau Field Atrium

*Judges will taste the gold medal cheeses selected in 72 classes. After a first round of tasting, 18 cheeses will advance as finalists. All 25 expert judges will taste these Elite Eighteen cheeses and select one United States Champion Cheese and two runners-up. Samples of award-winning cheeses from the 2009 Contest will be available free for public tasting.*

Event Host: Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association, 8030 Excelsior Drive, Suite 305, Madison, Wisconsin 53717  
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