


# Chapter 14

## The Cheese Industry's Global Economic Landscape: An Essential Perspective

**Merve Uçkan Çakır**

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8935-2800>

*Graduate Education Institute, Sakarya University of Applied Sciences, Turkey*

**Gülşen Berat Torusdağ**

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0934-5115>

*Graduate Education Institute, Istanbul Gelisim University, Turkey*

### ABSTRACT

*Fermented products such as cheese, consumed fondly in many parts of the world, are seen as value-added dairy products due to their functional and economic effects on health. This research examines the financial performance of the cheese industry from both production and consumption perspectives. It evaluates global costs of cheese production, production capacities, and the contributions of local cheese markets to the regional economy and development. The study highlights the emergence of cheese tourism as a significant interest area within gastronomy tourism, particularly in countries like France, Italy, Spain, and New Zealand. Recent research also suggests potential for cheese tourism in Brazil and Russia. Cheese tourism intersects with industrial tourism, with cheese-related activities crucial to economic development. Within the scope of this study, a conceptual analysis was carried out from a financial perspective on the cheese food product, which is the most produced and consumed among milk and dairy products.*

### INTRODUCTION

Cheese is believed to have evolved approximately 8,000 years ago in the “Fertile Crescent” region between the Tigris and Euphrates in Iraq. The domestication of animals and plants with the agricultural revolution resulted in people understanding the value of milk obtained from animals. The lactic acid fermentation of milk, which has a vibrant content in terms of nutrients, as a result of its coincidental combination with various bacteria, is accepted as the starting point in the formation of dairy products

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(Fox, 1993). It is thought that cheese, which is considered the most crucial fermented product obtained from milk, was first discovered by shepherds. While in some sources, it is stated that it was obtained from milk that turned sour by chance, in other sources, it is thought that it emerged by the coincidental coagulation of milk carried in the stomach of a sheep in Canada. Although no concrete source can be found regarding the history of cheese, it is accepted in the relevant literature that cheese was made in the lands of Mesopotamia, one of the first settlements (Bekiroğlu, 2019).

With the agricultural revolution and the domestication of animals such as cows, sheep, goats and buffalos, milk, which can be harvested daily, has become an indispensable nutrient for human nutrition. The fact that milk is processed in many ways to produce products and that its consumption extends over long days has caused it to be interpreted as a commodity that provides economic income. With the increasing global population, the increasing demand for milk and dairy products consumption reveals the importance of the work carried out for this industry. In addition, using new technologies to produce basic needs such as agriculture and food leads to product diversity and high-profit rates. Increasing costs in production leads to an increase in the consumption of products containing adulterated products. Cheeses are produced with different structures and properties depending on the type of animal from which they are obtained, water ratios, fat ratios, and production technologies (Özdemir & Dülger Altınar, 2018). Within the scope of this study, the economics of dairy production, cheese production costs, capacities and supply chain in the global economy, economic contributions of industrial cheese and artisan cheese production, and the cheese industry market regarding the cheese food product that has the highest production and consumption among milk and dairy products. It aims to provide conceptual information regarding the dimensions of trends and contributions to local economic development and perspectives on the international cheese industry.

## **THE ECONOMICS OF DAIRY PRODUCTION**

Human beings need nutrients in regular amounts due to the increasing population. When evaluated in this context, it can be emphasized that production is necessary to meet individuals' basic needs. The critical role of farmers and primary food producers is to contribute to the country's economy by processing and selling foodstuffs that can help meet physiological needs. Milk and dairy products, which have been produced and consumed almost all over the world since ancient times, are seen as foodstuffs that make essential contributions to the industry. The products produced are in line with the unique production techniques, and consumer demands that make up the dairy industry globally contribute to economic development by causing an increase in market share. Effective product development and effective use of technology and resources are seen as factors that increase the consumption and demand of dairy products globally.

Today, animal husbandry and the dairy industry that develops accordingly are in an indispensable position in terms of providing added value on a unit basis to the economies of developing countries and creating employment (İçöz, 2004). Livestock activities, which are an integral part of the economy in developed countries, create an opportunity for dairy products to be seen as an industry. While animal products can be consumed directly, they also contribute to the economy as products obtained after going through industrial and traditional processes. The transactions carried out in this context are effective in the development of rural areas where industry does not enter, by contributing to the development of rural economy and employment. Growing in direct proportion to livestock activities does not appear to

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