



Overview of cheese products available in Québec 2020-2021

The Observatory's mission is to measure and monitor the evolution of the food supply in order to contribute to the collective effort to improve its quality and accessibility. Sectoral studies make it possible to situate the nutritional quality of foods offered and purchased in Québec and to monitor them over time.

1 Results for the 118 cheese products studied show that:

Near half (40%) of cheese products exceed the 15% daily value threshold for sodium.¹ However, all processed cheese products for cooking (100%) and almost all processed cheese products in individual servings (95%) exceed this threshold. In fact, 80% of single-serving processed cheese products exceed their voluntary sodium reduction target² (data not shown).



Single-serving processed cheese products have higher sodium levels than other cheese products.

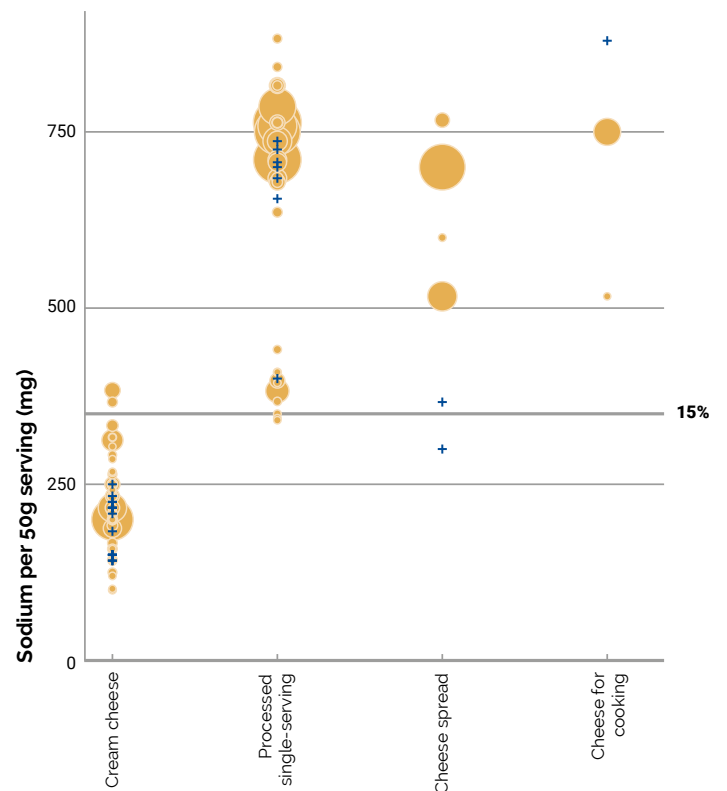


Figure legend: Each circle represents a product according to its classification (horizontal). The larger the circle, the higher the sales volume. The higher the circles, the higher the content of this nutrient (vertical). Crosses (+) represent products for which sales data was not available.

¹ Daily value threshold: According to a Health Canada proposal, this threshold represents a high quantity of a nutrient for a reference amount (50g).

² Voluntary sodium reduction target: Health Canada, in consultation with industry, has established targets to encourage sodium reduction - in stages - in processed foods (350 mg/100 g for cream cheese products, 460 mg/100 g for plant-based cheese products, and 1240 mg/100 g for single-serving processed cheese products, spreads & for cooking).

2 Classification of cheese products according to their type, in descending order of variety:



Cream cheese (59%):
Cream cheese product. Includes plant-based imitations.



Single-serving processed cheese (33%):
Processed cheese product typically sold in slices or triangles for individual consumption. Includes plant imitations. They account for 61% of all sales in the category.



Processed cheese spread (5%):
Processed cheese spread. Includes plant-based imitations.



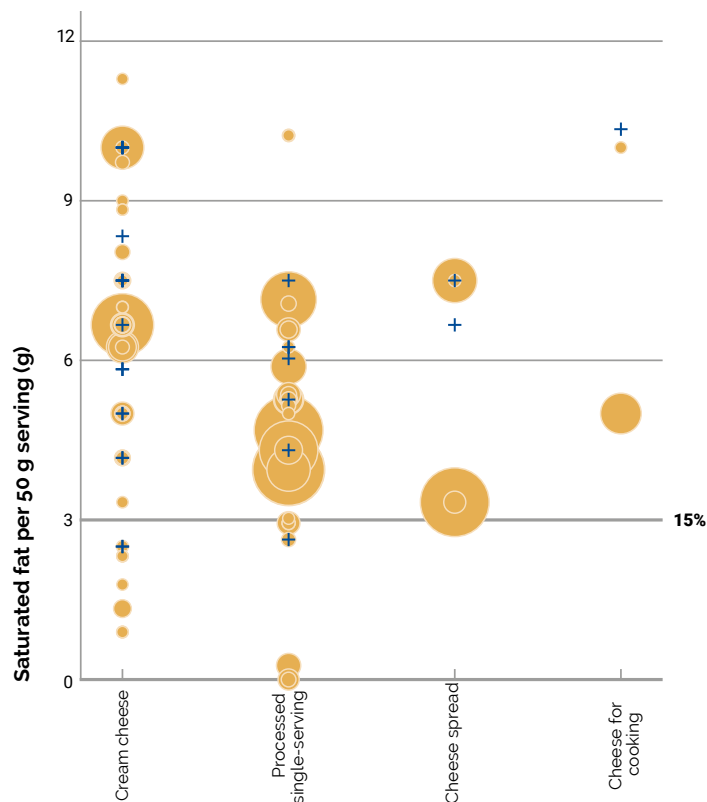
Processed cheese for cooking (3%):
Processed cheese product that is usually presented in blocks and is often used for cooking. Includes plant-based imitations.



Cream cheese products have higher fat content compared to other cheese products.

3 Results for the 118 cheese products studied show that:

Over three-quarters of cheese products (83%) exceed the 15% daily value threshold for **saturated fat**.³ All spreadable and cooking cheese products (100%) as well as 83% of cream cheese products and 79% of single-serving processed cheese products exceed this threshold.



4 Conclusion & courses of action

Given their high sales volume and high sodium and saturated fat content, strategies to monitor and improve the supply should focus on **single-serving processed cheese products**.

³ The Government of Canada's Food and Drug Regulations limit the potential for reformulation of saturated fat, as cheese products must contain a minimum of 20% milk fat in order to be identified as a cheese product.

The data for this overview of cheese products comes from:



➤ **Nutritional composition**



➤ **Consumer purchases**

Market coverage

➤ **74% of the offer**
➤ **72% of sales**

Steps taken to create this overview:

