

Infant Lesson Plan 4 - Cheese up your life!

Objective:

To help pupils understand where cheese comes from and the process of cheese production.

Duration: 30 minutes (approximately).

Curricular Links:

SESE (Geography) → Living in the local community → People at work →
Food and farming

Words of the Day

Pasteurisation: Involves heating the milk to a high temperature for a short time (e.g. 72° Celsius for 15 seconds), and then cooling it really quickly.

Cheddar: A type of hard cheese that can be white or red.

Edam: A white cheese with a bright red cover.

Soft Cheese: Usually white in colour and spreadable.

Classroom Discussion

Discuss with your pupils the different types of cheese they have tried.

Cheese Making in Ireland

Ireland has been famous as a producer of great dairy products for a very long time. Dairy products have been an important part of the Irish diet since prehistoric times (back when there were cavemen).

Irish butter has always been very popular but cheese production has become more common in the last 40 years (when many of your parents were your age). Today, lots and lots of people are making cheese in Ireland for us to eat and also to send to other countries.

Irish dairy cows graze on more grass and for longer over the year than dairy herds almost anywhere else in the world. This is what makes our cheese so tasty!



The Story of Cheddar Cheese – From Farm to Fridge

1. Cheddar cheese is made during the spring, summer and autumn months. This is when the cows are out in the fields and eating fresh grass which gives the Cheddar a lovely flavour and yellow colour.
2. The milk is brought in tankers to the cheese factory. It is pasteurised and put into large containers known as vats, where it is kept warm. Pasteurisation is heating the milk to a very high temperature for a short time, and then cooling it really quickly.
3. The milk is processed and friendly bacteria are added. It is heated and then cooled again using special machines.
4. The cheese is cut into blocks before it goes into the chill store (a big cold room) for 24 hours where it is cooled down. It is then stored in a cool room for 6 –

12 months until it is ready to eat. It won't leave the cheese store until a very important person called a cheese grader is satisfied that it is perfect.

5. So the next time you are enjoying a piece of cheese, you can be sure you are eating a high quality, nutritious and tasty product.

Did you know?

Cheddar cheese is part of the 'milk, yogurt and cheese' food group in the Food Pyramid (refer to 'Healthy Eating' lesson plan). Three servings are recommended per day from this food group for children aged 5 - 8 years, with five daily servings recommended for those aged 9 - 18 years. Examples of a serving include **200ml of milk, 125g of yogurt or a 25g piece of Cheddar cheese.**

Cheddar cheese provides many important nutrients such as **calcium, protein, phosphorus and vitamin B12.**

Class Activity:

Say Cheese!

Irish Cheddar cheese is one of our most delicious foods. Grate it, slice it, cube it, or melt it! It's perfect for the lunchbox, as a snack, or adding to meals.

Ask the pupils in your class what their favourite cheesy meal is. Ask them to draw a picture of it and try to write some of the key ingredients. Bring in some different types of cheese for the class to taste and talk about.

Bring it Home

Cheese up your life at home!

- Adding 25g of Cheddar cheese to a pasta dish, a mixed salad or an omelette is a 'grate' way to get one of your recommended servings from the 'milk, yogurt and cheese' food group!
- What other recipes can you cook which include cheese?
- Cheesy beans on toast
- Jacket potatoes with cheese
- Homemade pizza
- Savoury pancakes
- Quiche
- Cheese scones