



Julia Baker

The 2024 dairy landscape

When you think of South Africa, images of vibrant landscapes and rich cultures come to mind. But let's not forget about the delightful world of dairy products that play a significant role in our culinary landscape. From creamy cheeses to indulgent ice creams, the dairy sector is thriving and ever evolving.

As we continue into 2024, it's essential to explore what's happening with these beloved staples. Are consumers leaning towards traditional favourites or exploring newer options? What trends are shaping the future of milk, yoghurt, cheese, and ice cream? The answers may surprise you as we look into this deliciously diverse market. Whether you're a devoted fan or just curious about what's on offer, there's plenty to discover in South Africa's dynamic dairy scene.

Milk production is the fourth largest agricultural sector in South Africa. The milk and dairy industry contribute largely to the South African economy through food security and its dairy products export earnings. In June 2024 South Africa's Concentrated Milk exports accounted up to R83.6M according to The Observatory of Economic Complexity (OEC).

The industry comprises a number of different economic activities and significant differences



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exist between farming methods and processing of dairy products. These activities involve the production and marketing of raw milk, pasteurised milk and cream, fermented milk, long-life milk and cream, yoghurt, cheese and its by-product whey, milk powder, sweetened and unsweetened concentrated milk, butter and butter oil (ghee).

According to Milk South Africa, the Covid 19 pandemic that had affected most of the normal value chain within agricultural sector had little impact on the dairy industry. In South Africa, the dairy products had performed well under the pandemic and most of the raw milk was channelled to the dairy products market.

According to www.journals.co.za, "Food safety aspects of dairy in South Africa are governed by the Foodstuffs, Cosmetics and Disinfectants Act (Act 54 of 1972, Regulation 1555 of 21 November 1997). It is illegal to sell raw milk in South Africa for direct use unless the specific municipality where the sale is taking place is authorised to do so. Raw milk is milk that is not subjected to heat treatment namely pasteurisation, ultra-pasteurisation, ultra-high temperature treatment or sterilisation.

"Raw milk for direct consumption is generally considered to be of a higher risk due to its potential as a carrier of potential harmful bacteria not normally associated with pasteurised milk."

Milk production is the fourth largest agricultural sector in South Africa. The milk and dairy industry contribute largely to the South African economy through food security and its dairy products export earnings.





Meet SA's most recycled milk packaging

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The logo for Dairypack, featuring the word "Dairypack" in a blue, stylized font with a white outline, enclosed within a blue rounded rectangular border.

A DIVISION OF POLYOAK PACKAGING



Current market trends

According to Stats SA's recent report, the prices for milk, eggs, and cheese have seen a substantial increase of 13.9% from November last year. This significant price hike is affecting consumer purchasing patterns and preferences.

The South African dairy market is seeing notable shifts as consumer preferences evolve. The demand for traditional dairy products such as milk and cheese remain strong, yet there's a noticeable surge in alternative options.



Signature Salted Caramel Ice Cream with Salted Caramel Sauce.
<https://cupcakesandcouscous.com/>

Ice cream consumption has also seen an upward trend. Local artisans are experimenting with innovative flavours that cater to diverse palates. Polar Ice Cream for example have some wonderful



The dairy at Hawthorne Valley Farm in Ghent. Credit: Lauren Lancaster, www.nytimes.com/

flavours; Banana Nut Fudge, Choc Fudge Brownie, Madagascan Vanilla, Pralines & Cream, Salted Caramel and Cannolis. This creativity not only attracts younger consumers but also supports small businesses like WhiskAway Ice Cream who offer vegan and sugar free ice cream options.

Additionally, online shopping for dairy products is on the rise. E-commerce platforms provide convenience and accessibility, allowing consumers to explore various brands without leaving home. This change enhances competition among producers, ultimately benefiting customers through better quality, price and variety.

Technological advancements play a crucial role too. Smart farming techniques enhance efficiency and yield, making local dairy farms more competitive.

Notable technological breakthroughs involve the production of specialised enzyme blends that elevate the standards of dairy goods and procedures. With the aid of engineering and biotechnology, new enzymes have been introduced to optimise lactose reduction, enhance flavour, and modify texture.

The dairy industry relies heavily on technology to push progress. Notable breakthroughs involve the production of specialised enzyme blends that elevate the standards of dairy goods and procedures. With the aid of engineering and biotechnology, new enzymes have been introduced to optimise lactose reduction, enhance flavour, and modify texture. Furthermore, advancements like encapsulation and controlled-release techniques are extending their lifespan.

Sustainability

Sustainability plays a significant role in purchasing decisions too. Many dairy brands are adopting eco-friendly practices in production and packaging. This shift resonates well with environmentally conscious shoppers looking for responsible choices.



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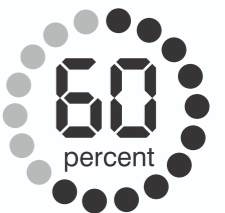
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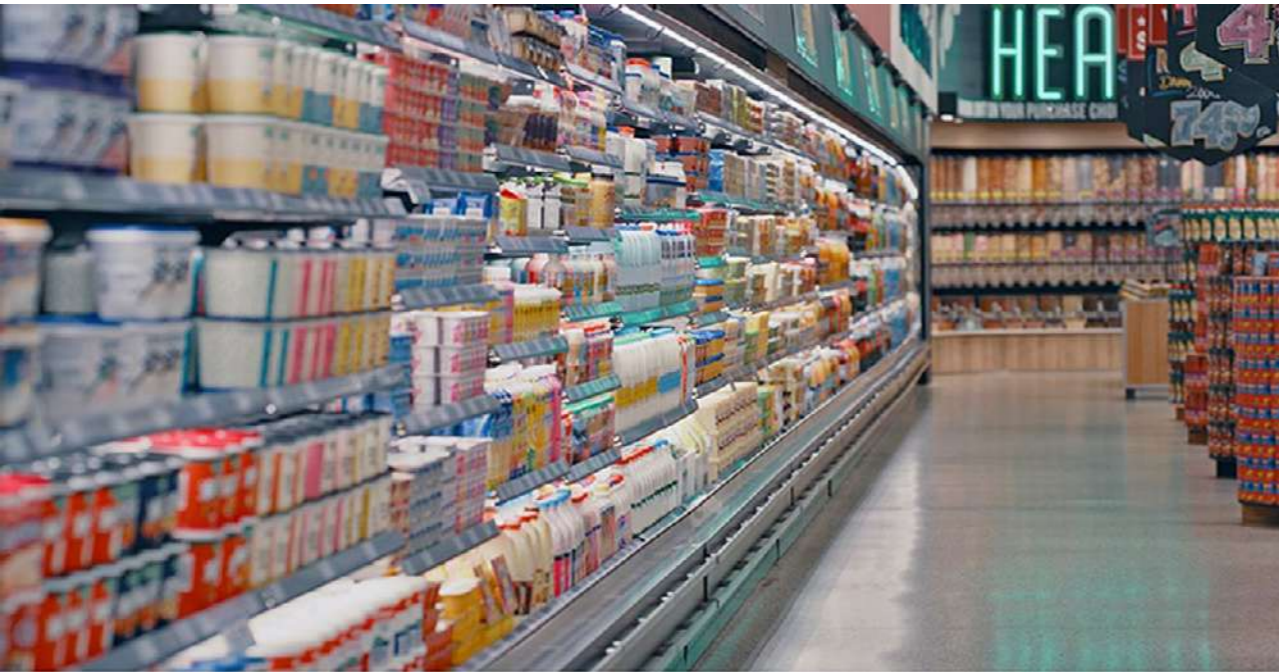
- Faster payment transactions & reduced queues
- Faster & easier staff training reducing on-boarding time by up to



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- Eliminate counterfeit acceptance by up to





www.ingredientsnetwork.com/



A great initiative is a collaboration between Woodlands Dairy, Infinite Industries and Botes Honey Farms who are creating beehives from recycled materials.

Marisa Maccaferri, Marketing Executive for Woodlands Dairy and First Choice, says "Sustainability is at the heart of what we do. Partnering with Infinite Industries, which specialises in upcycling packaging material, was an obvious choice."

Ethical considerations come into play. Consumers increasingly seek transparency in sourcing and production methods for their favourite cheese or yoghurt brands. This pressure encourages companies to adapt practices that align with consumer values while addressing health-related concerns effectively.

Types of SHEEP MILK CHEESE

ONLYFOODS



Manchego
Semi-hard, buttery, nutty flavour with a tangy finish
120 kcal*



Roquefort
Semi-soft, crumbly creamy, robust, yet tangy blue cheese
110 kcal



Pecorino Toscano
Hard, sweet & nutty with a hint of sharpness
110 kcal



Pecorino Romano
Hard, sharp, salty flavour, distinctive tanginess
110 kcal*



Pecorino
Hard, crumbly sharp and salty
110 kcal



Oscypek
Hard, smoky flavour with a hint of saltiness & nuttiness
120 kcal



Pecorino Sardo
Hard, slightly sweet and nutty flavour, with a sharp finish
110 kcal



Idiazabal Cheese
Semi-hard, smoky, nutty flavour, with a nutty undertone
120 kcal



Ossau-Iraty
Semi-hard, smooth, creamy texture with a nutty, slightly sweet flavour
120 kcal



P'tit Basque
Semi-hard, nutty, earthy flavour with hints of butteriness
120 kcal



Pepato
Hard, sharp, spicy flavour with added peppercorns
110 kcal



Torta del Casar
Soft, creamy texture with a rich, earthy flavour
100 kcal



Etorki
Semi-soft, smooth, buttery texture with a mild, slightly nutty flavour
120 kcal



Zamorano Cheese
Hard, nutty, slightly sweet flavour with a sharp finish
120 kcal



Foncal Cheese
Hard, robust, nutty flavour with hints of fruitiness
120 kcal



Pag Cheese
Semi-hard, sweet, slightly tangy and nutty
120 kcal



Serra da Estrela Cheese
Soft, creamy, buttery texture with a mild, slightly tangy flavour
110 kcal



Lighvan Cheese
Hard, sharp, tangy flavour with a crumbly texture
110 kcal



Pecorino Siciliano
Hard, sharp, tangy flavour, with a slightly sweet undertone
110 kcal



Abbaye de Belloc
Semi-hard, nutty, earthy flavour with a hint of sweetness
120 kcal



Bryndza
Soft, creamy with a tangy, slightly salty flavour
100 kcal



Bundz
Semi-soft, creamy texture with a tangy, slightly salty flavour
100 kcal



Abertam Cheese
Semi-hard, creamy texture with a mild, slightly tangy flavour
120 kcal



Casu Marzu
Soft, intense, pungent flavour with a hint of sweetness. Contains live maggots
N/A

*Calorie per ounce of cheese

www.onlyfoods.net/sheep-milk-cheese





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WITH FAMILY



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Popular South African dairy brands and products

South Africa boasts a vibrant dairy scene, with brands that have become household names. One standout brand is Clover, renowned for its wide

range of products including milk and butter. Their full-cream offerings are particularly popular among families looking for quality and taste.

Another key player is Dairymaid, famous for its delicious yoghurt varieties. With flavours ranging from classic vanilla to exotic fruits, it caters to diverse tastes while promoting healthy snacking.

Then there's Lancewood, celebrated for cheeses like edam cheese, mushroom sauce to chunky chive cottage cheese. Their products are in fridges across the nation.

Ice cream lovers appreciate the indulgence offered by Magnum and Cornetto from Unilever. Both brands continue to innovate with new flavours that excite local palates.

These brands not only represent quality but also signify a unique South African dairy culture worth exploring further.

The rise of plant-based alternatives

The demand for plant-based alternatives in South Africa is on a remarkable rise. Consumers are increasingly opting for dairy-free options, driven by health benefits and environmental concerns.

Brands are responding with innovative products that replicate the taste and texture of traditional dairy items. From creamy almond milk to rich cashew cheese, the choices are expanding rapidly.

Local producers are tapping into this trend, creating delicious yoghurts made from coconut

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or soy. These alternatives cater not only to vegans but also to those looking to reduce their dairy intake. This shift stems from a growing awareness of lactose intolerance among many South Africans. As more people seek options that align with their dietary needs, plant-based substitutes continue gaining traction in supermarkets and restaurants alike.

With every passing year, it seems like there's something new on the shelf waiting to be discovered by adventurous eaters and health-conscious consumers. Many people now scrutinise fat content and opt for low-fat or reduced-calorie versions of ice cream and cheese.

There's also growing awareness about the link between saturated fats found in full-fat dairy foods and heart disease. As a result, plant-based alternatives are gaining traction among those looking to maintain healthier diets without sacrificing flavour.

The future of dairy in South Africa

Innovations in production methods are gaining traction. Farmers are adopting sustainable practices, focusing on reducing carbon footprints while ensuring high-quality output.

As regulations tighten around food safety and sustainability, the industry must adapt quickly. Collaboration between farmers, manufacturers, and retailers is essential to meet these new standards effectively.

Consumer preferences will dictate the future of dairy in South Africa. Emphasising quality over

www.dairyreporter.com/



quantity could pave the way forward for this cherished sector.

The dairy landscape in South Africa is evolving rapidly. Whether you're a fan of creamy cheese, indulgent ice cream, or tangy yoghurt, staying informed about the latest trends and developments can enhance your choices. Awareness of health issues surrounding dairy consumption can guide you toward products that align with your dietary needs.

As plant-based alternatives gain traction, it's essential to explore both traditional and new options available in the market. Engaging with brands that prioritise sustainability and nutrition empowers consumers to make better decisions for themselves and the planet. Being knowledgeable about these dynamics allows you to navigate the

myriads of offerings confidently.

Keep an eye out for innovations within this sector while ensuring that your consumers' dietary habits reflect a balance between enjoyment and health consciousness. The world of dairy may be changing, but staying informed will always put you at an advantage when making food choices.

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In Woodlands Dairy's drive to reduce their environmental footprint, they continually explore innovative solutions. They've commissioned two Biomass Boilers to harness efficient renewable energy sources. The Resource Recovery Plant is a testament to their dedication to waste reduction and resource optimisation. Through their Sustainability Programme, they empower farmers to adopt sustainable practices, creating a positive impact on communities. They formed strategic alliances with trusted recycling partners and prioritised eco-friendly packaging by increasing the plant-based content to reduce their reliance on non-renewable resources.

Sources:

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All the cheesy goodness

This family favourite is packed with nutrients and can make any meal amazing

Cheese is versatile and delicious, perfect for snacking and cooking and, of course, melting. It's so easy to make it one of your family's "three-a-day" dairy options, every day.

You can use cheese as a tasty topping for pasta and vegetable dishes, add it as an essential ingredient to a recipe or make it a go-to sandwich filler. It is packed with good-quality protein and provides important nutrients such as calcium, potassium, zinc, vitamin A and vitamin B12.

With so many varieties available, cheese can rightfully claim its place as a must-have in your family's meal prep.

Cheese, glorious cheese

Cheese is nutritious. It's packed with calcium, phosphorus and protein to build healthy bones, help with muscle development and repair, and help to protect your teeth. As an in-between snack, cheese keeps you feeling fuller for longer. Recent research has also proven that, when eaten as part of a healthy diet, cheese does not increase

your cholesterol levels or your risk of heart disease. However, always be mindful of your portion size. Having a serving of cheese (40g or 2 tablespoons, grated) every day can be a guilt-free treat for everyone in your family.

Perfect for cheese lovers

When it comes to choosing the type of cheese to include in your family's meals and snacks, value for money is often top of mind. Luckily, today's options range from luxury to everyday prices – there's something to fit every budget. By being smart about storing cheese you can make it last long, avoid food waste and benefit from specials.

Many hard and semi-hard types of cheese freeze well, which allows you to buy specials or bulk offers. It works well to buy a big block of a hard cheese such as Cheddar or Gouda, grate it all before the expiry date then freeze it in smaller portions for quick and easy use.

Processed cheese spreads can be stored in the pantry until they are opened and have a long shelf life in the fridge. Remember to always check the label for the recommended storage advice.



<https://www.facebook.com/SACheeseFestival/>

With proper meal planning and shopping to get good value for money, you can help your family eat more cheese, more often – in more fun ways.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=54LXcjNZPQY>



Cheese, glorious cheese. Here's more on the family favourite packed with goodness: #rediscoverdairy #EnjoyDairy



Cheese – a family favourite packed with goodness! Here's more ways to love cheese: #rediscoverdairy #EnjoyDairy

