

CHEESE STARTER CULTURES

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STRATEGIES TO GROW YOUR BUSINESS

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In this case study, an innovative cheese starter culture manufacturer engaged CPL Business Consultants to conduct a Voice of Customer (VoC) Survey to gain insights into the needs of its customers. CPL's report included a synopsis of the 'ideal starter culture' and uncovered buying criteria and motivators of which the client had previously been unaware. The client was able to tailor its marketing strategy to the needs of its cheese-maker customers.

Traditionally cheese makers used liquid 'bulk starter' to inoculate milk with bacteria in cheese manufacturing. However, Direct Vat Set (DVS) or Direct Vat Inoculation (DVI) cultures have become more popular, particularly in small plants, as an alternative to bulk starters. CPL was asked to investigate how this may impact sales of cheese starter cultures and the reasons behind these changes. The client chose CPL for this task as it had the right combination of technical knowledge and commercial experience and could also carry out the project anonymously.

The objective of this project was to try to understand the true feelings of cheesemakers about starter cultures. CPL carried out a Voice of Customer (VoC) survey combined with desktop research. The study aimed to determine what cheesemakers want; how different a new system has to be to get them to change; and if a new system is developed, what aspects will catalyse a change. In effect, there are many factors in play, and this study put them into priority order.

[Click to see the contents of the study](#) or look below for an outline.

CHEESE STARTER CULTURES

Executive Summary

- Objective
- Background
- Method
- Conclusions
- Recommendations

Valorisation of cheesemaking by-products

- Cheesemakers' Views
- Market & Trends
- Products
- Barriers to Entry
- Success Factors
 - Driving forces
 - Restraining forces

6 Principal Visit Contact Reports

Interviews and Meeting Reports with Commercial Cheesemakers

Combined Questionnaire Responses for all Principal Companies Visited

- Summary of Results from Face-to-Face Meetings with Cheesemakers

Analysis of Cheese Starter Culture Voice of Customer Survey

- Opinions of Bulk Starter Cheesemakers Visited
- Opinions of all Cheesemakers Surveyed
- Opinions of Cheese Companies Using Bulk Starter Systems
- Opinions of Cheese Companies Using Direct Starter Systems
- Opinions of Small Cheese Making Companies
- Opinions of Large Cheese Making Companies
- Opinions of Small Companies Using Bulk Starter Culture Systems
- Opinions of Large Companies Using Bulk Starter Culture Systems
- Opinions of Small Companies Using Direct Starter Culture Systems
- Opinions of Large Companies Using Direct Starter Culture Systems
- Differences in Opinion between Bulk Starter Culture Users and Direct Starter Culture Users

Cheesemaker Voice of Customer Survey Results

- Raw Data from Cheese Starter Culture Surveys and Interviews

Ideal Cheese Starter Cultures

- Introduction
- Views of 19 Companies

Wisconsin Cheesemakers Association Meeting

- Interviews with Cheesemakers
- [World Championship Cheese Contest](#)

8 Academic Contacts

- Experts in Cheesemaking and Starter Cultures

Appendices

- Cheese Manufacturers Interviews about Starter Cultures
- Cheese Makers Questionnaire on Starter Cultures
- Cheese Making and Starter Culture Patents

Tables and Figures

- 51 Tables and 2 Figures

CPL has also worked on other relevant projects including [health ingredients from starter cultures](#), [cheese ingredient strategy](#), and [dairy enzyme markets](#). Have a look at our [PowerPoint Introduction](#) and [Brochure](#) describing deliverables, differentiators and case studies. [Eight case studies](#) can also be reviewed.