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Cheese Heads: Part 2

In 2012, Wisconsin’s 11,490 dairy farms provided the milk needed to produce 2.8 billion pounds of cheese. It takes ten pounds of milk to make one pound of cheese.

Which of the following varieties is the most commonly produced cheese in Wisconsin?

   a) Colby
   b) Cheddar
   c) Mozzarella
   d) Monterey Jack

Answer: c) Mozzarella. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) reports that in 2012, Wisconsin produced 952 million pounds of mozzarella cheese. That’s more than the combined total production of cheddar, Colby, and Monterey Jack cheese in the state. It is also more mozzarella cheese than produced in Italy (550 million pounds).

Half of all the cheese produced in Wisconsin in 2012 was Italian cheese (mozzarella, provolone, parmesan, Romano, and Asiago). Mozzarella alone accounted for over one-third of all Wisconsin cheese produced.

Although Wisconsin ranks first in total cheese production, we rank second to California in Italian cheese production.

However, Wisconsin stands alone in Limburger cheese making. The most recent USDA data reveals that 100 percent of all Limburger cheese produced in the United States in 2012 was made in Wisconsin.


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