



Welcome to **taste** the npd newsletter from Dairygold Food Ingredients UK. Each issue we will be bringing you our latest innovations, and looking at trends in the cheese sector. So sit back, read and enjoy, and if there is anything that you'd like to find out more about, please get in touch.

## Taste discovering cheese...in Greece

Greece is a country with a long history and traditions. In ancient Greece, milk was considered to be sacred food, legend had it Zeus, leader of the Olympian gods, was fed with milk from the nymph Amalthea.

Greece's natural terrain is more suited to sheep and goats and consequently the cheeses produced are largely made from goat's and ewe's milk. Almost all traditional Greek cheeses are produced from milk of animals that graze freely in regions which means they are typically free from fertilizers, insecticides and pesticides.

Greece has some 14 cheeses under the EU Legislation for product with Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) status, these include Feta, Kasseri, Kefalograviera, Manouri, Galotryi, Kopansti, Sfela, Anevato, Kalathaki Limnou, Katiki Domokou, Pichtogalan Chanion, San Michall and Formaella Arahovas Parnassou, and there are still more pending approval.



1 Feta - (Greek: φέτα) produced in the regions of Macedonia, Thrace, Epirus, Thessaly, Sterea Ellada, Peloponnesus and Mytilini.

2 Kasseri - (Greek: Κασέρι) produced in the regions of Macedonia, Thessaly and in the prefectures of Lesbos and Xanthi.

3 Myzithra - (Greek: μυζήθρα) produced throughout Greece

4 Kefalotyri or Kefalotiri - (Greek: κεφαλότυρι) produced throughout Greece

Without a doubt *Feta* (1) is the most popular of all Greek cheeses, it was given PDO status by EU legislation and can now only be produced in the regions of Macedonia, Thrace, Epirus, Thessaly, Sterea Ellada, Peloponnesus and Mytilini. The importance of having a product labeled as PDO is that it serves as a guarantee of quality and tradition. In the case of Feta, guarantees the cheese is made from sheep's milk and / or sheep and goats milk not cow's milk. The PDO also states goat's milk should not exceed 30% of it's total. Once the cheese is made it is then placed in barrels or tins which are filled with brine and allowed to mature for no less than 60 days.



In Greece Feta would be consumed as a table cheese, in a traditional Greek salad or in cooked filled pies and pastries. Greece produces 115,000 tons of feta each year, and most of this is sold domestically. This shows how specific this cheese is to Greek traditional food. The largest percentage of feta consumption is in Greece (85.6%). Greeks rank at the top of the tree for cheese-per-capita consumption with an average yearly intake of around 23 kg per person, 40% of which is feta.

Dairygold's NPD team have been trialing Feta through the factory at Crewe in both crumb and diced formats. There is also spreadable Feta available.



Other Greek cheeses Dairygold have been trialing at Crewe are -

*Kasseri* (2), another PDO cheese that is produced in the regions of Macedonia, Thessaly and in the prefectures of Lesvos and Xanthi. It is also made from sheep's milk or a combination with goat's milk, which according to the PDO should not exceed 20% of the total. It is a semi-hard to hard cheese, yellowy white in colour and has a mild creamy taste, it is often used to top pizzas.

*Myzithra* (3) is made from the whey from the production of Feta or Kefalotyri. Fresh sheep's or goat's milk is added to the whey, the curds are then separated and poured into muslin lined baskets, with light weights placed on top. The cheese is ready in just one or two days. It is very similar to Ricotta in its flavour, texture and application, and used in Greek cooking for filled pastries & other baked dishes.

*Kefalotyri* (4) is another popular Greek cheese, it is a hard, pale yellow cheese, with a sharp, salty flavour and aroma, and is not dissimilar to Italian hard cheeses, such as Pecorino Romano. It is generally served grated over cooked dishes, such as Mousakka. It was traditionally an un-pasteurised ewe's milk cheese and dates back to Byzantine times, although today it is also made outside of Greece using cow's milk, it is not one of the protected cheese with PDO status.

## Moussakka

### Ingredients:

450g minced lamb  
 2 medium-sized aubergines  
 2 tablespoons olive oil  
 2 medium onions, peeled and chopped small  
 2 cloves garlic, peeled and chopped  
 1 heaped tablespoon chopped fresh mint  
 1 heaped tablespoon chopped fresh parsley  
 1 level teaspoon ground cinnamon  
 2 rounded tablespoons tomato purée  
 75ml red wine



### For the topping:

250g Myzithra  
 275ml whole milk  
 25g plain flour  
 25g butter  
 ¼ whole nutmeg, grated  
 1 large egg  
 1 level tablespoon grated *Kefalotyri*

- 1) Prepare the aubergines, drizzle with olive oil, roast for 30 minutes.
- 2) Fry the minced lamb with the onions and garlic until brown, mix the mint, parsley, cinnamon, tomato purée and red wine and pour them over the meat, season well and cook gently for about 20 minutes.
- 3) Make the topping by placing the milk, flour, butter and nutmeg in a saucepan, whisk over a medium heat until everything comes up to simmering point and the sauce becomes smooth and glossy. Remove the saucepan from the heat and let it cool a little before whisking in the Myzithra and egg.
- 4) Combine the roasted aubergines with the meat mixture and put it into the baking dish. Then pour the topping over, sprinkle the surface with the *Kefalotyri* and bake for 50 minutes.

Serve with a Greek-style salad of cucumber, tomatoes, olives and crumbled *Feta* cheese dressed with olive oil and fresh lemon juice.