

General Safety Tips for Cheese

Source: Whole Foods Market
<https://www.wholefoodsmarket.com/about-our-products/food-safety/handling-dairy-products-cheese-and-eggs-safely>

Make the dairy aisle one of the last stops in your shopping trip so the items you choose do not become warm in your cart.

Although there are many different types of cheeses, some general safety guidelines apply.

- Refrigerate solid cheese in its original wrap until opened. After opening, rewrap the cheese tightly in moisture proof wrap, such as foil, or place in an airtight container. (If concerned about the plasticizer in cling wrap, you may wish to transfer your cheese to foil or an airtight container as soon as you get it home.)
- Buy only pasteurized cheese or hard cheeses marked "aged 60 days" (or longer) if unpasteurized milk is used.
- If mold is visible on solid cheese, trim it off, along with a half inch piece around it. (Cheese ripened with harmless mold, such as blue cheese, is an exception.) Discard all soft cheese, such as cottage cheese, when mold is visible.
- Serve cheese at the recommended serving temperature, which varies according to type. Do not leave moist cheese, such as ricotta or mozzarella, out of the refrigerator for longer than 2 hours.
- Hard natural cheese can be frozen if wrapped tightly in plastic in sections of 1 pound or less and 1-inch thick. It will keep for about 6 to 8 weeks. Thaw cheese in the refrigerator and use within a few days. Since the texture is affected, previously frozen cheese is best used in cooked dishes.
- Due to a potentially harmful bacterium, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration advises pregnant women, the elderly, and people with weakened immune systems to refrain from eating soft cheeses such as feta, Brie, Camembert, blue-veined, and Mexican-style cheeses.

Cheese Storage Chart

Cheese Type	Keep Refrigerated
Cottage cheese opened	10–30 days
Cream or Neufchatel cheese opened	2 weeks

Hard or wax coated cheeses (such as cheddar, Edam, Gouda, Swiss)

unopened 3 to 6 months

opened 3 to 4 weeks

sliced 2 weeks

Ricotta cheese opened five days

Processed cheese food products 3 to 4 weeks

Sources

1. Partnership for Food Safety Education — a public-private coalition of industry, government and consumer groups dedicated to educating the public about safe food handling to help reduce food-borne illness.
2. Food Marketing Institute — a non-profit association conducting programs in research, education, and public affairs on behalf of retailers, wholesalers and consumers.
3. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition
4. U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food Safety and Inspection Service