

## Entry Information

# THE BIG E

## 2024 Gold Medal Cheese Competition



### 2024 Competition Dates to Remember

- |         |   |
|---------|---|
| July 15 | Competition entry forms and fees due  |
| July 24 | Deadline for your entries to arrive at Eastern States Exposition<br>*July 25 by appointment only    * Deliveries will start being accepted on July 17 |
| July 26 | Contest judging day   |

## **Cheese Competition Entry Rules**

1. An entry form and entry fee of \$25 for each entry must be received by Eastern States Exposition no later than July 15, 2024 to be eligible for competition.
2. Cheeses made in New England by a New England licensed cheesemaker in a licensed dairy facility are eligible to compete.
3. Classes will be determined based upon entries. Remember: all cheeses are based on their individual merit and not based on the best in class. Classes that receive less than three entries may be eliminated and entries moved to the appropriate Open Class. Competition Judges or Show Management reserve the right to move products that appear to be misclassified into the correct cheese class.
4. Cheeses with federal standard of identity must conform to those standards.
5. Send your cheese in its original form. Cheeses may not be plugged and/or resealed. Cheeses must be entered as whole wheels, loaves, or blocks. Exceptions will be made for larger form cheeses, i.e. Emmental and Cheddar. These cheeses must be presented in the form in which they are available for wholesale distribution. (For example, 10-pound Print, 5-pound Brick, 20-pound Wedge, etc.) Any individual cheese under one pound weight will require a minimum of 3 pieces or samples. Any yogurt, fermented dairy drinks, or other fermented dairy products require a minimum of 3 8-ounce samples or the equivalent.

## **Cheese Competition Judging Rules**

1. Cheeses are judged by deducting points from a 100-point scale, based on defects for technical judges and desirable qualities for aesthetic judges. Judges' score sheets will be returned to participants. Gold, Silver, and Bronze medals will be awarded, based on the following:
  - Gold: 95 to 100 points
  - Silver: 90-94 points
  - Bronze: 80-89 points
  - All cheeses placing below 80 points will be awarded a no medal.
2. All Gold Medal winning cheeses are eligible for Best in Show. Best in Show is determined by all judges as the overall best cheese of the day regardless of previous score.
3. Each cheese will be evaluated by a panel of at least two judges: one Aesthetic judge and one Technical judge. A Guest Judge may join a panel. Aesthetic and Technical judges' scores will be counted towards the overall score. Guest Judges include invited chefs, local cheese writers, and cheese enthusiasts who work with the judges to learn more about New England cheeses. Guest Judge scores do not count, but they do receive copies of their score sheets to utilize in future cheese opportunities.
4. Cheese entries become the property of Eastern States Exposition and are used for promotional purposes.

## **Cheese Competition Promotion and Results Release**

1. All cheesemakers entered in the competition are invited to participate in the Farmers Market as part of The Big E, September 13 – 29, 2024. Promotional material or placards are encouraged and used for display. Materials should not be reflected on actual entries for judging. The remaining cheese is used throughout the Fair at various tasting events. If additional samples of cheese are needed, the cheesemaker will be contacted. Additional opportunities for cheese promotions will be given as information becomes available.

## How to Enter

### Step 1: Send in Your Product Entry Forms and Fees

The official entry form for the 2024 Big E Gold Medal Cheese Competition is below.

1. Fill out one entry form per entry. Feel free to photocopy the entry form.

**Entries can also be submitted online (preferred): <https://thebigech.fairwire.com>**

2. Each contest entry must be accompanied by a \$25 entry fee. Make checks payable to Eastern States Exposition. MasterCard, Visa and Discover will also be accepted.

Online Entry is available. Online Payment options: MasterCard, Visa, Discover and mail in by check.

3. Entry forms and fees must be received **by July 15, 2024**. All entrants will receive labels from ESE.

**Mail Forms and Fees To:  
Eastern States Exposition  
Agriculture & Education Department  
Mallery Complex  
1305 Memorial Avenue  
West Springfield, MA 01089**

### Step 2: Ship Your Entries to Eastern States Exposition

Please make sure your ESE labels are securely affixed to your entries. Securely wrap or box your entries to ensure safe delivery. All products should not have any markings or labels of any kind other than your ESE designated labels.

Please package in basic, discreet containers. If you can see any label from the inside of the lid, please cover.

Entries should arrive before 4PM on the day of delivery and must arrive on July 24, 2024.

Deliveries will start being accepted on Wednesday, July 17 (depending on the nature of the cheese).

Deliveries will not be accepted on Saturday and Sunday.

### **Ship Entries To:**

**Eastern States Exposition  
Agriculture & Education Department  
Mallery Complex  
1305 Memorial Avenue  
West Springfield, MA 01089**

If you have any questions about entering or shipping your entries, please contact Paige at (413) 205-5015

## Cheese Classes

All classes are open to all milks. Please remember that cheeses are judged on individual merit. Classes may be reorganized in the best interest of judging at the discretion of competition management.

- Class 1**      **Cheddar**  
**Class 1A**      **Cheddar:** aged up to 12 months – all milks – no flavored cheese.  
**Class 1B**      **Cheddar:** aged between 13 and 24 months – no flavored cheese.  
**Class 1C**      **Cheddar:** aged over 24 months - no flavored cheese.
- Class 2**      **Flavored Cheddar:** all ages, all milks.
- Class 3**      **American Originals:** Colby, Monterey Jack, Colby Jack, Brick Muenster, and Brick Cheese – all milks.
- Class 4**      **Swiss and Alpine Styles**  
**Class 4A**      **Swiss Style:** Emmental, Baby Swiss all milks – no flavored cheese.  
**Class 4B**      **Alpine Style:** Including but not limited to: Raclette, Gruyere, Sbrinz, Appenzeller, Abondance, Beaufort styles, etc. – all milks, no flavored cheese.
- Class 5**      **Italian**  
**Class 5A**      **Italian Hard & Firm Style:** Including but not limited to: Provolone, Parmesan, Romano, Asiago, Montasio, Caciotta, etc. – all milks, no flavored cheese.  
**Class 5B**      **Italian Soft Style:** Including but not limited to: Fresh Mozzarella, Fiore di Latte, Burrata, Robiola Style, etc. – all milks, no flavored cheese.
- Class 6**      **Hispanic Style Cheese:** Including but not limited to: Cotija, Para Frier, Queso Blanco, Queso Fresca, Azoreans, Chihuahua, Quesadilla, etc. – all milks, no flavored cheese.
- Class 7**      **Traditional International Cheese Styles:** Including but not limited to: Manchego, St. Jorge, Bom Petisco, Edam, Gouda, Havarti, Caerphilly, Juusto Leipa (Bread Cheese), Monastery Style, Danish Fontina, etc. All milks, no flavored cheese.  
Excluded: Blue Cheeses, Italian Cheeses, Cheddar, Hispanic Cheeses, Swiss Styles, Feta.
- Class 8**      **Blue Cheese:** Exterior Only Blue, Full Rinded Blue, Rindless Blue. Gorgonzola style, Roqueforti Style, Soft Ripened Blue, etc. – all milks, no flavored cheese.
- Class 9**      **Goat Cheese**  
**Class 9A**      **Fresh Goat Cheese:** All shapes, all sizes, no flavored cheese.  
**Class 9B**      **Ripened Goat Cheese:** Soft ripened, aged over 31 days, all shapes, all sizes, no flavored cheese.  
**Class 9C**      **Flavor Added Goat Cheese:** All sizes, all shapes.
- Class 10**      **Flavor Added Cheese – Open Category:** hard cheeses with less than 39% moisture - all milks  
Excluded: all Cheddars, all Fresh and aged Goat Cheese, all Flavored Dips and Spreads, all Cultured Dairy Products, all Unripened Dairy Products, All Feta
- Class 11**      **Washed/Smear Ripened Cheese:** includes all cheese washed or rubbed with natural agents including alcohol, brine, B-linens, grape must, etc. All milks – including Flavor added cheeses. Examples include Limburger, Beer Cheese, French Muenster style.  
EXCLUDED – Gruyere, Raclette, Brick Cheese.
- Class 12**      **Soft Ripened White Mold Cheese:** Including but not limited to: Brie, Camembert, Triple Crème styles - all milks.
- Class 13**      **Dips and Spreads**  
**Class 13A**      **Dips and Spreads:** must contain at least 55% Dairy Milk Cheese - all milks.  
**Class 13B**      **Flavored Dips and Spreads:** must contain at least 55% Dairy Milk Cheese – all milks.
- Class 14**      **Smoked Cheese – Open Category:** All smoked cheeses should be entered here – all milks, all sizes.
- Class 15**      **Feta Cheese**  
**Class 15A**      **Feta Cheese:** all milks, all sizes.  
**Class 15B**      **Flavored Feta Cheese:** all milks, all sizes.

**Class 16**

**Cultured Dairy Products**

**Class 16A**

**Other Cultured Dairy Products:** includes all yogurt drinks (Kefir, Labneh, etc.) Buttermilk, Crème Fraiche, Sour Cream, all milks.

**Class 16B**

**Flavored Cultured Dairy Products:** includes all yogurt drinks (Kefir, Labneh, etc.) Buttermilk, Crème Fraiche, Sour Cream - all milks.

**Class 16C**

**Open Class- All Yogurts:** all milks

**Class 16D**

**Open Class- All Flavored Yogurts:** all milks

**Class 17**

**Unripened Dairy Products**

**Class 17A**

**Unripened Dairy Products:** includes Cheese Curds, Cottage Cheese, Fromage Blanc, Quark, Mascarpone, Ricotta, Crescenza, Stracchino – all milks.

**Class 17B**

**Flavored Unripened Dairy Products:** includes Cheese Curds, Cottage Cheese, Fromage Blanc, Quark, Mascarpone, Ricotta, Crescenza, Stracchino – all milks.

**Class 18**

**Butter**

**Class 18A**

**Butter:** includes salted and unsalted styles. Includes cultured butters - all milks.

**Class 18B**

**Flavored Butter:** includes salted and unsalted styles. Includes cultured butters - all milks.

**Class 18C**

**Ghee:** Made from whole milk or cream with no milk solids remaining after being clarified (clear color).