



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**ACS RELEASES POSITION STATEMENT ON SAFETY OF RAW MILK CHEESE
& RESPONDS TO RECENT CDC STUDY ON RAW DAIRY PRODUCTS**

Denver, CO (April 12, 2012) — In response to recent media attention around the issue of raw milk cheese safety in the United States, the American Cheese Society (ACS) has released two documents:

- (1) An official *Statement on the Safety of Raw Milk Cheese* and
- (2) A public response to *Nonpasteurized Dairy Products, Disease Outbreaks, and State Laws—United States, 1993–2006*, a recent Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) study.

In its *Statement on the Safety of Raw Milk Cheese*, ACS declares:

Raw milk cheese, when produced and sold under current FDA guidelines, can be consumed without unnecessary risk. The American Cheese Society (ACS) endorses current FDA raw milk cheese guidelines for manufacturers, including:

- producing cheese in licensed facilities that are routinely inspected on the local, regional, and federal level
- producing cheese under the oversight of licensed dairy handlers
- aging cheese for a minimum of 60 days before it is sold

The majority (approximately two-thirds) of ACS members voluntarily *exceed* these standards by establishing and adhering to a Hazard Analysis & Critical Control Points (HACCP) plan, and following these additional ACS-recommended best practices:

- taking part in ongoing food safety education
- regularly conducting product and environment testing
- maintaining accurate and up-to-date records
- seeking third party certification
- building relationships with local, regional, and federal inspectors
- adhering to all state and federal regulations and industry standards

By purchasing raw milk cheeses produced by licensed cheesemakers, at reputable grocery and specialty food stores, consumers can enjoy a safe and legal product while also playing a role in a broader movement to support small businesses, local economies, sustainable agriculture practices, and informed food choices.

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Download the full statement online at <http://tinyurl.com/rawmilkcheesesafety>.

In its response to a recent CDC study on raw dairy products and disease outbreaks, ACS calls attention to misleading language that conflates fluid raw milk with raw milk cheese. ACS also corrects the authors' incorrect statement that the interstate sale of raw milk cheese is illegal in the United States, and contends that consumers can enjoy many safe, legal raw milk cheeses in today's marketplace. The full response, *Not All Raw Dairy Products Are Alike: ACS Responds to a Recent CDC Study on Nonpasteurized Dairy Products, Disease Outbreaks, and State Laws*, is available at <http://tinyurl.com/cdcstudyresponse>.

For press inquiries or additional information about either document, please contact Rebecca Sherman Orozco at 720-328-2788 x301 or rorozco@cheesesociety.org.

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About the American Cheese Society

The American Cheese Society (ACS) is the leading organization supporting the understanding, appreciation, and promotion of farmstead, artisan, and specialty cheeses produced in the Americas. Over 1,500 members strong, ACS provides advocacy, education, business development, and networking opportunities for cheesemakers, retailers, enthusiasts, and the extended industry. ACS strives to continually raise the quality and availability of cheese in North America. For more information, visit www.cheesesociety.org.

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