

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL

Table S1. Consumer questionnaire items

| I. DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS | | | | |
|---|--------------------|------------------|----------------------|--|
| 1. Gender: a. male | b. female | c. neuter | | |
| 2. Age: a. < 18 years | b. 18-40 years | c. 41-60 years | d. > 60 years | |
| 3. Monthly income: a. < 1800 lei | b. 1800-3000 lei | c. 3000-5000 lei | d. >5000 lei | |
| 4. Education: a. no education | b. primary/general | c. high school | d. University degree | |
| 5. Family members: a. 1 member | b. 2 members | c. 3-5 members | d. >5 members | |
| 6. Occupation | | | | |

| II. SWISS CHEESE CONSUMPTION | | | | |
|--|----------------------------|------------------------|----------------|--------------|
| 1. Are you a Swiss cheese consumer? (if the answer is no, the questionnaire ends here): | | | | |
| YES | | NO | | |
| 2. How often do you eat Swiss cheese? | | | | |
| a. once a week | b. once a month | c. sometimes in a year | d. once a yeas | e. never |
| 3. How important are the following aspects when buying a type of Swiss cheese? | | | | |
| 3.1. price: | | | | |
| a. not at all | b. a little | c. neutral | d. much | e. very much |
| 3.2. taste and flavor: | | | | |
| a. not at all | b. a little | c. neutral | d. much | e. very much |
| 3.3. appearance/texture: | | | | |
| a. not at all | b. a little | c. neutral | d. much | e. very much |
| 3.4. producer: | | | | |
| a. not at all | b. a little | c. neutral | d. much | e. very much |
| 3.5. product history: | | | | |
| a. not at all | b. a little | c. neutral | d. much | e. very much |
| 3.6. benefits for health | | | | |
| a. not at all | b. a little | c. neutral | d. much | e. very much |
| 3.7. mood | | | | |
| a. not at all | b. a little | c. neutral | d. much | e. very much |
| 3.8. ingredients | | | | |
| a. not at all | b. a little | c. neutral | d. much | e. very much |
| 3.9. product notoriety and advertising | | | | |
| a. not at all | b. a little | c. neutral | d. much | e. very much |
| 3.10. commodity | | | | |
| a. not at all | b. a little | c. neutral | d. much | e. very much |
| 3.11. nutritional value | | | | |
| a. not at all | b. a little | c. neutral | d. much | e. very much |
| Others..... | | | | |
| 4. How much Swiss cheese do you usually buy? | | | | |
| a. I don't buy | b. 100-200 g | c. 200-500 g | d. 0.5-1 kg | e. > 1kg |
| 5. How much would you be willing to pay for 1 kg of Swiss cheese? | | | | |
| a. < 50 lei | b. 50-75 lei | c. 75-100 lei | d. 100-125 lei | e. >125 lei |
| 6. Where do you prefer to buy Swiss cheese? | | | | |
| a. Agro-food market | b. supermarket/hypermarket | c. local store | d. dairy store | |
| e. particular houses | f. online | | | |

Table S2. Producer questionnaire items

| | | | | |
|--|-------------|------------|---------|--------------|
| 1. What year did you start the production of Swiss cheese? Were there any discontinuities during this period? | | | | |
| 2. What is the current production volume? | | | | |
| 3. Do you want to expand your business? If so, how exactly? | | | | |
| 4. What are the points of sale of the Swiss product you sell? | | | | |
| 5. List the most important difficulties encountered in the production of Swiss cheese. | | | | |
| 6. How important are the following aspects related to the production and the Swiss: | | | | |
| 6.1. hygienic-sanitary / physico-chemical parameters of the raw materials | | | | |
| a. not at all | b. a little | c. neutral | d. much | e. very much |
| 6.2. staff training | | | | |
| a. not at all | b. a little | c. neutral | d. much | e. very much |
| 6.3. equipment | | | | |
| a. not at all | b. a little | c. neutral | d. much | e. very much |
| 6.4. the quality of packaging and auxiliary materials | | | | |
| a. not at all | b. a little | c. neutral | d. much | e. very much |
| 6.5. hygiene | | | | |
| a. not at all | b. a little | c. neutral | d. much | e. very much |
| 6.6. raw materials availability | | | | |
| a. not at all | b. a little | c. neutral | d. much | e. very much |
| 6.7. origin of raw materials | | | | |
| a. not at all | b. a little | c. neutral | d. much | e. very much |
| 6.8. utilities | | | | |
| a. not at all | b. a little | c. neutral | d. much | e. very much |
| 6.9. environmental protection | | | | |
| a. not at all | b. a little | c. neutral | d. much | e. very much |
| 6.10. legislation | | | | |
| a. not at all | b. a little | c. neutral | d. much | e. very much |
| Others | | | | |
| 7. How important are the following aspects related to the marketing of Swiss cheese: | | | | |
| 7.1. advertising | | | | |
| a. not at all | b. a little | c. neutral | d. much | e. very much |
| 7.2. taste and flavor | | | | |
| a. not at all | b. a little | c. neutral | d. much | e. very much |
| 7.3. nutritional value | | | | |
| a. not at all | b. a little | c. neutral | d. much | e. very much |
| 7.4. appearance and texture | | | | |
| a. not at all | b. a little | c. neutral | d. much | e. very much |
| 7.5. quality label | | | | |
| a. not at all | b. a little | c. neutral | d. much | e. very much |
| 7.6. product notoriety | | | | |
| a. not at all | b. a little | c. neutral | d. much | e. very much |
| 7.7. availability and access for consumers | | | | |
| a. not at all | b. a little | c. neutral | d. much | e. very much |
| 7.8. price | | | | |
| a. not at all | b. a little | c. neutral | d. much | e. very much |
| 7.9. ingredients | | | | |
| a. not at all | b. a little | c. neutral | d. much | e. very much |
| 7.10. product history | | | | |
| a. not at all | b. a little | c. neutral | d. much | e. very much |
| Others | | | | |
| 8. What is the average daily amount of Swiss cheese sold? | | | | |

Table S3. Description of the sensory analysis scale

| Characteristic | Score | Description |
|--|-------|---|
| Appearance and shape - crust; - section. | 5 | - Smooth, uniform, yellowish crust, without cracks. - Uniform fermentation meshes, of different sizes, smooth and shiny meshes inside, large fermentation meshes predominate, under the crust there is a compact area of about 2 cm. |
| | 4 | - Smooth, slightly thickened, uniform crust, yellow to brown in color, 1-2 cracks not penetrating the core and not covered by mold. - More numerous meshes, unevenly distributed pattern starting closer to the crust, with elongated holes. |
| | 3 | - Yellow or brown crust, superficial cracks not covered by mold and not penetrated into the core, small bumps on the surface. - Several meshes, of different sizes, some joined together or poor in design, meshes with a walnut crust appearance. |
| | 2 | - Rough crust, yellow in color, not attacked by pests, bumps / chamfers / deep cracks, no black mold, no holes. - Small, many and dense meshes, with different format (oval, fringed, walnut shell), united meshes that form a pattern that is too large, with cracks or rare caverns. |
| | 1 | - Rough or slightly wet crust, with spots of a different color, frequent deep cracks, with holes caused by pests, rotten areas, detached bark, with mold. - Paste without fermentation voids or spongy, ballooned, with several caverns, with large and dense cracks. |
| Color | 5 | Straw yellow to yellow, uniform, with a darker shade towards the crust. |
| | 4 | With small deviations from the specification, with a darker shade towards the crust on a larger portion, rare small white dots, without impurities, are allowed. |
| | 3 | Yellow to grey, slightly marbled, small brown dots (colonies of propionic bacteria) are allowed. |
| | 2 | Chalky white, dirty yellow-gray, marbled, with spots around the cracks. |
| | 1 | Uneven, intensely marbled, with brown, greenish, reddish spots. |
| Consistency | 5 | Elastic, homogeneous, non-crumbling paste, when masticated it should not be hard and should melt in the mouth. |
| | 4 | Slightly inelastic, slightly rubbery or slightly crumbly, denser paste. |
| | 3 | Crumbly, slightly sandy, floury, hard, dry paste. |
| | 2 | Hard, chalky, sandy or too soft, slightly sticky paste, with fat removal. |
| | 1 | Very dry, very hard or very soft, very sticky paste. |
| Smell | 5 | Pleasant, with a well-expressed specific aroma, without extraneous nuances. |
| | 4 | Pleasant, less expressed aroma, without extraneous nuances, slightly sour. |
| | 3 | Weak aroma, with a slight smell of yeast, sour. |
| | 2 | Unflavored, with slight foreign nuances, slightly rancid, sour, from yeasts, from butyric fermentation. |
| | 1 | Non-specific, rancid, foreign fermentations. |
| Taste | 5 | Pleasant, slightly sweet, with the characteristic aroma of walnut kernels, without any foreign taste. |
| | 4 | Slightly highlighted, slightly salty, slightly sour, slightly bland. |
| | 3 | Bland, slightly willowy, too salty, slightly spicy, slightly yeasty, slightly foraged, slightly cloying, slightly oxidized, slightly smoky, slightly bitter, sour. |
| | 2 | Slightly non-specific, willowy, spicy, yeasty, foraged, smoky, bitter, rancid, slightly musty. |
| | 1 | Non-specific, very rancid, slightly rotten, easy to soap, very sour, strong fodder, bitter, moldy. |