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Export cheese wins top industry marketing award

Kingdom cheddar – a brand of organic cheese developed especially for the US market – has won a top marketing award at the dairy industry's blue ribbon event.

This unique cheese, the first European cheese to meet USDA organic regulations, as set out under the EU-US Equivalency agreement, took the Food Chain

Marketing title at the Cream Awards ceremony on Thursday (15 September). It won, not just for its export success, but for the way producers, OMSCO, have brought together farming and supply chain innovation to meet USDA standards, developed a great cheese, and forged the first-ever cross Atlantic co-operative partnership to drive sales and distribution.

The sharp cheddar, and the more recently developed cheddars with cracked black pepper and cheddar with caramelised onion, can be found on US supermarket shelves and are proving a huge hit with American housewives.

The special partnership OMSCO has developed with Organic Valley, the largest organic co-operative in the world, has resulted in each owning a single share in one another's business. This, in turn, is leading to innovative new product development, and growth in trading in global markets.

This year, close to 30% of OMSCO's revenue is expected to come from added-value export markets, allowing the co-operative to balance supply and demand, while returning higher than average returns to its dairy suppliers.





“This is a great tribute to the growing band of OMSCo producers who have made a big commitment to supply milk that can be made into organic dairy products, like Kingdom, for sale in the US market,” says chairman, Nicholas Saphir.

“When we first started out on this journey, there were just a handful of producers who set out to make significant changes to their farming methods to meet the USDA organic requirements. This pool has increased annually, and now we’re heading towards 25% of the pool being produced to this standard.”

“Kingdom is a good example of OMSCo’s strategy to develop added value products for export markets, generating a premium not only for the participating farmers but also for an enhanced return to be shared among the rest of the membership,”

This award is sponsored by NSF Agriculture and presented at the National Conference Centre in Birmingham. The event is organised by Lewis Business Media.

“We were very impressed with the innovation and commitment shown by OMSCo in developing a brand new organic cheese, and an exciting market for Kingdom cheddar,” said Tim Green, agriculture director, NSF.

“OMSCo has ensured the product returns a real benefit for their farmer members, in a year when pricing has been a huge issue throughout the dairy market. Through the increase in sales, and the unique relationship with Organic Valley, they have bought further stability to their business.”