

What Is Vegetarian Cheese?

Vegetarian cheese is cheese that is not curdled with rennet, an enzyme that occurs naturally in animal stomachs. Most vegetarian cheeses are curdled with either plants, fungi, or bacteria.

Vegetarians who do not consume cheese with rennet generally choose not to because it involves slaughtering animals to extract the enzymes.

Vegetarian cheese is hard to distinguish from cheese made with rennet. This lack of distinguishability often forces vegetarians who are ethically-opposed to harming animals to consume cheeses that contain rennet.

Even though more cheeses are being made with vegetable rennet, it is usually impossible to spot the difference, unless the package is clearly labeled "vegetarian cheese." Recently, some grocery stores have started doing this to aid vegetarian shoppers, who would not otherwise be able to distinguish the difference between the vegetable and animal rennet cheeses.

In addition to eating cheeses made with vegetable rennet, there are more alternatives to eating regular cheese.

Vegans, for instance, do not consume cheese at all because it is an animal byproduct and subsequently requires animals to be caged and suffer. Many vegans, however, do consume cheese substitutes.

Chreese (www.chreese.com) is one of these substitutes. Chreese is an all natural, non-soy, cheese replacement that requires substantially less natural resources and energy to create than cheese with rennet.

And chreese is just one substitute. There are a number of other all natural alternatives you can find at local organic and health food stores.

If you are a vegetarian and you don't support animal suffering on your behalf in any capacity, you may also want to consider adjusting your dietary habits if you consume cheese made with animal rennet.

To reiterate, you have three basic options: you can look for grocery stores that label vegetarian cheese; you can purchase vegetarian cheese online; or you can

purchase cheese alternatives online or at your local organic or health food store.