

Buying and Storing Cottage Cheese

Fresh, wholesome cottage cheese is the easiest, low-cost way to add to your meals the protein of milk with relatively few calories. This simplest form of cheese is digested easily, too. Another plus, it's ready to eat as it comes from the container.

Cottage cheese is made from high quality pasteurized skim milk or from reconstituted skim milk made from nonfat dry milk. An average serving of one-half cup has only 120 calories and about as much protein as three eggs, a serving of lean meat or three slices of cheddar cheese.

You can buy it as large or small curd and either salted or unsalted. Read the label on the cottage cheese package when you're trying to decide which type to buy.

Note the difference...

Small curd cottage cheese, sometimes called "country style" has a curd which has been heated long enough to be quite firm. It holds its shape and is particularly good for salad making. A scoop of this small curd cottage cheese in the center of a fruit plate, or mounded in a peach, or tomato makes an attractive and tasty dish.

Large curd cottage cheese is made the same way as the small curd type, except that it's heated for a shorter time and is cut with larger cutters. So, the result is large, soft curds that mix easily with other foods. Large curd cottage cheese is best for

This low-calorie favorite is rich in important nutrients.

One-half cup of cottage cheese has almost twice as much protein as a cup of milk and about three-fourths as much riboflavin.



dips since a softer curd beats up quickly and makes a smooth dish.

Creamed cottage cheese has a creaming mixture added to it. This mixture has a minimum of 4% milk fat.

Low fat cottage cheese has a creaming mixture of not less than .5% and not more than 2% milk fat.

Un-creamed or dry cottage cheese has less than .5% milk fat.

Cottage cheese cartons are marked with a "pull date," the last date it should be sold as a fresh, high quality product. The pull date is planned to allow for several days of storage in a home refrigerator. Cottage cheese is at its peak flavor when used soon after purchase. Store it only a

short time, and make sure the container is covered tightly.

Versatile in recipes

You can use cottage cheese in many refreshing ways: with spices and seasonings, with any fresh, dried, canned or frozen fruit, with crisp, tangy vegetables, with meat, fish, eggs or other dairy products. Cottage cheese-filled pancakes are a delicious breakfast dish, a good luncheon dish and a tasty dessert. You can also use cottage cheese on sandwiches in place of mayonnaise. You might want to make up your own recipes using cottage cheese. It's versatile and nutritious.

For more information on buying and storing cottage cheese, contact your local county Extension office.