



COMPETITION CONDUCT

2026 BEST CANADIAN CHEESEMONGER

DATE & LOCATION

Wednesday, April 29, 2026, from 9:30 AM to 13:45 PM,
at SIAL Canada – Palais des Congrès of Montreal.
SIAL Dairy booth #2851

THE EVENT

Cheesemonger is a culinary profession, just like baker or chef. In Canada, thanks to the creativity of artisan cheesemakers and the gourmet discovery of consumers in the world of fine cheeses. The profession of Cheesemonger is beginning to establish itself in the sector of gourmet food and artisanal dairy products, a distinct field in food that values quality, authenticity, and traditional craftsmanship.

The 2026 Best Canadian Cheesemonger Competition by SIAL proudly stands for its 2nd edition as the exclusive national stage dedicated to championing the outstanding talent of Canadian cheesemongers. This competition aims to elevate the Canadian cheesemonger profession by shining a spotlight on the most talented professionals, and positioning the awarded Grand Champion on the international stage.

THE CONTEST

CANDIDATES

All professional cheesemongers, based in Canada and over 18 years of age.

SCHEDULE FOR THE DAY

- 09:30 am: Welcome of candidates and the Jury / Instructions to the Jury
- 10:00 am: Opening of the competition- Presentation of the jury and candidates
- 10:15 am: **Test 1 – Themed Cheese Platter : “Cultural Mosaic in Canada”**
- 11:15 am: **Test 2 – Presentation in front of the jury**
- 11:45 am: Lunch break and jury deliberation (jury will be released)
- 12:15 pm: **Test 3 – Cutting**
- 12:30 pm: **Test 4 – Multiple-choice questionnaire**
- 1:00 pm: End of the contest - Deliberation
- 1:30 pm: **Award ceremony - Announcement of results**
- 1:45 pm: Closing

APPLICATION FORM FOR NATIONAL SELECTION

The deadline to submit your application is **March 23, 2026**, and your file must include:

- Your CV
- A photo in JPEG format (minimum 300 KB)
- A short text (minimum 350 words/maximum 500 words) explaining your motivation for participating
- Payment by credit card of \$300 for registration fees

IMPORTANT:

- Application files submitted will be subject to approval by the organizers for participation in the national selection contest.
- Incomplete applications will be automatically eliminated.
- Registration fees are non-refundable, whether in the event of cancellation by the candidate or if the application is not selected by the organizers.

THE CONTEST

DRESS CODE FOR CANDIDATES:

Black trouser and white shirt for each candidate, with black shoes.

An official apron will be supplied by SIAL Canada and will remain the property of the candidate.

EQUIPMENT AND PRODUCTS

- **Equipment to be provided by the candidate before the tests:**

- Personal equipment for cutting cheeses (no electrical apparatus)
- Plates and supports, depending on tests
- Equipment necessary for creation of the cheese dish
- Equipment necessary for tasting, presentation and labelling

- **Equipment to be provided by the Organisation:**

- Work fixtures
- Workspace
- Cutting boards

- **Fresh products, ingredients:**

- All types of ingredients, dry or liquid, excluding fresh products, are allowed, and must be provided by the candidate.

2026 PRIZES & RECOGNITION

- **The Prestigious National Title:** Official recognition as the Best Canadian Cheesemonger 2026, awarded by SIAL Canada.

- **A \$1,000 cash prize** to support your professional development and future projects in the cheese world.

- **High-Impact Visibility:**

- Interview in Grocery Business magazine
- Featured across SIAL Canada's social media channels, newsletter
- Mentioned in an official press release shared with 1500+ Canadian trade media

These prizes not only celebrate your performance in the competition, they also reinforce your status as a leader in the Canadian cheese industry and open the door to further national and international recognition.

CHALLENGES

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The contest will consist of 4 timed challenges.

1ST CHALLENGE: CHEESE PLATTER

TIME ALLOCATED: 1 HOUR

- Creation of a presentation platter based on a defined theme: **“Cultural Mosaic in Canada”**
- This preparation will be presented on your own service tray with a maximum size of 60 cm x 60 cm x 60 cm.
- The support will be provided by the candidate and can be prepared in advance of the competition.
- The platter will contain a total of 20 cheeses and will be composed of 10 Canadian cheeses and 10 PDO cheeses including 5 goat, 3 sheep, 7 cow, and one buffalo cheese.
- The presentation must be created exclusively through the cutting and/or sculpting of cheese. All creations must be done on-site; no pre-cut or pre-sculpted cheese will be accepted.
- The cheeses will be brought by the candidates and can be either whole wheels or pieces weighing a maximum of 1 kg for larger cheeses.
- The labeling is mandatory and should mention the product's name (cheese name and its origin). The labeling materials will be provided by the candidate.
- Plates, small containers, presentation supports, ingredients, and fresh products are allowed.

Note : Candidates must respect the time allocated for each test.
Completed or not, the test will end when the time is up.

CHALLENGES

2ND CHALLENGE: ORAL PRESENTATION IN FRONT OF JURY

TIME ALLOCATED: 3 MINUTES

- Each candidate selects a Canadian cheese of their choice and must present and taste it to the jury.
- The cheese or piece weighing 0.500 kg will be cut by the candidate and then tasted by each member of the jury.
- The candidate may speak in the language of their choice: French or English

3RD CHALLENGE: CUTTING

TIME ALLOCATED: 5 MINUTES

- The candidate has 5 minutes to cut four 0.250 kg (250 g) portions from different cheeses provided by the Organizer.
- The cheeses will be revealed at the start of the event.
- The candidate must use their own tools.

Only cheese wires, cheese harps, and knives are permitted.

4TH CHALLENGE: MCQ - MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONNAIRE

TIME ALLOCATED: 20 MINUTES

Candidates will have to answer a multiple-choice questionnaire of 20 questions related to general knowledge about Canadian cheesemaking and PDO cheeses available in Canada.

Note : Candidates must respect the time allocated for each test.
Completed or not, the test will end when the time is up.

SCORING AND CRITERIA

WORKSTATION: 10 POINTS

- General organization (4 pts)
- Hygiene and cleanliness (3 pts)
- Use of equipment, mastery of cutting techniques (3 pts)

CHEESE PLATTER: 1 HOUR - 30 POINTS

- Selection of products and quality of aging (5 pts)
- Compliance with the specified cheeses (5 pts)
- Cutting execution (5 pts)
- Labeling (5 pts)
- Evocation of the theme 'Cities of the World': originality & use of supports (5 pts)
- Overall artistic aspect: harmony of the arrangement (5 pts)

CUTTING: 5 MINUTES - 20 POINTS

- Exact weight (5 pts per cut)
- Weight within ± 10 g (3 pts per cut)
- Weight within ± 25 g (1 pt per cut)

ORAL PRESENTATION IN FRONT OF JURY: 3 MINUTES - 20 POINTS

- Quality of the oral presentation: Richness of vocabulary (10 pts)
- Visual quality of the cheese: Originality of the presentation and quality of cutting (5 pts)
- Organoleptic quality : Jury's approval of the tasted cheeses (5 pts)

MCQ - MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONNAIRE: 20 MINUTES - 20 POINTS

- 1 point per correct answer