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## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Class of Global Chefs Receive First-Ever USA Cheese Specialist™ Designation**

*Unparalleled training series raises awareness of all that USA Cheeses have to offer, empowering chefs to unlock their creative potential*

**Dubai, United Arab Emirates, June 10, 2019** – This week marks the graduation of 40 young chefs who will receive the first-ever designation as USA Cheese Specialist™—a premiere, one-of-a-kind global cheese certification offered by the USA Cheese Guild™.

The USA Cheese Specialist™ Certification Program launched in partnership with the International Centre for Culinary Arts (ICCA) Dubai in the fall of 2018. The inaugural class is composed of chefs from 22 hotel properties in the UAE with students coming from 9 different countries (India, Indonesia, Pakistan, Portuguese, Syria, Kenya, Sri Lanka, Nepal and the Philippines).

“As the leading global supplier of high quality cheese, the United States is in a unique position to help educate the world about this versatile food and inspire new culinary creations,” said Angélique Hollister, executive director of the USA Cheese Guild. “We are proud to be investing in the future of these young chefs.”

Designed for foodservice, this new global training consists of three, progressive certification levels (Associate, Intermediate and Advanced). Over the past few months, the chefs attended a series of hands-on training courses designed to instill knowledge about the depth and breadth of U.S. cheese. Starting with the basics, how cheese is made, categories, handling, etc., the education program gradually encompasses more technical applications as well as nutrition and how the more than 600 varieties of U.S. cheese can be used to capitalize on global trends.

“The course has opened the eyes of these culinary professionals, inspiring creativity and providing practical knowledge,” said Sunjeh Raja, director and CEO of ICCA Dubai. “The gained appreciation for these high-quality cheeses is sure to bring success as they serve on-trend dishes to consumers in Middle East and beyond.”

Award-winning U.S. specialty cheeses are being increasingly recognized around the world for craftsmanship, innovation, variety and versatility. Because of its diverse population and geography, the United States can produce a wide-range of cheeses representing cultures from around the world. From traditional classics to diverse flavors (spicy, savory, bold), U.S. cheeses can complement everything from local favorites to fusion cuisine.

Upon completion of all three courses, graduates receive a recognition chef coat patch and pin, and are inducted into the global USA Cheese Specialists community, with membership in the broader USA Cheese Guild—



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providing continued access to valuable resources to stay engaged and connected to the U.S. cheese industry throughout their careers.

In addition to the ICCA, certification courses are being offered through additional prestigious culinary institutes and schools in Japan (Hattori Nutrition College), South Korea (Daelim University College) and Taiwan (National Kaoshiung University of Hospitality and Tourism) with a few others in the works in Latin America and Hong Kong.

Visit [ThinkUSAdairy.org](http://ThinkUSAdairy.org) for more information on U.S. cheese, nutrition and applications. For more information about the Guild, visit [Facebook.com/USAcheeseGuild](https://Facebook.com/USAcheeseGuild).

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### **About the USA Cheese Guild**

The USA Cheese Guild™ was established by the world's largest cheese producer and exporter as a center of excellence to build global cheese knowledge. By providing access to U.S. cheese resources, the Guild empowers the success of business and industry as well as improves the lives of others. The U.S. dairy industry offers a sustainably produced, world-class and ever-expanding portfolio of cheese varieties. The Guild is managed by the U.S. Dairy Export Council®.

### **About International Centre for Culinary Arts Dubai**

The International Centre for Culinary Arts (ICCA) Dubai is a world-class culinary training centre, delivering programs accredited by the internationally recognized City & Guilds, London. It was established in the year 2005, with a mission to become the leading culinary training provider in the Middle East and redefine the way in which professional and personal culinary training is delivered across the region. ICCA Dubai has been featured amongst the "Top 10 Culinary Institutes in the World" and awarded the "Recognition of Quality Culinary Education" by the World Association of Chefs Societies (WorldChefs), a global authority on food standards. ICCA Dubai has recently been awarded the prestigious City & Guilds, London "International Centre of the Year Award 2016" and "International Centre for Excellence (Middle East) – 2016," also the ProChef Middle East "Cooking School of the Year 2016" Awards.



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