

Meyer Gouda Cheese is a family run Cheese factory that was established in the Netherlands and has since re-established in Waikato, New Zealand. Their biggest export market is Australia as their food safety regulations are very similar to those of New Zealand's. Meyer Gouda Cheese is a family run business, they own their own farms which supply them the cow's milk needed for most of their cheese making. **The other milk used for their cheese making is goats and sheep's milk, which is supplied by ethical farms under contract.** Their main philosophy as a business is to supply a quality cheese at a price that can be afforded by the majority of the population, not the minority of wealthy people. ①

One of the major future proofing issues for Meyer Cheese is food safety. **If food safety isn't future proofed by Meyer Cheese it could affect the economic future of the business.** If cheese being made were to get contaminated during the manufacturing process it would immediately reduce income as none of the cheese would be able to reach the shelves. For example, **every cheese mix has to be tested for e-coli, and if the tests return with a result of 100 or more then cheese is contaminated and has to be recalled and disposed of.** This could result in short term impacts such as an increase in **costs of production due to Meyer Cheese having to immediately bring in people to fix the problem/pay people to recall the contaminated cheese, as well as paying wages to workers while there is little to no income received as the cheese has to be recalled.** Meyer Cheese may lose customers as they are not receiving the cheese they usually order, meaning Meyer Cheese's overall income will decrease **making them less sustainable and viable for the future.** ①

Therefore, **to reduce the chance of contamination during the manufacturing process, Meyer Cheese has a rigorous cleaning process in place that is abided by all staff, which includes hair nets, clean hands, and sanitised tools or technology.** Each batch of cheese has to be tested, meaning that if any cheese tests higher than the given regulation, Meyer Cheese can immediately find the cheese **contaminated before it leaves the factory and dispose of it before it even reaches the shelves.** Meyer cheese also future proofs their workers by sending them on courses that **improve knowledge of their jobs within the manufacturing process resulting in them becoming more reliable employees, as well as boosting their productivity, so improving the economic viability of Meyer Cheese.** ③

**Technology influences on the business may also be affected by food safety.** Meyer Cheese may have to **spend more money on upgrading or installing new technology if the contamination of cheese continues to happen, meaning that their costs of production will increase.** When using humans to cut cheese or other processes there can be **contamination from touching the cheese with hands.** In the **long term if Meyer Cheese does not upgrade or install new technology contamination may happen more often, meaning that they will lose customers and income meaning that profit would decrease resulting in the business becoming less sustainable for the future.** If they choose to upgrade or install **new technology this would benefit them majorly in the long term as the new or upgraded technology will be more efficient than the old technology and will boost overall productivity (output per unit of input per hour) meaning that Meyer Cheese would become a more viable business for the future.** ③

**Health and safety regulations can also be an influence for Meyer Cheese when future proofing their business.** If Meyer Cheese were to install new technology that cut cheese more efficiently and precisely than the regular workers it would mean that there may be fewer cases of accidents **happening when cutting the cheese.** **This would result in Meyer Cheese's workforce becoming relatively safer as they will no longer be working with knives, and less cheese would be wasted.** In the long term, as there are fewer accidents happening, Meyer Cheese would not be required to pay **higher ACC levies and fill out health and safety reports, meaning less costs of production and workplace accidents.** ②

This contributes positively to Meyer Cheese staying a viable business because there will be a very low chance of knife accidents happening, there will be fewer people on sick leave or ACC meaning that production rates will be higher resulting in more income, meaning that Meyer Cheese will be able to stay viable and sustainable.

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Another Influence Meyer Cheese faces when future proofing is the political decisions of governments. For example if the government of Australia put a tariff on imports to help local producers, Meyer Cheese would be faced with long and short-term problems. In the short-term Meyer Cheese would have to increase the price of product exported to Australia as they are now having to cover the costs of the tariff, meaning that quantity demanded would fall. In the long term, as the tariff has resulted in a decrease in quantity demanded, Meyer Cheese would now be receiving less export receipts which means that they have become less able to cover the costs of exporting the cheese on refrigerated cargo boats, resulting in them becoming less viable as a business.

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There is also a huge economic influence on the future proofing decisions of Meyer Cheese when thinking about their security of supply. Fonterra used to supply Meyer Cheese their milk to produce cheese, but Fonterra was inconsistent with their production. Miel Meyer said, "We were never sure whether we would have enough milk". This gave Meyer Cheese many problems that affected the viability of their business. In the short term, if Fonterra didn't supply enough milk, Meyer Cheese would have to immediately halt all cheese production meaning that their productivity would significantly decrease as workers would not be working.

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In the long term, as cheese takes a while to ferment, when the time comes for the cheese to be ready to be sold to customers or contracts, there would be a delay meaning Meyer Cheese would receive no income and possibly have to pay fines for contracts not met as well as still paying regular costs of production such as wages. This would negatively affect Meyer Cheese's viability as they would be less sustainable because of the decrease in income as a result of lack of supply from Fonterra, possibly resulting in Meyer Cheese going out of business. Therefore, they now own the dairy farm that supplies cow's milk for cheese production, as well as supplying to Fonterra for an extra source of income. This also means they can be absolutely sure that the farm meets the ethical concerns of their cheese market. This also means that they are sure that the supply of cow's milk is consistent and if not, they have a contract with Fonterra that states if there was a shortage of milk on the Meyer farm, Fonterra would help out. They also have strict contracts with both sheep and goat milk producing farms that have been inspected by Miel Meyer, making sure they meet ethical standards. Meyer Cheese makes sure not to completely rely on export receipts from various different countries as tariffs are a possibility, so they sell most of their cheese here in New Zealand and some in Australia.

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#### References:

- <http://meyer-cheese.co.nz/>
- Miel Meyer Interview in Agribusiness centre