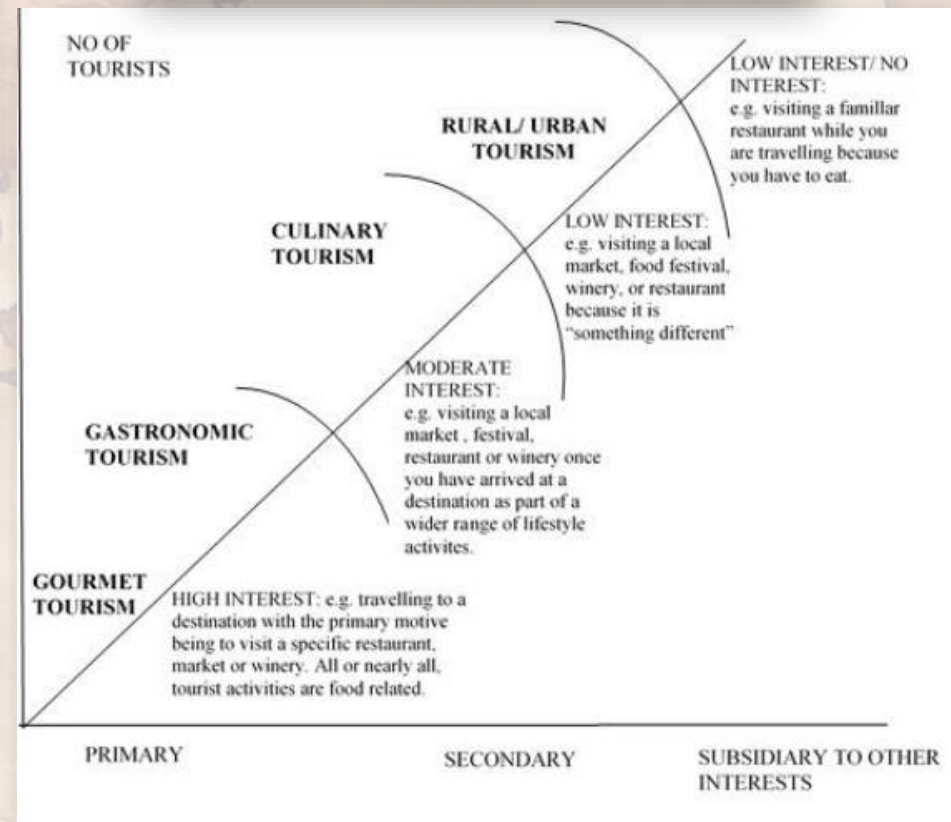


Tasting Tourism: Cheese Competitions as Emerging Drivers of Local Travel and Spending in Hungary

Dr. Gyöngyi Kovács
Rovinj, 2025. 10. 27.

In the beginning was the cheese...



...we later became the face of artisan cheese events and cheese tourism in Hungary



13. Sajtmustra SAJTVERSENY

SAJTVERSENY HATÁRIDŐ
szeptember 25.



2024. március 22-23. • CSÍKSZEREDA



Budapest



MAGYARORSZÁG



SZÉKELYFÖLD

II. ŐRSÉGI SAJTMUSTRA

2025.08.12. 10:00
Soproni, Pécsi és Hévízei
Egyesületi Szervezés



• Bukarest

Cheese tourism in a World Heritage Site: Vall de Boí (Catalan Pyrenees)

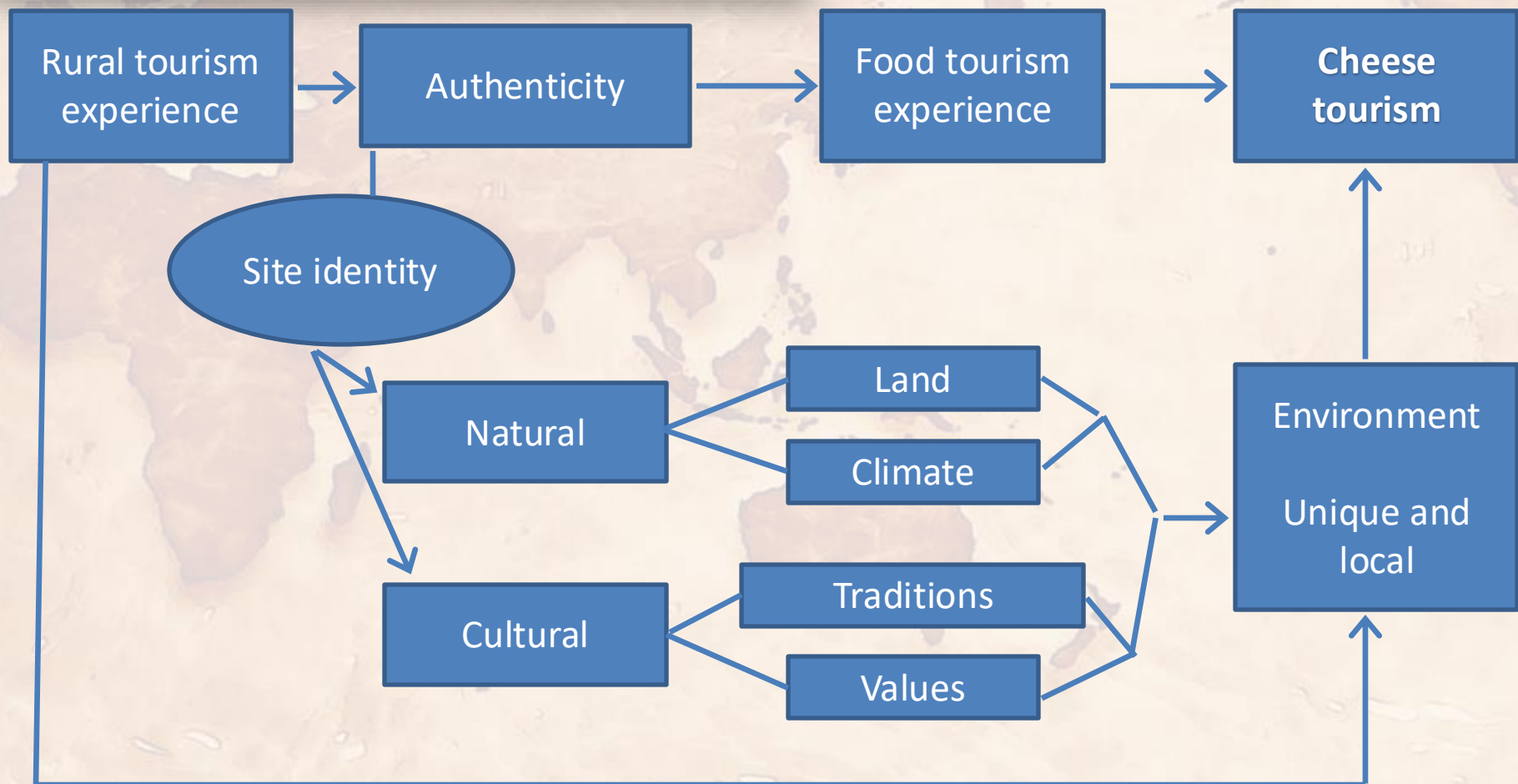
October 2015 · *European Journal of Tourism Research* 11:87-101

DOI: [10.54055/ejtr.v11i.196](https://doi.org/10.54055/ejtr.v11i.196)

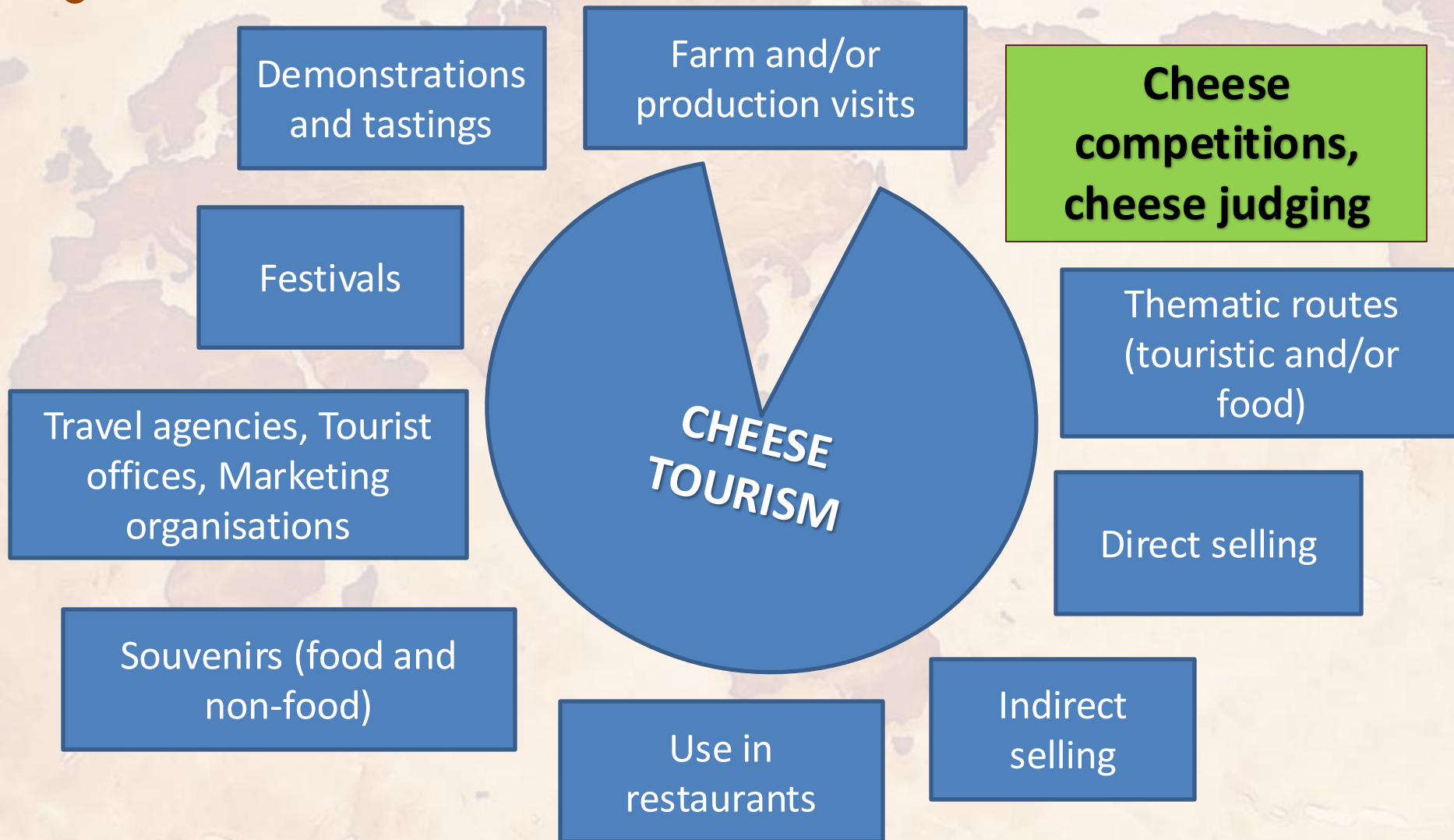
License · [CC BY 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

 Francesc Fusté-Forné

Theoretical framework of cheese tourism

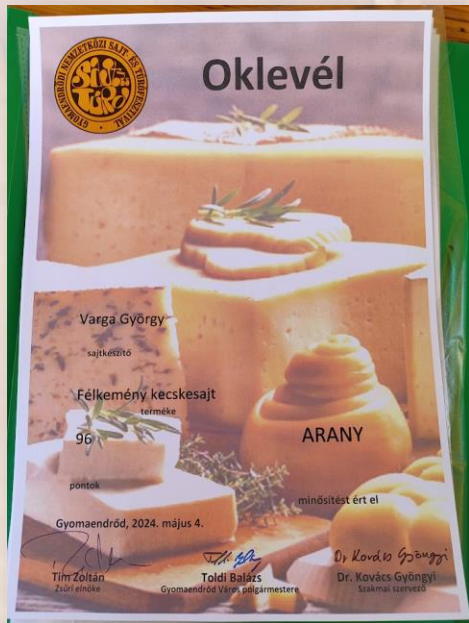


The cheese tourism wheel



based on Fusté-Forné (2015)

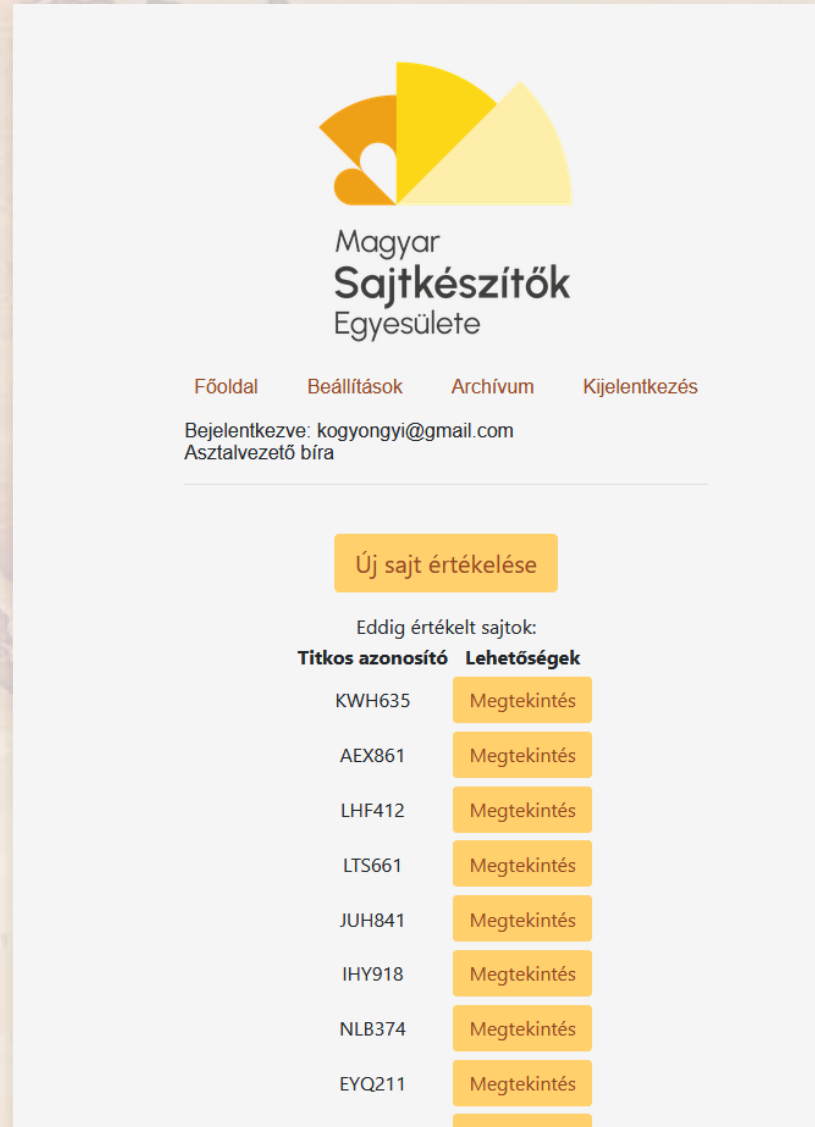






Introducing the Digital System

- Hungarian-developed, operating for 4 years
- Unique in Europe
- Goals: objectivity, sustainability, data collection
- Combining artisanal traditions with digital tools



The screenshot shows the website of the Magyar Sajtírók Egyesülete (Hungarian Journalists' Association). At the top is a logo consisting of three overlapping semi-circles in orange, yellow, and light yellow. Below the logo, the text "Magyar Sajtírók Egyesülete" is displayed. A navigation bar contains links: "Főoldal", "Beállítások", "Archívum", and "Kijelentkezés". Below the navigation bar, contact information is provided: "Bejelentkezve: kogyongyi@gmail.com" and "Asztalvezető bírá". A prominent orange button labeled "Új sajt értékelése" is centered. Below this, a section titled "Eddig értékelt sajtók:" (Previously evaluated media) contains a table with two columns: "Titkos azonosító" (Secret identifier) and "Lehetőségek" (Options). The table lists eight media identifiers, each with a corresponding "Megtekintés" (View) button.

Titkos azonosító	Lehetőségek
KWH635	Megtekintés
AEX861	Megtekintés
LHF412	Megtekintés
LTS661	Megtekintés
JUH841	Megtekintés
IHY918	Megtekintés
NLB374	Megtekintés
EYQ211	Megtekintés



Magyar
Sajt készítő k
Egyesülete

Íz

Pontszám: 36/40

☐ ízhibás

☐ éretlen

☐ keserű

☐ émelyítő

☐ élesztős

☐ tisztátalan

☐ enyhén savanyú

☐ kissé üres, jellegtelen

☐ kissé sóatlan v. sós

☐ kissé csípős

☐ kissé pikáns

☐ élesztős

☐ enyhén kesernyés

☐ jellegzetesen tiszta

☐ aromás, zamatos

☐ kellemesen sós

☐ kellemesen pikáns

Megjegyzés:

Összbenyomás:

A leírásának tökéletesen megfelel, valóban egy szerethető, kellemes termék. Tiszta ízű, nagyon kicsit sóatlan. Kellemes aromák, és valóban, a klasszikus camemberhez képest visszafogottabb aroma

Összpontszám:
92

OK

Aktiv
Aktivá

Cheesemakers vs. Cheese Judges: Insights from Parallel Surveys

- Cheesemakers (n=38)
 - - Mostly small-scale, 71% solo craft workshops
 - Balanced experience (0–2 yrs to >10 yrs)
 - Focus: production, livelihood
- Cheese Judges (n=27)
 - Strongly Budapest/Pest-based (67%)
 - Mostly recent certifications (2022–25)
 - Focus: evaluation, gastronomy

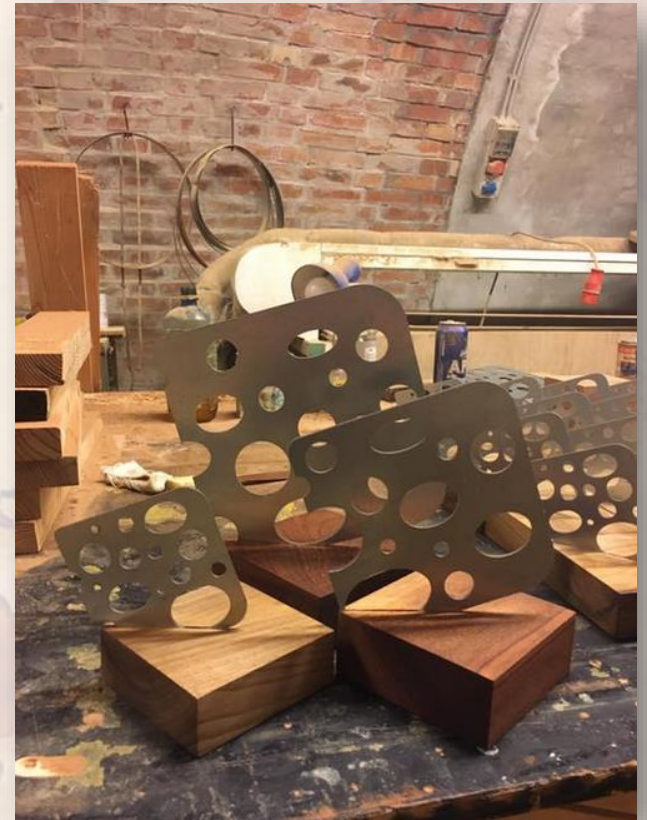
Roles at Events

- Cheesemakers: mostly visitors & competitors; rarely sellers (71% never sell)
- Judges: mostly attend as judges; many repeat at flagship events
- Implication: Programs must serve both producer learning and judging standardization



Motivations

- Cheesemakers: professional development, feedback, modest marketing
- Judges: establishing standards, consistent scoring, gastronomic refinement
- Implication: Dual-track professional days (practical workshops + judge seminars)



Travel & Costs

- Cheesemakers
- Own car (84%), flexibility for product transport
- 100–300 km domestically; steep drop abroad
- Highly cost-sensitive
- Judges
- Shuttle buses attractive (37%), cars (33%)
- 100–300 km domestically
- More flexible with organized logistics





Marketing & Awards

- Both agree awards build consumer trust (~70–75%)
- Cheesemakers underuse awards (only 24% active)
- Judges highlight potential
- Marketing: producers rely on Facebook (63%); 18% websites; 31% no channels
- Implication: Provide PR kits & training on award marketing

Technology & Feedback

- Judges: need mobile-first features (logbook, thresholds, edit)
- Cheesemakers: need transparent, constructive, usable feedback
- Implication: Develop software that serves both sides (workflow + digestible reports)

Shared Ground (Consensus)

1. Professional days highly valued
2. Practical, hands-on content is key
3. Awards need stronger post-event communication
4. Costs/logistics are critical

Divergences & Actions

- Geography: urban judges vs. rural producers
→ outreach & rotating venues
- Roles: producers rarely sell vs. judges actively judge
→ shared stalls/logistics help
- Marketing: producers lack tools vs. judges see potential
→ PR kits/training
- Feedback: producers want constructive tone
vs. judges focus on detail → feedback training



Recommendations

- Regional outreach & inclusion
- Dual-track event design
- Cost/logistics support packages
- Unified post-win communication kits
- Judge 'soft skills' training
- Enhanced judging software
- Fairer competition categories
- Stronger post-event media strategy

Marketing Recommendations for Cheesemakers and Cheese Competition Organizers

1. Strategic Communication of Competition Results
2. Unified “Hungarian Artisan Cheese” Brand Identity
3. Strengthening Digital Presence
4. Events as Experience-Based Marketing
5. Nationwide Campaigns
6. Consumer Education and Storytelling





Thank you for your attention!

