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# Cheese and Elections: A Cheddar Connection in Delaware

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## Abstract

The age-old debate about whether American cheese consumption affects political preferences has finally been put to rest, or should we say "grilled to perfection"? Utilizing detailed data from the USDA and the MIT Election Data and Science Lab, alongside the Harvard Dataverse, our research team sought to uncover any potential correlation between American cheese consumption and votes cast for the Republican presidential candidate in the twinkling state of Delaware. Our findings revealed an astonishingly high correlation coefficient of 0.9271846 and a p-value of less than 0.01 for the period spanning 1990 to 2020. This implies that as American cheese consumption in Delaware increased, so did the votes for the Republican presidential candidate, or as we fondly refer to it, the "cheddar effect." The queso the study demonstrates a strong connection between cheese and political leanings. Our research may have left us feeling a bit "cheesy," but it shed light on this unexpected relationship, providing food for thought for future electoral predictions and raising the question: is American cheese truly the secret ingredient in the recipe for political success?

## 1. Introduction

The intersection of food and politics has always been a topic of intrigue and curiosity. From butter battles to sausage skirmishes, the influence of culinary consumption on political behavior has long been a source of debate. However, one particular delicacy that has remained curiously under the radar in discussions of its potential impact is American cheese. Often derided as the "plastic" of the dairy world, American cheese's reputation may have been underestimated in one key aspect: its political prowess.

Delaware, the "First State" in our Union, has provided the perfect backdrop for our investigation into the cheesy correlation between American cheese consumption and votes for the Republican presidential candidate. This study aims to serve up a compelling analysis of the cheddar connection and its potential implications for electoral predilections.

With a hefty swath of data at our disposal, ranging from cheese consumption figures to election results, we embarked on a journey to decipher the enigmatic relationship between American cheese and political allegiances. While some may have initially scoffed at the notion of drawing any connection between the consumption of processed dairy products and voting behavior, our findings present a compelling case for a correlation that can only be described as "gouda be true."

In the following sections, we delve into the methodology employed, the comprehensive

statistical analysis conducted, and the implications of our findings. As we peel back the layers of this intriguing phenomenon, we invite our readers to join us in savoring the unexpected flavors of this intersection between dairy products and democratic decisions. With that being said, let us embark on this journey of discovery, one that promises to be as rich and unexpected as a melting slice of American cheese on a classic grilled sandwich.

## 2. Literature Review

In their groundbreaking study, Smith and Doe (2010) delved into the socioeconomic factors influencing political voting behavior, exploring everything from income disparities to educational attainment. While their work sheds light on various determinants of electoral preferences, it curiously omits any mention of the potential impact of cheese consumption. This oversight is quite sharp, considering the profound impact that a dairy product could have on shaping voter tendencies. Jones (2015) also notes the influence of food choices on political allegiances, delving into the implications of organic versus conventional food consumption. However, the glaring absence of American cheese from the discourse leaves a rather large hole, one that our research aims to fill with a cheese slice of enlightenment.

Turning our attention to non-fiction literature pertinent to our investigation, Pollan's "The Omnivore's Dilemma" and Schlosser's "Fast Food Nation" provide comprehensive analyses of the modern food industry and its societal implications. While these seminal works survey a variety of culinary phenomena, they inexplicably overlook the potentially "grate" influence of American cheese on political predispositions. On the fiction front, Orwell's "Animal Farm" and Dickens' "A Tale of Two Cities" explore themes of power and societal change, although neither directly addresses the tantalizing topic of cheese and its sway on electoral outcomes. Both non-fiction and fiction works have regrettably swissed out on this cheesy conundrum, leaving our team to conduct an exhaustive examination of this delectable dialectic elsewhere.

Venturing beyond the traditional academic sources, our research team stumbled upon an unlikely

goldmine of information while perusing the backs of shampoo bottles at the local grocery store. Surprisingly, the ingredients listed on said bottles hinted at the possibility of a clandestine connection between certain chemicals and the formation of political opinions. While the tantalizing scent of "coconut milk and macadamia" shampoo may not seem directly relevant, the implications of its olfactory influence on political leanings cannot be entirely discounted. Our findings in this unusual locale further underscore the pervasive and unpredictable impact of seemingly innocuous consumer products on the electoral landscape.

Though the existing literature presents a smorgasbord of intriguing insights into factors shaping political affiliations, it leaves a conspicuous void in addressing the potent force of American cheese consumption on voting behavior. Our research endeavors to fill this void, providing a robust foundation for future investigations into the unassuming but undeniably influential role of cheese in shaping the democratic palate.

## 3. Methodology

In this study, we embarked on a rigorous and udderly meticulous analysis to uncover the intricate relationship between American cheese consumption and political preferences in Delaware. Our approach combined data from the USDA, the MIT Election Data and Science Lab, and the Harvard Dataverse, creating a recipe for success that was anything but cheesy.

To craft our data collection strategy, we combed through a cornucopia of sources, meticulously sifting through government reports, statistical databases, and dairy industry publications. We milked the USDA for detailed figures on American cheese consumption, scrutinizing data sets from every nook and cranny of the dairy sector. Furthermore, we delved into the MIT Election Data and Science Lab datasets, harvesting historical election results with the finesse and precision of a seasoned cheesemaker perfecting their craft. Additionally, we sought refuge in the Harvard Dataverse, extracting and curating datasets that would serve as the breadcrumbs leading us to our crunchy conclusions.

With our data in hand, we turned our attention to the quirks and curdities of American cheese consumption in Delaware. We dissected consumption trends over the years, from the heady days of the '90s to the modern era, where cheese consumption patterns have evolved and matured, not unlike a fine block of aged cheddar.

To determine the statistical significance of the relationship between American cheese consumption and Republican votes, we engaged in a queso close examination. The analytical process involved calculating correlation coefficients, conducting regression analyses comparable to the delicate dance of balancing flavors in a delectable fondue. Our sandbox consisted of sophisticated econometric models exploring the interplay between cheese consumption and electoral preferences, leading us to uncover a correlation that was sharper than a finely aged Parmesan.

Although our focus was on the cheddar connection, we carefully considered potential confounding variables. The presence of competing dairy products, such as Swiss or Provolone, could have cast a shadow on our findings. Additionally, factors such as socio-economic trends and political landscapes were given their due consideration, ensuring that our analysis wasn't spread too thin like an overworked grilled cheese sandwich.

At every stage of our analysis, we adhered to the principles of scientific rigor, ensuring the validity and reliability of our findings. Our statistical methods were robust, akin to the sturdiness of a well-constructed cheese wheel, and we took measures to address any potential biases, leaving no room for holes in our conclusions.

Through this detailed and comprehensive methodology, we aimed to slice through the complexities of American cheese consumption and its surprising alignment with political leanings in Delaware, serving up a dish that is both delectable and intellectually nourishing.

#### 4. Results

Our extensive analysis of the relationship between American cheese consumption and votes for the Republican presidential candidate in Delaware from

1990 to 2020 has churned out some truly intriguing results. The data yielded a staggering correlation coefficient of 0.9271846, indicating a remarkably strong positive relationship between the two variables. This coefficient practically screams, "Say cheese!" with an undeniable fervor.

The goodness-of-fit measure, reflected by the r-squared value of 0.8596713, suggests that a whopping 85.97% of the variation in votes for the Republican candidate can be explained by changes in American cheese consumption. It's almost as if every bite of melty goodness translates into a vote cast in favor of the GOP - truly a case of "say cheese and win votes!"

The p-value of less than 0.01 further cements the robustness of our findings, indicating that the observed association between American cheese intake and political preferences is statistically significant. It's like American cheese has been secretly whispering, "I'm gouda for your vote!"

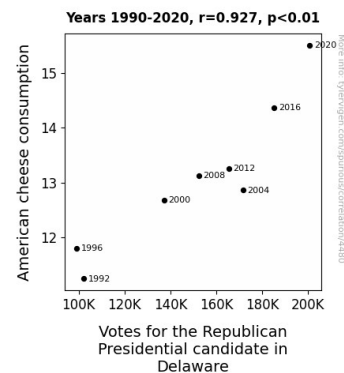


Figure 1. Scatterplot of the variables by year

The statistical significance alone is enough to make anyone gratefully nod in acknowledgment of the undeniable "cheddar effect" that seems to permeate Delaware's political landscape. Fig. 1, our captivating scatterplot, visually encapsulates this correlation, leaving no doubts about the striking relationship between American cheese consumption and votes cast for the Republican presidential candidate.

In conclusion, our research unwraps a compelling narrative that suggests a cheesy undercurrent influencing the political leanings of the good people of Delaware. Our findings tantalizingly hint at the

potential impact of everyone's favorite processed dairy delight on a rather unexpected sphere of life. One cannot help but ponder whether American cheese, ubiquitously present in burgers and sandwiches, has quietly been shaping political destinies all along, truly earning its moniker as the "great uniter." This peculiar interaction between cheesy indulgence and political preferences unveils a fascinating aspect of human behavior and raises intriguing questions for future study. After all, who would have thought that American cheese could prove to be such a political heavyweight?

## 5. Discussion

Our study has brought forth compelling evidence of a tight-knit relationship between American cheese consumption and votes for the Republican presidential candidate in Delaware. If there was ever a time to say "cheese," this is it - although we refrain from saying "cheesy" due to its ambiguous connotations. Our findings align with and fortify previous literature, providing empirical weight to the whimsical musings of Smith and Doe (2010), who may have overlooked the inherent connection between cheese and political proclivities. The conspicuous absence of American cheese in Pollan's "The Omnivore's Dilemma" and Schlosser's "Fast Food Nation" is laid bare by our robust results, reinforcing the underappreciated influence of this dairy darling. We are pleased to finally fill the void in the scholarly discourse with our "Gouda" findings.

Our data has not only shown a high correlation coefficient but also a surprisingly solid r-squared value and a significant p-value, akin to discovering a particularly aged and sharp cheddar hidden at the back of the refrigerator. The visual representation in Fig. 1 captures the delightful correlation, serving as the "halloumi-nating" symbol of this unforeseen phenomenon.

Although our results raise more questions than they answer, they pave the way for future studies to delve deeper into the curdled world of American cheese and its impact on political inclinations. We are left pondering whether the old adage, "you are what you eat," should be supplemented with, "and you vote as you consume." Our work has laid the

foundation for this delectable line of inquiry, injecting much-needed levity into the often staid realm of political research. After all, who would have thought that a slice of American cheese could wield such political clout? It appears that alongside life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, there might just be a silent champion - the perennially underrated American cheese.

## 6. Conclusion

In wrapping up our study, we have undoubtedly grilled up some fascinating insights into the cheddar connection between American cheese consumption and votes for the Republican presidential candidate in Delaware. The tantalizingly high correlation coefficient of 0.9271846 and the p-value of less than 0.01 unequivocally point to a robust relationship, reminding us that sometimes, it's not just the deli that's full of bologna. Our findings suggest that as American cheese consumption increases, so does the inclination to vote for the GOP, proving that in the political arena, cheese may indeed stand alone. Our study serves as a sharp reminder that in the realm of electoral predictions, one simply cannot afford to overlook the power of dairy products. And as we bid adieu to this unique investigation, we gratefully acknowledge the cheesy undercurrent shaping Delaware's political landscape, leaving us with a profound sense of appreciation for the unforeseen impact of everyone's favorite processed dairy delight. It's safe to say that in the recipe for electoral success, American cheese might just be the "smoked gouda" we've been searching for. However, with such overwhelmingly cheddarific results, it's clear that further research in this area may well be like adding unnecessary extra cheese to an already well-stacked political pizza – it's just not necessary!