### **Cheese is hot on the barbecue**

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Consumers are increasingly cutting down on meat and using cheese as an alternative. The trend is clearly evident in increasing sales by Nordex Food of barbecue cheese to the whole of Europe.

“We’re seeing very satisfactory growth in sales of the category known as barbecue cheeses. The growth is not so much due to there being more vegetarians, but first and foremost to the fact that more and more consumers are starting to have meat-free days,” says CEO of Nordex Food, Martin Aagaard Pedersen to Mejeri.dk, which examines the trend in an article.

Martin Aagaard Pedersen says that the growth in sales is being seen throughout Europe, but to varying degrees.

“In some countries we are seeing growth of 20% – that is the case in the UK and Sweden, and Germany is not far behind. In other countries, including Denmark, growth rates are not as dramatic,” he says.

Mejeri.dk also reports on a research project at the University of Copenhagen called ‘Gelcook’, which is conducting research into cheese as a cooking ingredient. The project is supported by the foundation Mejeribrugets ForskningsFond.

“Consumers’ growing interest in cutting down on meat means new possibilities for developing more dairy products for cooking,” says Grith Mortensen, a senior consultant with the Danish Agriculture & Food Council, and mentions halloumi and paneer as examples of the so-called milk gels which are used in hot food.

“The project will give dairies more knowledge about the production of these milk gels, and what happens when they are used in cooking,” she says.