

The International Marketing Proposal for Queijo Fresco

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Executive Summary

This international marketing plan presents a comprehensive analysis of the market, product, and target consumers, along with strategic marketing recommendations and detailed implementation approaches across each element of the marketing mix. Through this framework, marketers can assess the suitability of Queijo Fresco in Metro Vancouver and develop a thorough understanding of its target audience. With the promise of “Made in British Columbia using Brazilian tradition,” the product combines Brazilian authenticity with Canadian local production standards. Despite operating within a highly regulated and competitive dairy market, Queijo Fresco demonstrates strong potential due to its alignment with the region’s multicultural population and growing consumer interest in fresh, healthy specialty foods. It is strategically positioned as “premium yet approachable,” offering high perceived quality at an accessible price point.

Overall, the plan seeks to cultivate customer loyalty within the Latin community and build a broader international audience through word-of-mouth and cultural storytelling, while creating sustainable partnerships with local retailers and restaurants across Metro Vancouver. To achieve these objectives, the plan incorporates influencer marketing, sampling events, and cross-promotional initiatives.

Introduction

Product Background

Queijo Fresco is a traditional Brazilian fresh cheese widely known for its mild flavor, soft texture, and versatility in everyday meals. It is commonly consumed at breakfast, as a snack, or

incorporated into both sweet and savory dishes. Its simple production process and fresh characteristics make it a staple in Brazilian households and an important part of the country's dairy culture. As global food markets become increasingly diverse, Queijo Fresco is expected to gain attention beyond its country of origin, particularly in multicultural urban areas, where consumers are open to exploring international cuisines.

Metro Vancouver, British Columbia, is a promising market for introducing Queijo Fresco. This region is known for its cultural diversity, growing interest in international foods, and strong demand for fresh and high-quality dairy products. In addition, the presence of Brazilian communities and adventurous food consumers provides an opportunity to position Queijo Fresco as both an authentic ethnic product and a versatile fresh cheese suitable for various uses.

Marketing Plan Objectives

The marketing objectives for launching Queijo Fresco in Metro Vancouver focus on building awareness, driving trials, securing distribution, and achieving repeat purchases within the first year. The plan aims to reach 50%-60% awareness, generate a 5%-8% digital engagement rate, and secure 10+ influencer features in Vancouver. It seeks to drive a trial rate of 20%-30% through in-store sampling and achieve a repeat purchase of 25% or higher, while expanding distribution to 20+ retail locations, including both major chains and local specialty stores.

Market Analysis

Canadian Market Overview

The dairy industry plays a key role in Canada's food market, with cheese being one of the most commonly consumed dairy products. It is recorded that in 2024, “the volume of cheese

produced in Canada amounted to around 527,000 metric tons” (Statista, 2024) and has gradually increased from 2005 to 2024 (Statista, 2025). This large production volume demonstrates the importance of cheese in Canadian diets.

In recent years, Canadian consumers have also become more interested in a wider variety of cheeses, including specialty and international options. According to Statistics Canada (2023), cheese consumption per person in Canada has gradually increased, indicating changes in consumer preferences and a greater openness to diverse food products. This growth suggests that there is room for new cheese products, especially those with unique cultural and culinary value.

Meanwhile, the Canadian dairy sector operates under a supply management system that regulates the production and pricing of dairy products to support local farmers and keep prices stable. Because of this, dairy imports are controlled through tariffs and quotas, which can create barriers for foreign dairy products trying to enter the market (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, 2025). Despite these regulations, imported specialty cheeses are still found in Canadian supermarkets and specialty stores. It is reported that Canada imports a large amount of cheese each year, approximately 55 million kilograms in 2023, mainly from countries like the United States, France, and Italy (Statista, 2024). The ongoing high levels of cheese imports show that foreign cheeses are widely available to consumers through retail channels, especially in urban markets where the demand for international and specialty products is strong.

In Metro Vancouver, British Columbia, the population is very multicultural. This makes the area a good choice for introducing international food products. According to Statistics Canada (2021), over half the population in the Vancouver Census Metropolitan Area identifies as part of a visible minority group. This level of diversity significantly influences local food preferences.

For instance, the Latin American population in the region is estimated at more than 50,000 people, making up about 2% of the population (Statistics Canada, 2021). Although this is a smaller share compared to other groups, it still represents an important consumer segment that is already familiar with fresh cheeses or Brazilian food culture.

This diversity also affects how people shop for food. Research shows that the variety of ethnic groups in the region contributes to demand for diverse food options, which supports the availability of imported and specialty foods in supermarkets and local markets (Statistics Canada, 2021). Therefore, in a multicultural city like Vancouver, consumers often seek products that reflect various cultural backgrounds. These products are not just niche; they often fit into regular shopping habits, especially for those who enjoy cooking different cuisines at home. The rise of international grocery stores, specialty markets, and premium supermarkets in the area shows this demand.

These traits create a promising environment for introducing Queijo Fresco to attract not only Brazilian consumers but also a wider group interested in exploring international foods. Marketing Queijo Fresco as both an authentic cultural product and a practical everyday ingredient could help it successfully enter the Metro Vancouver market.

Consumer Behavior Analysis

Understanding consumer behavior is crucial when launching a new international food product in the Canadian market. Generally, Canadian consumers focus on food quality, freshness, and safety when making their purchase decisions. Many shoppers pay close attention to ingredient lists, nutritional facts, and product origins. According to Dairy Farmers of Canada (2023), Canadian shoppers increasingly prefer dairy products that are natural, minimally

processed, and made with simple ingredients. Since Queijo Fresco is a fresh cheese that usually consists of only a few basic ingredients, it fits well with these preferences.

Another key factor shaping consumer behavior is Canada's strong interest in international cuisine. Many consumers actively explore foods from different regions through restaurants, food festivals, and multicultural grocery stores. Reports from McEWAN Group (2026) show that Canadians enjoy experiences with global flavors, and menus are changing to incorporate more cultural storytelling for diners. Additionally, retail data in 2023 indicates that sales of international and specialty food products have increased by 10.8 percent compared to the same month a year earlier, reflecting a broader shift toward more foreign food choices among consumers (Statista, 2024). This trend is especially noticeable in cities like Vancouver, where food culture is heavily influenced by global cuisines.

In Metro Vancouver, more Canadians are cooking meals at home and choosing ingredients that seem healthier and higher quality to fit into their daily menu (Metro, n.d.). Because of this trend, consumers often seek products that can be used in various ways in the kitchen. Fresh cheeses like Queijo Fresco are especially appealing since they fit the preference for simple, fresh ingredients and can be added to many types of meals, including breakfast dishes, salads, snacks, and cooked recipes. At the same time, it caters to Canadians' shift toward health-conscious eating habits (Export Development Canada, 2025) and local government's initiatives on improving access to fresh foods like fruits, vegetables, and other whole ingredients (City of Vancouver, 2025).

Overall, consumer trends in Metro Vancouver indicate a growing interest in fresh, culturally diverse, and versatile food products. These trends bode well for the potential

introduction of Queijo Fresco as both a traditional Brazilian specialty and a practical ingredient for everyday cooking.

However, some challenges must be taken into account. The Canadian cheese market already features several fresh cheeses that may be somewhat similar in texture or use, such as mozzarella, feta, and paneer. Because these cheeses are already familiar to Canadian consumers, Queijo Fresco would need to stand out by highlighting its Brazilian origin, freshness, and versatility in cooking. Clear product information, recipe ideas, and cultural storytelling could help consumers understand the cheese's uses and give it a try.

Competitors Analysis

Although Queijo Fresco is not widely recognized in Canada, consumers are already familiar with a wide variety of fresh cheeses that already compete for attention. According to Statista (2024), “Canada is ranked as one of the major cheese-producing countries in the world and Canadian cheese is internationally renowned for its variety and high quality.” This strong domestic cheese industry means that Canadian consumers already have access to numerous cheese varieties that are commonly used in everyday cooking.

Among these cheeses, mozzarella is one of the most widely consumed products and represents a significant competitor. Mozzarella is commonly used in many dishes such as pizza, pasta, sandwiches, and salads, making it a staple ingredient in both households and restaurants. As reported by Statista (2024), “the majority of cheese produced in Canada was Cheddar and Mozzarella varieties.” The widespread use of mozzarella is also closely tied to the growth of the food-service sector and fast-food industry. Research on the Canadian cheese market notes that

“the rise in consumption of fast foods, such as pizza, pasta, and burgers, has contributed to the growing demand for Cheddar, Mozzarella, and Parmesan” (Research and Markets, 2023).

In addition to mozzarella, other fresh or specialty cheeses that were once considered niche products have gradually become more common in Canadian grocery stores and restaurants. Based on Mordor Intelligence (2025), “specialty varieties, including aged Gouda, artisanal blue, and ethnic formats like paneer and halloumi, are growing in the market.” This trend demonstrates how Canadian consumers are becoming more open to trying cheeses connected to different cultural traditions. This creates both competition and opportunity for Queijo Fresco.

Another important aspect of the competitive landscape is the structure of the Canadian dairy industry. Large dairy companies dominate cheese production and distribution across the country. For example, Saputo, one of Canada’s largest dairy companies, operates a major cheese division that produces a wide variety of products. According to the company’s 2024 Annual Information Form, “the division manufactures and markets a wide range of cheeses, from mozzarella and cheddar to specialty cheeses” (Saputo Inc., 2024). It is undeniable that Saputo still produces many similar fresh or soft cheeses, including fresh mozzarella, bocconcini, feta, ricotta, mascarpone, and fresh curd, which are somewhat similar to fresh cheese like Queijo Fresco; however, Saputo does not produce Brazilian-style Queijo Fresco specifically, which means this is still a niche product with potential market. Yet, it is worth considering that companies like Saputo already have strong brand recognition and nationwide distribution networks; therefore, new cheese products must be accompanied by effective marketing efforts to penetrate the market.

Despite these challenges, Queijo Fresco has the potential to differentiate itself from existing cheeses. While many cheeses currently sold in Canada are associated with the United States, Italy, and France (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, 2025), Queijo Fresco represents Brazilian culinary tradition. By emphasizing its cultural origin, fresh texture, and versatility in both savory and sweet dishes, the cheese can be positioned as a unique specialty product rather than a direct substitute for existing cheeses. This strategy allows Queijo Fresco to complement the cheeses already available in Canadian supermarkets while offering consumers a new culinary experience.

Market Trend & Opportunities

Current trends in the Canadian food market create favourable conditions for introducing Queijo Fresco. Changes in consumer preferences, the appeal of a hometown flavor, and improving retail distribution may forecast a growing demand for international and specialty cheese products.

The Rise of Food Explorers

Consumer tastes are shifting toward more diverse and internationally influenced foods. In the past, the Canadian cheese market was dominated mainly by a few traditional varieties such as cheddar and mozzarella; however, this has changed over time as consumers have more options and flavors. From 2020 to 2024, while specialty cheese saw an increase in production of 5%, the production of Mozzarella declined by 1% and Cheddar by 4% (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, 2025). The expansion of specialty cheese production reflects a broader change in consumer preferences, as people are now more willing to try unfamiliar products and international ingredients. As a result, a cheese such as Queijo Fresco, which represents Brazilian

culinary traditions, may appeal to consumers who enjoy discovering new foods and authentic global flavors.

Canadian consumers are also more open to exploring global cuisines through restaurants, social media, and food festivals. This growing curiosity about international foods creates an opportunity for specialty products such as Queijo Fresco. By emphasizing its Brazilian origin, freshness, and versatility, the cheese can attract both Latin American consumers seeking familiar flavors and Canadian food explorers interested in trying new cultural ingredients.

Latin Cuisine and the Appeal of Hometown Flavour

Another key trend is the growing popularity of Latin American cuisine. Kazmierski (2025) stated that restaurants, consumer packaged goods companies, and retailers are adding the flavours of South America into everyday foods. Since Canada's population is diverse, consumers might be interested in foods that reflect cultural identity and homeland flavors. For many immigrant communities, food plays an important role in maintaining cultural identity. Traditional ingredients allow families to prepare familiar meals and stay connected to their heritage. Therefore, Queijo Fresco can appeal to Latin American communities by offering an authentic Brazilian cheese and a powerful "hometown flavor."

Supermarket Expansion and Retail Opportunities

Retail distribution also supports the introduction of new cheese products. Supermarkets in Canada have expanded their international food selections to meet demand for global ingredients, making specialty cheeses more accessible to consumers. As explained by Grocery Business (2025), this is the 'channel blurring' phenomenon, where products that were historically

associated with specific ethnic groups are now gaining popularity across all demographics, encouraging mainstream retailers to expand their international offerings throughout their stores. In terms of the specialty cheese category, a successful precedent is the Brazilian cheese business WOW! Foods in Langley, British Columbia. The company imports and distributes Brazilian food products, including traditional cheeses like Queijo Coalho, and works with supermarkets and specialty grocery stores to make these items available to consumers across Canada. Through partnerships with retailers and international food markets, specialty cheeses like Queijo Fresco can successfully enter the market and gain visibility and accessibility in major urban regions such as Metro Vancouver.

Opportunities for Queijo Fresco are also expected to increase alongside the foodservice industry; as mentioned by Research and Markets (2023), “the rapidly evolving foodservice industry and novel food preparations” may boost the demand for cheese selection in future years.

Overall, the rise of food explorers, increasing interest in recreating Latin cuisine, and expanding supermarket distribution networks can support the marketing of Queijo Fresco in the Vancouver market.

Product Analysis

Detailed Description

The product proposed for launch in the Canadian market is Queijo Fresco, based on a traditional fresh white cheese widely consumed in Brazil, known as Queijo Minas Frescal. This cheese is known for its soft texture, high moisture content, and mild, salty taste, which makes it lighter and fresher than many aged cheeses (Opportunity FoodTech, 2023).

Minas Cheese hails from the Brazilian state of Minas Gerais, where it has traditionally been made for over 300 years. It is usually made from raw cow's milk, and the cheese can be ripened depending on the variation sought (Worldnews, Inc., 2026). Its production began with the arrival of the Portuguese, who introduced cheesemaking techniques to Brazil. With an ideal climate and pastures required for ensuring milk quality, Minas Gerais became the main area of production for this cheese - a status that remains in modern times (Opportunity FoodTech, 2023).

In contrast to cheeses such as cheddar or parmesan, Queijo Minas Frescal is not aged, which gives it a smooth, moist texture and a light flavour. The cheese is tender and slightly creamy, making it easy to slice or eat directly as a snack. Because of its mild taste, the cheese can be used in many different dishes, including breakfast meals, soups, sandwiches, and charcuterie boards.

For this project, the cheese will be produced locally in British Columbia using traditional Brazilian recipes and production methods. Local production ensures freshness and quality control while preserving the authentic characteristics of Brazilian cheese.

Unique Selling Points and Competitive Advantages

The product offers several unique selling points that differentiate it from existing cheeses in the Canadian market. First, the product appeals to Canadian consumers who are increasingly interested in international cuisine and new food experiences. The growing demand for global flavors creates an opportunity for Queijo Fresco to position itself as a unique and authentic Brazilian product. This allows the cheese to attract food explorers who are open to trying new ingredients while also introducing Brazilian culinary culture to the Canadian market.

Secondly, the cheese has a distinct texture advantage. Compared with similar fresh cheeses already available in North America, such as Mexican queso fresco, Queijo Minas Frescal is less crumbly and moister, which creates a softer mouthfeel and more versatile culinary uses (AnyCheese, 2024). This difference allows the product to stand out in the fresh cheese category.

Thirdly, the cheese will be produced locally in Canada, which guarantees quality and significantly improves brand image. This is particularly important for fresh dairy products, as extended transportation and storage can negatively affect texture and quality. By shortening the supply chain, the product can maintain its soft structure and reach consumers more efficiently. In addition, local production strengthens consumer trust. Canadian consumers tend to rely on strict national food safety standards and are more confident in products produced under local regulations. This “locally made” aspect signals quality, transparency, and reliability, which are key decision factors in the dairy category. At the same time, producing in Canada also supports local economic activity and job creation, which can further enhance brand perception among Canadian consumers. Compared to imported specialty cheeses, locally produced Queijo Fresco offers a stronger value proposition. Imported cheeses often face higher costs due to tariffs, transportation, and cold-chain logistics, which can result in higher retail prices and potential freshness concerns. In contrast, local production allows the product to remain more accessible and affordable while maintaining consistent quality. This balance between authenticity and accessibility gives Queijo Fresco a competitive advantage in the Canadian market.

Finally, the product can create a strong emotional attachment through food culture. Minas Gerais has over 30.000 cheesemakers who engage in this activity for their livelihood, many of whom have inherited their knowledge and skills through family traditions, which have shaped the culture and identity of the region (Tonon, 2018). For Brazilian and Latin American

communities living in Canada, Queijo Fresco represents more than just a food product. It is closely connected to childhood memories, family meals, and everyday customs. Food often plays an important role in maintaining cultural identity, especially for immigrant communities, and familiar products help recreate a sense of home. This emotional connection can increase brand loyalty and repeat purchase behavior.

Product Positioning and Branding Strategies

The brand will position the product as a value specialty cheese, meaning it delivers high perceived value through a combination of freshness, Brazilian authenticity, and versatility. Rather than competing directly on low price, the product offers consumers a unique culinary and cultural experience at a reasonable and accessible price point. This positioning allows Queijo Fresco to stand out from both mass-produced cheeses and higher-priced imported specialty products. Core strategy focuses on three main ideas: freshness, versatility, and cultural tradition.

In terms of competitive positioning, Queijo Fresco can be placed between commonly used cheeses, such as cheddar, and premium imported specialty cheeses. While cheddar offers



functionality at a lower price, and imported cheeses offer a premium experience at a higher price, Queijo Fresco provides a balance of both. It delivers a higher level of authenticity and versatility than common cheeses, while remaining more accessible than

imported specialty products. This positioning supports its role as a high-value specialty cheese in the Canadian market.

The brand message will emphasize the concept of “Made in British Columbia using Brazilian tradition”. This positioning allows the product to maintain originality while also highlighting the quality and safety of Canadian food production.

Brand storytelling will play an important role in the marketing strategy. The brand will communicate the history and cultural background of Brazilian cheese-making and explain how the product was developed. Sharing the story behind the recipe, the production journey, and the cheese's cultural meaning can help build an emotional connection with consumers.

Strategic Orientation: Standardization vs Adaptation

Standardization is applied to the core product elements, including the original Brazilian recipe, traditional production methods, and the authentic flavor profile. Maintaining these elements ensures that the product remains true to its cultural origin and preserves its identity as a Brazilian cheese.

However, certain aspects of the product must be adapted to fit the Canadian market. Packaging and labelling must comply with Canadian food regulations, including bilingual English and French labels, as well as Canadian food safety standards (Canadian Food Inspection Agency, 2023). Additionally, the product format may be adapted to match Canadian consumption habits. For example, smaller portions or ready-to-eat snack-sized cheese can be introduced to align with modern consumer behaviour, such as snacking or preparing charcuterie boards.

Segmentation and Target Market Selection

This product targets three main groups: Latin American communities with cultural ties to the product, Canadians and other international consumers who enjoy trying new foods, and businesses such as restaurants and specialty stores.

Marketing Strategy

Target Markets	Demographic	Psychographic	Behavioral	Marketing Strategy
Brazilian & Latin Communities	Brazilians & Latin Americans	Cultural identity, nostalgia, tradition	Frequent purchase	Word-of-mouth of Brazilian origin
International Food Explorers	Canadian and International food enthusiasts	Curiosity, exploration	Buy on trend for more non-traditional uses	Cultural storytelling and Sampling
Businesses	Owners of restaurants and specialty stores	Innovation, differentiation	Bulk buying for ingredient use and resale	Partnerships and Cross-promotion

Demographic Segmentation

The first segment is the Brazilian and Latin American communities in Metro Vancouver, who are already familiar with the cheese and may actively seek authentic products from their home cultures. As mentioned above, this segment is estimated at around 50,000 consumers.

Another segment for Queijo Fresco includes other multicultural young professionals, families, and food enthusiasts who are curious about global food products. These consumers come from various cultural backgrounds and enjoy cultural diversity. As reported by Secord (2025), 88% of Gen Z and millennials enjoy exploring cultural cuisines, and 35% integrated Mexican cuisine into their regular diet. They typically shop at specialty grocery stores, international markets, and premium supermarkets that offer imported or unique products. They are often willing to pay higher prices for foods that provide authenticity, quality, or cultural significance.

Businesses are also a potential segment because they may integrate Queijo Fresco into their recipes and products on a B2B basis. Possible demographics include chefs, restaurant owners, café operators, and specialty retailers in Metro Vancouver.

Psychographic Segmentation

For the Brazilian and Latin American communities who are already familiar with the product due to cultural ties, building the nostalgic and traditional value is the main purpose. As the product represents familiarity and tradition, maintaining original taste and emphasizing the traditional Brazilian production technique remains the priority.

For individuals from other cultures who are willing to try products from multiple cuisines, they focus on their experience with new flavours, so they are more likely to purchase if the product feels unique, accessible, and easy to incorporate into their routine. This segment is important because it drives trials and helps introduce Queijo Fresco to a wider market beyond cultural communities in Metro Vancouver.

In terms of the B2B model, businesses focus on innovation and differentiation, as they look for products that help them stand out while remaining efficient and practical for daily operations. Since this product is not yet widely known in the city, it provides these businesses with the opportunity to offer fresh options that better resonate with Brazilian cultural heritage and capitalize on the scarcity effect.

Behavioural Segmentation

Brazilians and members of other Latin communities are expected to purchase specialty products from ethnic grocery stores consistently since their behaviour is based on familiarity and trust, leading to repeat purchases.

Canadians and other international consumers tend to explore specialty stores and international product sections based on visibility, sampling, and trends rather than habit. They are more prone to purchase specialty cheeses for more non-traditional uses besides daily cooking, such as snacking or entertaining, like preparing charcuterie boards or sharing food during social gatherings. Semansky (2024) mentioned: “cheese boards continue to be popular. They’re appealing to the eye and they allow people to experiment [...] The cheese board is the new veggie tray.”

Finally, businesses might need to purchase in bulk to resell or incorporate the product into their offerings. Their priority is the cheaper bulk cost, consistent supply, fresh quality, and ease of integration into the existing menu.

Marketing Strategy

The marketing strategy for Queijo Fresco in Metro Vancouver is structured around three distinct target segments: Brazilian and Latin American communities, international food explorers, and business-to-business (B2B) partners such as restaurants and specialty stores. Because each group relates to the product differently, the strategies used to reach them must also differ. A uniform approach would fail to leverage the unique motivations and purchasing behaviours of each segment. The following section outlines a differentiated strategy for each group, along with the reasoning behind each approach.

Brazilian and Latin American Communities: Word of Mouth and Cultural Referral

For consumers of these groups, the primary marketing approach will rely on word-of-mouth referrals and community-based outreach. This segment already holds a strong cultural familiarity with Queijo Fresco, so the objective is not to introduce the product as something new, but rather to signal its availability and reinforce its authenticity. Word of mouth is especially effective in tight-knit immigrant communities because trust is concentrated within social networks rather than distributed across anonymous consumer channels. In communities where shared identity and heritage play a central role in daily life, a recommendation from a fellow member carries considerably more weight than conventional advertisement (Ogada & Lindberg, 2022). Food, in particular, is deeply tied to cultural belonging and memory, making peer referral a natural and cost-efficient channel.

To initiate this dynamic, the strategy will prioritize placement in ethnic grocery stores and Latin American supermarkets in areas with high concentrations of Brazilian residents, such as Surrey and Burnaby. The brand will also engage with Brazilian cultural associations, community events, and local social hubs where product awareness can be seeded quickly. Brand messaging communicated through these channels will emphasize the product's roots in Minas Gerais, its traditional recipe, and its role in Brazilian family meals, reinforcing the nostalgic and cultural value that drives repeat purchase within this segment.

International Food Explorers: In-Store Sampling and Cultural Storytelling

Reaching international food explorers, including Canadian-born consumers and multicultural residents curious about global cuisines, requires a different approach. Unlike Latin American consumers, this segment has no prior reference point for Queijo Fresco, which means their willingness to purchase depends on reducing the perceived risk of trying something unfamiliar. In-store sampling is one of the most effective tools for accomplishing this, as consumer research shows that product trials significantly lower the barrier to first purchase in the food and beverage category, where sensory experience is the primary driver of decision-making (Heilman et al., 2011). Sampling will be conducted in the international food sections of supermarkets. This not only provides a taste-and-interact experience with a product before purchasing but also helps consumers easily navigate the products' location in a large, self-service retail establishment. Unlike word-of-mouth, which travels through established relationships, the mass public lacks a trusted peer to guide their decision. Sampling, therefore, acts as a substitute for social proof by creating a direct and personal experience with the product.

Cultural storytelling will be woven into both the in-store and digital elements, connecting the product to the agricultural heritage of Minas Gerais and the generations of cheesemakers who practice this craft. Besides the packaging and recipe cards, the cultural message can also be delivered through social media content and sampling events at supermarkets and food festivals. Either used on special charcuterie boards or beautiful breakfast plates, Queijo Fresco will always remind consumers of the cultural layer that differentiates it from a crowded specialty cheese category.

B2B Partners: Partnerships and Cross Promotion

The business-to-business segment, comprising restaurants, cafés, and food retailers, will be approached through a cross-marketing strategy. Rather than relying on traditional one-directional advertising, cross-marketing establishes a mutually beneficial relationship between the Queijo Fresco brand and its business partners. The brand supports business partners with their practical needs, and in return, those businesses promote the product through their own channels and customer touchpoints. This approach is particularly well-suited for a product that is not yet widely recognized in the local market, as it leverages the existing customer base and credibility of established businesses to build brand visibility organically.

On the brand's side, the cross-marketing offering is flexible, which can include competitive bulk pricing for large purchases, long-term ingredient supply, Brazilian-inspired menu development support, and suggested applications for Queijo Fresco in existing dishes with minimal operational adjustment. These resources lower the barrier to adoption for chefs and operators, addressing practical concerns around cost efficiency, supply reliability, and ease of kitchen integration. Wholesale packaging will meet industry standards for cold storage and

portion control, ensuring the product is ready for professional use. Targeting both Brazilian and Latin American restaurants as natural early adopters, as well as contemporary cafés and brunch-focused establishments, allows the brand to reach a range of foodservice environments where the cheese's versatility can be showcased effectively.

In exchange, partner businesses will feature Queijo Fresco prominently on their menus, posters, social media, or other promotional materials. This creates a secondary layer of brand exposure that reaches consumers who may not yet be aware of the product. When diners encounter the cheese at a restaurant or café, curiosity is generated that may translate into retail purchase, reinforcing the connection between the B2B and direct consumer channels. Because Queijo Fresco is not yet widely available in Metro Vancouver's foodservice industry, early-adopting businesses also benefit from the differentiation of offering an exclusive specialty ingredient, creating a shared incentive for both parties to invest in the partnership's success. Together, these three tailored strategies form a coherent market entry plan that reflects the diversity of the Metro Vancouver consumer landscape and maximizes reach across both cultural and mainstream markets.

Marketing Mix

Product

The product strategy for Queijo Fresco focuses on delivering value beyond the physical product by combining quality, branding, packaging, and customer experience. This ensures the cheese appeals not only through taste but also through cultural meaning and usability.

At the core level, Queijo Fresco is a fresh, mild-flavoured cheese with a soft texture and high moisture content. These characteristics match Canadian preferences for natural and minimally processed foods (Dairy Farmers of Canada, 2023). Its versatility allows it to be used in a variety of meals, supporting trends such as home cooking and flexible meal preparation.

At the augmented level, the packaging design will focus on a clean and simple visual identity that reflects freshness and natural ingredients, while also incorporating subtle Brazilian cultural elements. A minimalist design approach will be used to align with Canadian consumer preferences for modern, transparent, and easy-to-understand food products. This includes the use of clear labeling and simple typography to communicate product quality and freshness.



Elements of Brazilian identity will be integrated into the packaging to preserve authenticity and create differentiation. This can include the use of soft color accents inspired by the Brazilian flag, subtle patterns referencing traditional Brazilian culture, or small storytelling elements that highlight the origin of the product (Martins et al., 2026). These design features allow the product to remain visually clean while still communicating its cultural background. This balance between simplicity and cultural identity is important, as it allows the product to appeal to mainstream Canadian consumers while still maintaining its authenticity. Clean packaging builds trust and readability, while cultural cues create emotional connection and brand uniqueness. As a result, the packaging becomes not only functional but also a key part of the product's overall value proposition.

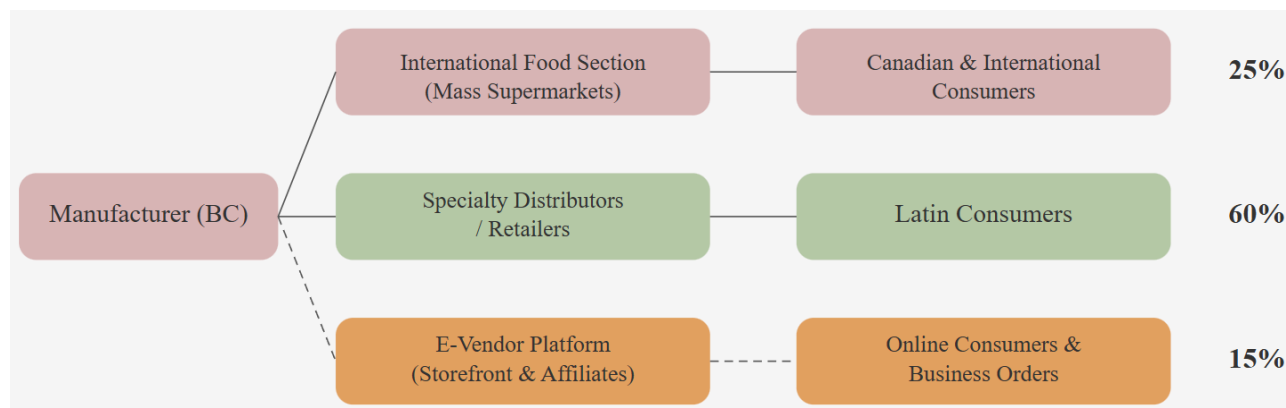
At the support services level, customer experience becomes a key differentiator. Since Queijo Fresco is relatively new to many Canadian consumers, cooking instruction and food safety guidance are essential. This will include:

- Simple food safety rules and serving suggestions on the packaging
- QR codes introducing the 300-year-old cheesemaking story in Minas Gerais and other Brazilian recipes with Queijo Fresco
- In-store demonstrations and sampling

Overall, the product strategy integrates functional quality, cultural storytelling, stunning packaging design, and customer support to create a complete value proposition for Queijo Fresco to successfully differentiate itself within the competitive Canadian cheese market.

Place

The distribution strategy for Queijo Fresco follows a multi-channel structure that combines specialty retail, mass markets, and e-vendor platforms.



The channel system fits the product's positioning as a Brazilian specialty cheese with mainstream potential. The main 60% flow targets specialty distributors and stores first, allowing

the brand to reach Latin American communities who are most familiar with their “hometown flavor.” A 25% direct channel to general supermarkets targets food explorers from the mass public, aiming for a smoother expansion into larger retail chains over time. The last 15% is kept for e-vendor platforms, which might take time to build at first, but can be an effective and convenient touchpoint for online shoppers and businesses who want to make private bulk purchases with the brand. The 60% channel builds strong penetration in niche cultural markets and ensures a stable, long-term supply, while the other 40% distribution through supermarket and digital channels increases visibility for the general population and trial among trend-driven consumers. Together, these channels ensure both focused targeting and wide market access.

Higher control is maintained in early stages through specialty stores and selected supermarkets, where the company can manage product placement, branding, and sampling activities. Sampling will be implemented in high-traffic supermarkets such as T&T Supermarket, Whole Foods, Real Canadian Superstore, and Costco, which attract large and diverse customer bases. Overall, the distribution strategy focuses on starting small and growing step by step. It first prioritizes specialty stores to reach Latin communities and slowly expands to mass supermarkets to reach more international customers. Together, this approach helps Queijo Fresco build awareness, reach more people, and grow steadily in the Metro Vancouver market.

Price

Pricing Analysis

Pricing plays an essential role in the success of Queijo Fresco because it directly influences both trial behavior and perceived quality. In the Canadian market, consumers are already informed about the price references of different types of fresh cheese. As a result, the pricing

strategy must be aligned with existing market benchmarks while still supporting the product's differentiation. In Canada, common fresh cheeses such as mozzarella, feta, and ricotta typically range from \$8 to \$18 CAD per 200-400g, creating a clear pricing anchor for consumer expectations (Loblaws, n.d.).

From a company perspective, local production in British Columbia reduces transportation costs and avoids import tariffs, allowing the product to maintain competitive pricing while preserving freshness and quality. However, costs related to cold-chain distribution, retail margins, and compliance with Canadian food regulations must still be considered to support a good pricing strategy and allow flexibility for retailer markups.

From a market perspective, Canadian consumers have relatively high purchasing power but are also price-sensitive when it comes to everyday products like cheese. The market already includes strong competitors such as mozzarella, feta, and ricotta, which puts pressure on prices to remain within an acceptable range. At the same time, there is a growing demand for specialty and international cheeses, allowing Queijo Fresco to justify a slightly higher price on the basis of its uniqueness and cultural value. This creates an opportunity to position the product as “premium but approachable,” rather than purely premium or low-cost.

From an environmental perspective, Canada's dairy regulations and supply management system create stable but controlled pricing conditions. Inflation and retail markups in urban areas like Vancouver also affect final pricing, requiring a balance between affordability and profitability. Therefore, pricing must remain aligned with both regulatory conditions and urban cost structures.

Strategic Consideration

Based on this market structure, Queijo Fresco is positioned at approximately \$2.70 to \$3.20 per 100g, through the recommended retail pricing of \$5.49 to \$6.49 for 200g and \$6.49 to \$7.99 for 250g (Loblaws, n.d.). This positioning is intentional, as it places the product slightly below or within the premium range of feta, which reduces the psychological barrier for first-time trials while still maintaining a strong perception of quality, especially for consumers unfamiliar with the product. Pricing below this range could weaken perceived value, while pricing above it could increase hesitation due to limited product awareness.

At the wholesale level, the recommended range of \$11.50 to \$13.50 per kilogram is aligned with market benchmarks. Bulk ricotta products are typically priced around \$9 to \$10 per kilogram, while feta ranges from \$14 to \$15 per kilogram (A1 Cash & Carry, n.d.). Positioning Queijo Fresco between these two categories reinforces its role as a differentiated but accessible specialty cheese. This ensures competitiveness for business buyers while maintaining sufficient margins for retailers.

The pricing strategy follows a penetration-to-value approach. In the early stage, the price supports trial by remaining competitive within the upper-middle range of the market. As consumers become more familiar with the product, the price becomes supported by its perceived value, including freshness, versatility, and cultural authenticity. This gradual shift allows the brand to build both market share and long-term pricing power.

Another key consideration is the structure of the distribution channel. In international markets, multiple intermediaries such as wholesalers and retailers add markups before the product reaches the consumer. If pricing is not carefully managed, this can create channel

conflict, where different partners compete on price or experience margin pressure. Therefore, the strategy separates retail and B2B pricing. Retail channels focus on smaller, branded packages with stable pricing, while B2B channels operate on bulk purchasing with lower per-unit cost. Discounts are applied only to volume-based orders rather than public retail pricing, which prevents direct price comparison and protects brand value. This approach supports consistent positioning while maintaining strong relationships across the distribution network.

Promotion

Canadian consumers prioritize quality, freshness, and transparency when purchasing food products, while also showing increasing interest in international cuisine, particularly in multicultural cities like Vancouver. However, because Queijo Fresco is not widely known, there is a clear knowledge gap that promotion must address. This means promotion must go beyond visibility and focus on education, usage demonstration, and cultural positioning to support trial behaviour.

Consumer behaviour indicates that trial is a key driver, as many consumers are willing to experiment only after experiencing the product directly or seeing it used in familiar contexts. Therefore, the promotion strategy follows an integrated communication approach, where influencer marketing, cultural storytelling and sampling, and B2B partnerships work together to create a consistent and reinforcing message across multiple touchpoints. Each element plays a different role in moving consumers from awareness to trial and finally to repeat purchase.

The promotion strategy is designed to achieve the above-mentioned targets: awareness of 50%-60% within the first 6 months, trial rate of 20%-30%, repeat purchase of 25% or higher, and

engagement rate of 5%-8%. These targets are aligned with the product's market entry stage, where initial focus is on awareness and trial before shifting toward retention and loyalty. Performance will be monitored on a monthly basis, with a formal evaluation conducted every 3 months to assess progress and adjust targets based on market response and campaign effectiveness.

Word-of-Mouth and Influencer System

Word-of-mouth forms the foundation of the promotional strategy because food products rely heavily on shared experience and recommendation. Social media amplifies this effect by allowing product-related content to reach large audiences quickly and influence purchasing decisions.

The influencer strategy is designed as a structured system rather than a single campaign. Collaborations with Latin American content creators serve as the initial entry point due to their credibility to ensure the product's authenticity. Influencers are categorized into tiers based on follower size, and each tier is assigned a specific role. Influencers with 100K to 300K followers focus on engagement-driven content such as detailed reviews, recipes, and demonstrations that build trust and product understanding. Influencers with over 300K followers increase reach by creating relatable and visually appealing content to introduce the product to a broader audience. While the lower-tier influencers emphasize authenticity and educational value, the higher-tier influencers prioritize visual impact and reach. As a result, the strategy creates a layered communication system that builds both credibility and awareness simultaneously.

The influencer system is further strengthened through a two-stage screening process. In the first stage, multiple influencers are selected to maximize exposure and test audience response. In

the second stage, performance is evaluated based on recognition, engagement quality, and conversion results. Recognition focuses on consistent reach across posts, engagement evaluates meaningful interactions, and conversion is measured through discount codes and sales performance, with a benchmark of 10% to 20% from engaged audiences. Influencers who meet these standards transition into long-term affiliate partners, shifting the strategy from short-term promotion to performance-based collaboration. This ensures that marketing investment is continuously optimized toward high-performing creators.



Cultural Storytelling and Sampling events

The promotion strategy extends beyond influencer marketing into a broader system that integrates cultural storytelling and direct engagement. By presenting Queijo Fresco through recipes, lifestyle content, and everyday usage, the product becomes more accessible to food explorers. Consistent content production of three to five videos per week ensures ongoing visibility while reinforcing familiarity over time.

Direct engagement through food supermarkets and cultural events further strengthens this approach. Sampling allows consumers to experience the product directly, reducing uncertainty and accelerating the transition from awareness to purchase. This step acts as a critical bridge between digital exposure and real-life consumption. For example, for a food festival event, the target is to reach approximately 1500-3000 attendees, with a sampling conversion rate of 25%-35% (consumers who try the product), and a purchase rate of 10%-15%. In addition, at least 20% of sampled consumers are expected to engage further on social media through participating in sampling booth mini-games (e.g., following the brand or scanning QR codes), ensuring that offline interaction continues into digital engagement.

B2B Cross Promotion and Relationship Development

This promotion strategy targets long-term relationship development through cross-marketing partnerships and bulk pricing incentives with small to medium-sized cafés and restaurants. These businesses are more flexible and open to experimenting with new ingredients, making them ideal partners for early-stage market entry. This B2B layer complements influencer and cultural strategies by embedding the product into real consumption contexts, enhancing consumer trust in the product. When cafés and restaurants incorporate Queijo Fresco into their menus, they introduce the product in a familiar and trusted setting. If the menu change is a success, this not only increases Queijo Fresco's consumer base but also visits from novelty-seeking customers at early-adopting businesses. The process includes identifying the needs of local businesses, creating partnerships in price, supply, or menu development, performance evaluation, and establishing long-term collaboration.

Together, influencer marketing drives awareness, cultural storytelling and sampling build connection, and B2B partnerships reinforce credibility and repeat usage. This integrated system ensures that consumers encounter the product across multiple touchpoints, strengthening both trial and long-term adoption.

Conclusion

The Metro Vancouver market represents a strong opportunity for Queijo Fresco thanks to its multicultural population, openness to international cuisines, and high levels of cheese consumption. With a distinctive flavor profile, deep-rooted Brazilian heritage, and local production, Queijo Fresco is well-positioned to preserve its cultural identity while establishing credibility as a specialty food product within Canada's highly competitive cheese market. The product serves as a cultural touchpoint for Latin American communities, a versatile and novel culinary option for Canadian and international consumers, and a source of differentiation and reliable supply for businesses such as restaurants and specialty retailers.

Queijo Fresco is thoughtfully developed across core, augmented, and support levels, delivering high-quality fresh cheese, culturally expressive packaging, and guidance that supports everyday culinary use. It is strategically distributed across specialty retailers, mass supermarkets, and e-commerce platforms to effectively reach three target segments and enable smooth expansion. In terms of pricing, it is benchmarked against competitors to remain competitive at retail while promising sustainable wholesale margins, with a subtle change from a penetration to a value-based strategy. Promotion has three pillars: a structured influencer program to build reach and recognition, sampling booths at supermarkets and cultural events to convert awareness

into purchase, and cross-promotion with local businesses to encourage adoption and consumption.

However, the product faces several risks, such as potential disruption of traditional production methods through localization, intense competition from established brands, possible channel conflict due to margin differences, and inconsistency in influencers' delivery of brand values. These challenges call for a consistent, culturally grounded marketing approach, supported by timely and responsive adjustments to market feedback.

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