ACS CCSE Code of Ethical Conduct

The ACS Certified Cheese Sensory Evaluator® (ACS CCSE®) program distinguishes people in their excellence in and commitment to cheese. Candidates who fulfill the eligibility criteria and pass the exam to obtain the ACS CCSE® designation have a duty to uphold the highest level of professional knowledge, conduct, and ideals, as well as to educate others whenever possible about cheese. To preserve these standards, those who hold the ACS CCSE® designation must not engage in any conduct or commit any act that may discredit the certification's credibility or integrity.

The code of ethics for ACS CCSEs® suggests the following considerations that must be kept in mind while carrying out work in the cheese industry:

- **Safeguard proprietary information:** An employee or associate of any organization has an obligation to respect confidentiality and proprietary ownership of data.
- **Engage in community:** When interacting with the public, there is a responsibility to educate and clear misconceptions about cheese.
- **Maintain the public trust:** The public trust relies on an excellent record of cheese safety in the Americas. This track record is vital to maintaining public trust, and ACS CCSEs® must train on and apply best practices related to safe handling.
- **Preserve credibility and integrity:** When communicating information about cheese, state facts clearly, and only when you know enough about a subject to accurately do so. If you don't know the facts, or when stating an opinion, clearly state your level of confidence in your answer. Others may view your statements as authoritative.
- **Stay accountable for behavior:** This certification places responsibility on you to not overstate the extent of your competence and to never take advantage of those who may lack your knowledge or experience.
- **Avoid conflicts of interest:** Act with integrity in dealing with others by disclosing any conflicts to all parties involved.
- **Work fairly:** When working with others, do not denigrate their competence or honesty with the intent to gain an unfair advantage.

Practice Standards

ACS CCSEs® must adhere to a standard of practice fitting a person of high integrity and skill. This standard includes following any overall ACS conduct guidelines, and practicing the following:

- **Practice safe handling:** ACS CCSEs® must hold the highest standards of food safety and comply with relevant federal, state, and local regulations.

- **Keep current on education:** The cheese world is constantly changing with new discoveries and new opportunities to expand existing knowledge. ACS CCSEs® have a special responsibility to keep fully aware of developments and learn about historical practices and knowledge related to cheese.
- **Contribute to the state of the art:** Historical practices have changed through the years with updated knowledge and new discoveries. As you make these discoveries, contribute to the industry's growth of knowledge to the extent that expertise and ability allow.
- **Set a good example:** With public exposure, there is a responsibility to support, respect, and abide by the appropriate laws, and to apply the same high standards of behavior in personal as well as professional activities.
- **Share information and showcase competence:** Back up your claims by exercising technical and professional competence suitable for your work and career level. Do not withhold information unless you are bound by a confidentiality agreement.
- **Communicate with clarity:** When communicating about cheese, make true and succinct statements without exaggeration. Keep lay people engaged by using accessible, non-specialist language wherever possible, unless there are no adequate equivalents in the general language.
- **Use discretion:** The cheese community, especially for artisan production and sales, relies on close relationships among producers, sellers, distributors, and consumers. Exercise discretion in disclosing, or permitting to be disclosed, or using to your own advantage, any information about your current or previous employer, or clients.