

Publication of an amendment application pursuant to Article 50(2)(a) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs

(2016/C 188/07)

This publication confers the right to oppose the amendment application pursuant to Article 51 of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽¹⁾.

AMENDMENT APPLICATION

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006

on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin for agricultural products and foodstuffs ⁽²⁾

AMENDMENT APPLICATION ACCORDING TO ARTICLE 9

‘GORGONZOLA’

EC No: IT-PDO-0217-01214 — 18.3.2014

PGI () PDO (X)

1. Heading in the product specification affected by the amendment

- Name of product
- Product description
- Geographical area
- Proof of origin
- Method of production:
- Link
- Labelling
- National requirements
- Other [amendment to packing rules]

2. Type of amendment

- Amendment to Single Document or Summary Sheet.
- Amendment to specification of registered PDO or PGI for which neither the Single Document nor the Summary has been published
- Amendment to specification that requires no amendment to the published single document (Article 9(3) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006)
- Temporary amendment to specification resulting from imposition of obligatory sanitary or phytosanitary measures by public authorities (Article 9(4) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006)

3. Amendment(s):

Product description

The product has not changed. However, the adjective ‘soft’ is deleted since it does not accurately describe all types of ‘Gorgonzola’; in particular the strong variety cannot be classified as a soft cheese. It is therefore incorrect to use the term ‘soft’ for all types of ‘Gorgonzola’ and this could, furthermore, cause confusion during official checks on compliance with the specification in the case of the strong variety. The adjective ‘fat’ is also deleted, since the indication of the minimum percentage of fat in the dry matter given in point 3.2 of the Single Document makes this superfluous.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 343, 14.12.2012, p. 1.

⁽²⁾ OJ L 93, 31.3.2006, p. 12. Replaced by Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012.

In the current specification, the colour of the paste is described as being 'blue-green', but the amendment also provides for it to be 'grey-blue', so as to fully describe all the possible colours of the various types of 'Gorgonzola'. Although blue-green is the characteristic colour of the paste, the development of the live, aerobic mould as maturation progresses can give the cheese what may appear to the human eye to be a grey-blue colour. If the specification did not stipulate that the cheese can be of a grey-blue colour, this could again cause confusion during official checks to determine whether the colour of the paste complies with the specification.

The minimum maturation period given in the current specification varies depending on the type of 'Gorgonzola', therefore the inappropriate general reference it contains to a minimum maturation period of 50 days is deleted.

The product has not changed. However, the reference to the taste depending solely on the length of the maturation period is incorrect and is therefore removed, since the taste can depend, although to a lesser extent, on other factors, such as the weight of the wheel.

The different types of 'Gorgonzola' are identified more appropriately, based on their weight, flavour and maturation. The previous classification, introduced by an amendment registered in 2009, could be misleading, since it appeared to be based solely on the dimensions of the cheese, using the terms 'large', 'medium' and 'small'. Therefore, in the interest of greater clarity, we have specified that the cheeses are classified not only on the basis of their weight but also on their flavour and their maturation period. The use, for the purposes of classification, of the terms 'mild type', 'strong type' and 'small wheel, strong type' would appear more appropriate for readily identifying the different types of 'Gorgonzola'. The 'mild type' is the 'large' wheel referred to in the previous classification. The term 'slightly strong' is deleted as not being appropriate, since this cheese has a 'mild taste', as indicated in the specification. The 'strong' type is the 'medium-sized wheel' referred to in the previous classification. The 'small wheel, strong type' is the 'small wheel' referred to in the previous classification.

The minimum and maximum dimensions of the wheels are slightly modified to reflect actual production, since the volume can increase or decrease depending on the moisture content of the cheese.

The maximum maturation period is inserted (see 'Method of production').

The different types of 'Gorgonzola' are therefore identified based on their weight, flavour and maturation:

- large wheel, mild type: from 9 to 13,5 kg with a mild taste and a maturation period of a minimum of 50 days and a maximum of 150 days,
- large wheel, 'strong' type: from 9 to 13,5 kg with a pronounced strong taste and a maturation period of a minimum of 80 days and a maximum of 270 days,
- small wheel, strong type: from 5,5 to less than 9 kg with a pronounced strong taste and a maturation period of a minimum of 60 days and a maximum of 200 days.

Proof of origin

In order to guarantee its authenticity, 'Gorgonzola' may be marketed whole, in half-cheeses cut horizontally or in portions wrapped in goffered aluminium foil.

In order to maintain the quality, guarantee the origin and ensure control, 'Gorgonzola' may also be marketed in pre-packaged portions without the goffered aluminium foil following certification by the authorised inspection body or other body delegated by it for that purpose.

Method of production

The temperatures and relative humidity levels for the maturation premises are amended slightly to take account of innovations in maturation plant and technology that improve the quality characteristics of 'Gorgonzola'.

The maximum maturation period is inserted, since further maturation would pose a serious risk of the product losing its specific properties and organoleptic characteristics.

Labelling

In order to facilitate verification of compliance with the specification and, in particular, to enable the consumer to make an informed choice even when the product is packaged at the retail outlet at the consumer's request, an obligation is introduced for the goffered aluminium foil on large and small wheels of strong Gorgonzola, the half-cheeses cut horizontally, and the portions to bear the word 'piccante' (strong).

Again to facilitate verification of compliance with the specification and, in particular, to enable the consumer to make an informed choice, an obligation is introduced for the primary packaging of pre-packaged portions cut from large and small wheels of strong Gorgonzola to bear the word 'piccante' (strong).

Other

In order to maintain the quality, guarantee the origin and ensure the control of pre-packaged portions of 'Gorgonzola' placed on the market, the new text lays down that, and gives reasons why, the cutting and packing of the portions must be certified by the authorised inspection body or other body delegated by it for that purpose. This is because the mechanical cutting of wheels and half-cheeses cut horizontally wrapped in goffered aluminium foil is not possible for food safety reasons and so, given that there is no marking on the side of the 'Gorgonzola' wheel, the origin of the portions without the aluminium foil must be verified by the inspection body. This does not prevent retailers cutting and packaging portions by hand at the consumer's request or for direct sale. Indeed, retailers do not remove the goffered aluminium foil in which wheels and half-cheeses are wrapped before cutting them with a knife, and there is no danger for food safety. What is more, in principle, such operations must be carried out by the retailer in front of the consumer, or at least the consumer can request this in order, in particular, to check that the wheel or half-cheese used has the goffered aluminium foil. Hand cutting by retailers of wheels or half-cheeses wrapped in goffered aluminium foil for direct sale of the pre-packaged product should also be allowed, provided that, in all cases, part of the foil remains on the portions obtained as a guarantee of authenticity.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006

on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin for agricultural products and foodstuffs⁽³⁾

'GORGONZOLA'

EC No: IT-PDO-0217-01214 — 18.3.2014

PGI () PDO (X)

1. Name

'Gorgonzola'

2. Member State or Third Country

Italy

3. Description of the agricultural product or foodstuff**3.1. Type of product**

Class 1.3. Cheeses

3.2. Description of product to which the name in (1) applies

'Gorgonzola' is a blue-veined cheese made exclusively from pasteurised whole cows' milk, that has a homogeneous, white and pale yellow, raw paste, with characteristic blue-green and/or grey-blue veins due to the development of mould (marbling).

'Gorgonzola' has the following characteristics:

— shape:

— cylindrical, with flat ends and a straight side,

— dimensions: minimum height of the side 13 cm; diameter between 20 and 32 cm,

⁽³⁾ Replaced by Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012.

— classification on the basis of weight, flavour and maturation:

1. large wheel, mild type: from 9 to 13,5 kg with a mild taste and a maturation period of a minimum of 50 days and a maximum of 150 days;
2. large wheel, strong type: from 9 to 13,5 kg with a pronounced strong taste and a maturation period of a minimum of 80 days and a maximum of 270 days;
3. small wheel, strong type: from 5,5 to less than 9 kg with a pronounced strong taste and a maturation period of a minimum of 60 days and a maximum of 200 days,

— rind: grey and/or pink in colour, non-edible,

— paste: homogeneous, white and pale yellow, with mould (marbling) producing characteristic blue-green and/or grey-blue veins;

— fat content in the dry matter: minimum 48 %.

3.3. Raw materials (for processed products only)

Whole cows' milk, calf rennet, salt.

3.4. Feed (for products of animal origin only)

At least 50 % on an annual basis of the dry matter of the feed for the cows comes from the production area.

3.5. Specific steps in production that must take place in the identified geographical area

Production of the milk and its processing and the maturation of the cheese to be sold as 'Gorgonzola' and the application of the identifying marks provided for in point 3.7 below take place in the defined geographical area.

3.6. Specific rules concerning slicing, grating, packaging, etc.

'Gorgonzola' may be marketed whole, in half-cheeses cut horizontally or in portions wrapped in gofferred aluminium foil.

'Gorgonzola' may also be marketed in pre-packaged portions without the gofferred aluminium foil following certification by the authorised inspection body or other body delegated by it for that purpose. In order to maintain the quality, guarantee the origin and ensure the control of pre-packaged portions of 'Gorgonzola' placed on the market, the cutting and packing of the portions must be certified by the authorised inspection body or other body delegated by it for that purpose. This is because the mechanical cutting of wheels and half-cheeses cut horizontally wrapped in gofferred aluminium foil is not possible for food safety reasons and so, given that there is no marking on the side of the 'Gorgonzola' wheel, the origin of the portions without the aluminium foil must be verified by the inspection body.

Portions of 'Gorgonzola' may be cut and packaged at the retail outlet at the request of the consumer, provided that the gofferred aluminium foil is visible. Portions of 'Gorgonzola' may also be cut and packaged at the retail outlet for direct sale, provided that, in all cases, part of the gofferred aluminium foil remains on the product portion as a guarantee of its authenticity.

3.7. Specific rules concerning labelling

The 'Gorgonzola' wheel is distinguished by two identifying marks affixed in the defined geographical area, namely:

— at the point of production, an identifying mark affixed on each flat face bearing the identification number of the dairy (see Figure 1),

Figure 1



- once the product has acquired the requisite characteristics to be released for consumption, the goffered aluminium foil bearing the goffered identifying mark (see Figure 2) is wrapped around the wheels, half-cheeses cut horizontally and, subject to the provisions for pre-packaged portions in point 3.6, portions; the goffered aluminium foil also bears the designation 'DOP Gorgonzola' with the EU symbol; in the case of large and small wheels, half-cheeses cut horizontally and portions of strong 'Gorgonzola', the goffered aluminium foil bears the word 'piccante' next to or below the designation 'DOP Gorgonzola' using a smaller type face than that used for the aforementioned designation.

Figure 2



Pre-packaged portions cut from the wheel

The primary packaging of pre-packaged 'Gorgonzola' portions bears the following indications in the principal field of vision:

- the designation 'DOP Gorgonzola' accompanied by the EU PDO symbol,
- the word 'piccante' for products cut from large and small wheels of strong Gorgonzola next to or below the designation 'DOP Gorgonzola' in smaller characters.

4. Concise definition of the geographical area

The defined geographical area comprises the entire territory of the following provinces:

- Bergamo, Biella, Brescia, Como, Cremona, Cuneo, Lecco, Lodi, Milan, Monza, Novara, Pavia, Varese, Verbano-Cusio-Ossola, Vercelli.

It also includes the following municipalities of the Province of Alessandria:

- Casale Monferrato, Villanova Monferrato, Balzola, Morano Po, Coniolo, Pontestura, Serralunga di Crea, Cereseto, Treville, Ozzano Monferrato, San Giorgio Monferrato, Sala Monferrato, Cellamonte, Rosignano Monferrato, Terruggia, Ottiglio, Frassinello Monferrato, Olivola, Vignale, Camagna, Conzano, Occimiano, Mirabello Monferrato, Giarole, Valenza, Pomaro Monferrato, Bozzole, Valmacca, Ticineto, Borgo San Martino and Frassineto Po.

5. Link with the geographical area

5.1. Specificity of the geographical area

The natural factors are linked to climatic conditions in the defined geographical area, which foster an abundance of quality fodder for dairy cows and the development of the microbiological agents responsible for the organoleptic characteristics and colouring of the cheese. As regards human factors, in addition to the historic importance of the cheese in the local economy, it should be noted that the complex operations to which 'Gorgonzola' cheese is subjected are based on traditional, craft, cheese-making techniques: the inoculation of the milk with milk enzymes and a suspension of *Penicillium* spores and selected yeasts and the addition of calf rennet at the ideal temperature, dry salting and the characteristic perforation of the paste during maturation have been handed down over the centuries in the defined geographical area.

5.2. Specificity of the product

'Gorgonzola' is a homogeneous, white and pale yellow, raw paste cheese with characteristic blue-green and/or grey-blue veins due to the development of mould (marbling).

The taste varies from mild to a pronounced tangy taste depending on various factors, in particular, the length of the maturation period.

5.3. Causal link between the geographical area and the quality or characteristics of the product (for PDO) or a specific quality, the reputation or other characteristic of the product (for PGI)

The abundance of quality fodder for dairy cows and traditional cheese-making techniques, in particular, the inoculation of *Penicillium* spores, dry salting and the perforation of the paste during maturation, ensure the organoleptic characteristics and colouring of 'Gorgonzola'.

Publication reference of the specification

(Article 5(7) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 (*)

The consolidated text of the product specification is available on the internet: <http://www.politicheagricole.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeBLOB.php/L/IT/IDPagina/3335>

or alternatively

by going directly to the homepage of the Ministry of Agricultural, Food and Forestry Policy (www.politicheagricole.it) and clicking on 'Prodotti DOP IGP' (at the top right-hand side of the screen), then on 'Prodotti DOP IGP STG' (on the left-hand side of the screen), and finally by clicking on 'Disciplinari di Produzione all'esame dell'UE'.

(*) See footnote 3.