

OTHER ACTS

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Publication of an application pursuant to Article 6(2) of Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin for agricultural products and foodstuffs

(2012/C 239/03)

This publication confers the right to object to the application pursuant to Article 7 of Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 ⁽¹⁾. Statements of objection must reach the Commission within six months from the date of this publication.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006

‘ORKNEY SCOTTISH ISLAND CHEDDAR’

EC No: UK-PGI-0005-0908-03.11.2011

PGI (X) PDO ()

1. **Name:**

‘Orkney Scottish Island Cheddar’

2. **Member State or Third Country:**

United Kingdom

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:*

Orkney Scottish Island Cheddar is produced with locally sourced milk from within the defined geographical area. The cheese has moderate levels of sharp acid notes whilst remaining fairly rounded with savoury and nutty notes. The aroma is clean and characteristic of cheddar with a firm but malleable texture which is smooth and closed. Orkney Scottish Island Cheddar cheese is typically matured for 6 to 18 months giving a variety of medium, mature and extra mature flavour profiles.

The cheeses are typically sold in three age profiles:

— Medium (6–12 months), which has a smooth texture with slight savoury flavour,

— Mature (12–15 months), which has a firm smooth texture with slightly sharp savoury flavour,

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 93, 31.3.2006, p. 12.

- Extra Mature (15–18 months), which has a firm slightly brittle texture with sharp savoury notes and lactate crystal.

The cheese is produced in a 20 kg block shape which is then cut into varying shapes and sizes after maturation as required. The cheeses are made in either white or coloured types which will have a bright even colour throughout the body of the cheese. The coloured cheese differing from the white by having a vegetable colour pigment added after pasteurisation.

The chemical standards of the cheese are:

- Moisture 33–36 %
- Fat 33–36 %
- Fat in dry matter 50–52 %
- Salt 1,6–2,1 %
- pH 5,1–5,4 at make.

The microbiological limits for the cheese are:

- *Listeria monocytogenes* absent in 25 g
- staphylococcal enterotoxins absent in 25 g
- salmonella absent in 25 g.

3.3. *Raw materials (for processed products only):*

Fresh pasteurised milk produced on farms within the geographical area. The characteristics of the milk being fresh and clean with all its cream as taken from the cow and free from any adulteration.

3.4. *Feed (for products of animal origin only):*

Dairy cattle are fed on a diet of fresh grass and silage-based production. The cattle are on grass for 6 months and housed for the remainder of the year. The diet is supplemented by home grown barley, turnips and brewers grains sourced from a local distillery. There is also non-GM Soya (protein supplement), sugar beet (energy supplement) and mineral supplement sourced from out with the area to complete the rations.

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

All stages of preparation and production of Orkney Scottish Island Cheddar must take place in the area including:

- sourcing of milk
- pasteurisation and standardising of milk
- preparation and stirring of ingredients
- addition of salt to curds
- maturation and grading of cheese.

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

Not applicable

3.7. *Specific rules concerning labelling:*

Not applicable

4. Concise definition of the geographical area:

The Orkney Islands, North of Scotland.

5. Link with the geographical area:

5.1. Specificity of the geographical area:

Orkney cheese is made using local milk from the Orkney Islands, following a traditional recipe and process. The production of Orkney Scottish Island Cheddar is a marrying of the craftsmanship of the cheesemaker and the use of the local Orkney Island milk.

The designated geographical area is typically on low undulating farmland which has deep fertile topsoil which is the result of the farming of the land over the last 5 000 years. The area is renowned for its world heritage site status for Neolithic monuments and for large areas having been classed as Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA) or Sites of Special Scientific Interests (SSSI). With the proximity of the Gulf Stream it has resulted in a temperate climate and also a rich source of iodine and sulphur in the soil which combined with the constant daylight around mid summer due to the northern latitude, produces a rich lush pasture for the predominately Holstein/Friesian and Ayrshire dairy cattle. This combination of conditions has led to a unique source of high quality milk for cheesemaking which is ring fenced by its physical geographical area.

The cheesemaker, controls the process by monitoring the acidic development and when at correct levels carries out pitching from the vat, running whey and working the dry curd on the table. The salting of the curd requires a great amount of skill as the curd needs to be at the correct consistency and acidity.

The salt is applied by hand by a technique that is akin to broadcast sowing of seed that the early crofters would have used in the fields of Orkney for generations before. It is essential this is skilfully done as the correct amount of salt must be applied and spread evenly through the curd. In addition the skill of the cheesemaker monitoring the production of the cheese is essential to ensure it remains at the correct consistency and acidity throughout the process. It is through many years of experience that the cheesemaker produces a cheese that has the correct texture and flavour. This requires skill and experience to ensure consistent production of a high quality cheese.

5.2. Specificity of the product:

Orkney Scottish Island Cheddar differs from other traditional cheddars due to the unique dry stir technique. This method of production was developed in 1984 and is still used today having been a real synergy of ideas of the management who were striving to produce cheddar efficiently with a short process time but also having a point of difference over traditional cheddar cheeses. It created a firm dense bodied cheese and by using milk that has been standardised gives the cheese a consistent body and texture over the whole year with a rounded mellow flavour.

Dry stirring is an adaptation of the traditional cheddar recipe which is carried out after the vat has been pitched onto the finishing table and is achieved by not allowing the curd to bond together after the whey has been run. It is continuously stirred up and to the point salt is added and allowed to mellow. The benchmark is for salting to be carried out at approximately 3 hrs 20 minutes after renneting and have a acidic titration of 0,28 This gives the cheese a closed texture and when the salting is skilfully carried out by hand it is being applied to a smaller curd particle which gives a more consistent distribution than with a traditional cheddar make. The curd is then allowed to cheddar together in the block-forming towers, after which it is bagged and matured in bound wooden slats.

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 cheesemaking industry in Orkney goes back hundreds of years with the crofting culture whereby to supplement a meagre income the crofter's wife would sell surplus handmade cheeses. There would also have been some cheeses that would be stored in an oatmeal girdel for supplementing the diet in the long winter months.

The original creamery was set up in Kirkwall in 1946 as a consequence of the milk supply having increased during the Second World War to feed the 60 000 service personnel based on the islands. A hard cheese in traditional clothed cylinders, blocks and wheels were made until, due to increased milk production, a switch to more modern method of production and a cheddar recipe was made with a new creamery in 1958. This cheddar recipe was then modified with a 'dry stir technique' being carried out in 1984 after a period of trialling this innovative variation to the traditional cheddar recipe.

Orkney Scottish Island Cheddar has achieved success by winning prizes at major competitions at Nantwich International Show (Gold Mild White 2009), Royal Highland Show (Gold and Best Scottish Exhibit 2009), The Bath and West Show (First Mild White 2007), British Cheese Awards (Gold Mild White 2006) and Great Yorkshire Cheese And Dairy Show (First Mild White 2010).

The cheese has also featured on the menu at the prestigious Langham Hotel in London and celebrity chef Nick Nairn quoted in 2009 'The quality of Orkney Cheddar is down to the islands' unique climate and to the dry stir method. It's particularly good for cooking, unlike some cheddar, due to its production method which results in less oil being released when melting. Using Orkney Cheddar to cook helps create a creamier, more flavoursome dish'.

Reference to publication of the specification:

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

<http://archive.defra.gov.uk/foodfarm/food/industry/regional/foodname/products/documents/orkney-scottish-island-cheddar-pgi-120320.pdf>
