



Publication of an approved standard amendment to the product specification of a protected designation of origin or protected geographical indication in the agricultural products and foodstuffs sector, as referred to in Article 6b(2) and (3) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 664/2014

(C/2025/606)

This communication is published in accordance with Article 6b(5) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 664/2014 ⁽¹⁾.

COMMUNICATING THE APPROVAL OF A STANDARD AMENDMENT TO THE PRODUCT SPECIFICATION OF A PROTECTED DESIGNATION OF ORIGIN OR PROTECTED GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION ORIGINATING IN A MEMBER STATE

‘Agneau de Pauillac’

EU No: PGI-FR-0178-AM01 - 4 November 2024

PDO () PGI (X)

1. Product name

‘Agneau de Pauillac’

2. Member State to which the geographical area belongs

France

3. National authority communicating the standard amendment

Ministry of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty

4. Description of the approved amendment(s)

Explanation as to why the amendment or amendments fall under the definition of standard amendment as provided for in Article 53(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012

The application for amendment to the ‘Agneau de Pauillac’ PGI does not involve any of the three situations constituting a Union amendment, specifically:

- a) it does not include a change in the name of the protected designation of origin;
- b) it is unlikely to void the link with the geographical environment;
- c) it does not entail further restrictions on the marketing of the product.

The French authorities therefore consider that the application is for a standard amendment.

1. RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT IN THE MEMBER STATE

The contact details of the National Institute of Origin and Quality (Institut national de la qualité et de l'origine, INAO) have been updated.

The amendment does not affect the single document.

2. APPLICANT GROUP / COMPOSITION

The composition has been reworded to specify: ‘any natural or legal person effectively involved in the production or preparation processes set out in the ‘Agneau de Pauillac’ PGI specification.

The amendment does not affect the single document.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 179, 19.6.2014, p. 17.

3. DESCRIPTION OF PRODUCT

The maximum weight of the lambs has been increased from 15 kg to 17 kg.

Three new breeds have been added in the female line: Black-face Manech, Red-face Manech and Basco-Béarnais.

The descriptors of the cooked meat have been deleted: 'It is remarkably tender, with a low-grain texture and an intense flavour of lamb'.

The amendment affects the single document.

4. DEFINITION OF THE GEOGRAPHICAL AREA

The geographical area has not been changed; instead, a reference has been added to the 2024 Official Geographic Code.

The amendment does not affect the single document.

5. TRACEABILITY

The reference to the maximum weight of the lambs has been amended: 17 kg rather than 15 kg.

The amendment does not affect the single document.

6. DESCRIPTION OF THE METHOD OF PRODUCTION / BREED

Three new breeds have been added in the female line: Black-face Manech, Red-face Manech and Basco-Béarnais.

The amendment does not affect the single document.

7. DESCRIPTION OF THE METHOD OF PRODUCTION / TRANSPORT

The time between leaving the holding and the slaughter has been reduced from 48 hours to 36 hours.

The amendment does not affect the single document.

8. DESCRIPTION OF THE METHOD OF PRODUCTION / SLAUGHTER

The provision in the product specification that provides for a 'a rest period of a few hours before slaughter (3 to 12 hours)' has been amended in order to reduce the period to a minimum of thirty minutes.

Deletion of the part relating to the cutting of the carcass.

Carcasses may be presented with or without the peritoneum.

The amendment does not affect the single document.

9. DESCRIPTION OF THE METHOD OF PRODUCTION / CHILLING OF CARCASSES

The following provisions have been deleted:

'The carcasses are chilled to a temperature of 7 °C within a maximum of 20 hours after slaughter.'

'The internal temperature of the meat must not fall below 7 °C within less than 10 hours after slaughter.'

The amendment does not affect the single document.

10. DESCRIPTION OF THE METHOD OF PRODUCTION / CLASSIFICATION OF CARCASSES

The reference to the maximum weight of the lambs has been amended: 17 kg rather than 15 kg.

The amendment does not affect the single document.

11. LINK

In line with the amendments to the 'Description of product' section, the passage concerning the specificity of the product and the causal link have been revised.

The amendment affects the single document.

12. THE SPECIFIC LABELLING DETAILS

The wording of the passage on labelling has been revised.

The amendment affects the single document.

13. NATIONAL REQUIREMENTS / TABLE WITH THE MAIN POINTS TO BE CHECKED

In line with the amendments to the 'Description of product' section, the maximum weight of the lambs and the list of breeds have been amended.

The amendment does not affect the single document.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

'Agneau de Pauillac'

EU No: PGI-FR-0178-AM01 - 4 November 2024

PDO () PGI (X)

1. **Name(s) (of PDO or PGI)**

'Agneau de Pauillac'

2. **Member State or Third Country**

FranceS

3. **Description of the agricultural product or foodstuff**3.1. *Combined Nomenclature code*

— 02 - MEAT AND EDIBLE MEAT OFFAL

0204 – Meat of sheep or goats, fresh, chilled or frozen

020410 – Carcasses and half-carcasses of lamb, fresh or chilled

— 02 - MEAT AND EDIBLE MEAT OFFAL

0204 – Meat of sheep or goats, fresh, chilled or frozen

020423 – Boneless

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

'Agneau de Pauillac' is an unweaned lamb aged not more than 80 days. It is suckled and reared principally on its mother's milk. It is raised in a sheepfold.

It is a cross between:

— mothers from a hardy breed: Tarasconnaise, Lacaune meat, Blanche du Massif Central, Black-face Manech, Red-face Manech, Basco-Béarnais, pure breeds or first-generation crosses with Charollais, Rouge de l'Ouest, Suffolk, Berrichon du Cher;

— fathers from a meat breed: Berrichon du Cher, Charollais, Rouge de l'Ouest, Suffolk.

'Agneau de Pauillac' weighs between 11 and 17 kg and has EURO conformation and fat cover 2 or 3 according to the EUROP grid.

The meat of 'Agneau de Pauillac' has a light colour. Its fat is white or slightly pinkish and firm.

'Agneau de Pauillac' is marketed:

- as a whole carcass;
- or cut;
- or in consumer sales units.

Offal is excluded from the PGI.

3.3. *Feed (for products of animal origin only) and raw materials (for processed products only)*

In the supplementary feed of mothers and lambs, only the following raw materials may be used:

- dehydrated fodder;
- cereal grains and products derived therefrom;
- oil seeds, oil fruits and products derived therefrom;
- legume seeds and products derived therefrom;
- tubers, roots and products derived therefrom;
- other seeds and fruits, and products derived therefrom;
- sugarcane products and products derived therefrom;
- vegetable fat;
- minerals.

Fodder rape is not allowed in exclusive feeding. In any case, the intake or grazing of rapeseed must not last more than three weeks.

The following are prohibited:

- meat meal, bone meal, meat and bone meal and any other animal protein, including milk;
- animal fat;
- antibiotics and growth promoters (belonging to the category of zootechnical additives);
- urea

Feeding of the lambs:

The lambs are fed through suckling by the mother.

The use of a milk replacer in addition to the maternal milk is not allowed, including in the event of adoption.

Supplementary feeding may be provided for the lambs. It must not exceed 45 % of the total feed. It consists of a balanced concentrate prepared on the farm or purchased commercially, with the nitrogen content limited to 18 % in total, cereal supplements to 20 % and fat to 5 %.

It is composed primarily of cereals in the following proportion: a minimum of 50 % of cereal grains, of which not more than 15 % are products derived from cereals.

The fodder may come from:

- natural grassland and rangeland;
- cultivated grassland based on grasses and forage legumes;
- catch crops: sorghum, rape seed, beetroot;
- feed grain (rye, oats).

The use of silage and wrapping is prohibited.

Feeding of the ewes:

The mothers are fed on natural fodder obtained by grazing or in the sheepfold, and on concentrates.

There is an obligatory minimum grazing period of 7 months.

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

'Agneau de Pauillac' is born and bred with its mother within the geographical area.

3.5. *Specific rules concerning slicing, grating, packaging, etc. of the product the registered name refers to*

All 'Agneau de Pauillac' carcasses are presented in a particular way before weighing:

- the carcasses are hung on special hooks, with their hind legs spread or crossed;
- the carcass is dressed with or without the peritoneum;
- elastic is used to hold the two shoulders together and give a more compact appearance to the carcass;
- the pluck is removed from the carcass during evisceration.

When 'Agneau de Pauillac' is sold as a whole carcass, it may be packaged and shipped in a cloth bag called a 'stockinette'.

When marketed in consumer sales units, it is packed under vacuum or protected atmosphere.

3.6. *Specific rules concerning labelling of the product the registered name refers to*

In addition to the mandatory information required by the rules on the labelling and presentation of foodstuffs, labels must include:

References to:

- The registered name: 'Agneau de Pauillac';
- the name and address of the inspection body.

4. Concise definition of the geographical area

The geographical area corresponds to the department of Gironde.

5. Link with the geographical area

The causal link of 'Agneau de Pauillac' is based on its established quality resulting from a specific rearing method and on its reputation.

The geographical area is located in the western central extremity of the Aquitaine Basin bounded in the south by the Pyrenees, in the east by the Massif Central and in the west by the Atlantic Ocean.

The department of Gironde borders on the Atlantic Ocean.

It consists of low wetland and woodland in the south and west and of healthier, gravelly land along the rivers of the Garonne and Dordogne, which come together in the Gironde estuary.

Gironde benefits from favourable, relatively homogeneous climatic conditions owing to its proximity to large bodies of water, which play an important role in regulating temperatures (the Gulf Stream). It is characterised by a temperate oceanic climate. Winters are mild and wet, while summers are hot, dry and sunny. Rainfall is moderately frequent and more abundant during winter. Average annual precipitation is about 900 mm.

In the winter, the moorland known as 'haute lande' (Lande de Médoc, Lande de Bordeaux, the 'grande lande', Lande de Ciron, etc.) – once a vast expanse of land with poor, barren soils where sheep farming predominated – became impassable; the flocks then returned to the sheepfold, fleeing the soils saturated with autumn and winter rainfall. That moorland was accessible only from April to October. Having had to abandon the rangeland (which had become marshy), the shepherds were forced to move to the 'lande rase', or dry heath. Charles Bouchet: 'Lugos, commune des landes de Gascogne, deux siècles d'évolution économique et sociale (1951)' - publication sponsored by the Landes de Gascogne Welfare Fund.

Shepherds on the edge of the heaths and farmland differed from their counterparts on isolated heathland (in the west) in that they had a particular preference for well-drained rangeland along river shores (Gironde estuary). Médoc shepherds – advantaged by the narrowness of the 'Médoc peninsula' – came to overwinter on the gravelly soils of the Médoc, which these days are entirely given over to wine-growing.

'For a very long time, shepherds from the moors of Hourtin (although not those from the lakes area) and shepherds from the Saint Laurent de Médoc heathland left each year to overwinter in the vineyards, staying there from mid-October to 1 March. By going to Château Montrose every winter, I merely perpetuated the traditions of the moorland elders.' The 86-year-old Mr Gombeau from the 'Marches ou crèves' ('The Long Walk') estate in the municipality of Hourtin – interviewed in September 1994.

Mr Meyre – the chairman of the Listrac cooperative winery, who was interviewed in 1994 – recalls the flocks of sheep that came to overwinter in the vineyards: 'Manure was needed for the vines and that was the main reason for bringing the sheep in – but the edges and the rows of vines also had to be kept neat. So once the grape harvest was over, the moor shepherds were invited to the vineyards.'

Sheep flocks predate vineyards in the Médoc: if we look at a Belleyme map covering the period from 1763 to 1774, we can see a large number of 'pens' (sheepfolds) in the parishes of Pauillac and Saint Julien - Beychevelle. Those 'pens' had been built on heathland that is nowadays covered in vineyards, and sheepfolds no longer needed by vineyard owners have all been destroyed (for example: Château La Couronne, Château Larose-Trintaudon (St Laurent)).

As this land was healthier, the shepherds were spared the usual excess mortality affecting flocks during the winter period. The grass on the gravelly soils was not of exceptional nutritional quality, but it had the advantage of being abundant. Hence the flocks did not suffer from chronic undernourishment in the winter, unlike the flocks of the 'pond shepherds', who were forced to keep their animals on extensive grassy areas called 'airial' (rented farms, villages).

By moving to heathland along the river every winter, shepherds on the edge of the heathland and farmland gained an additional advantage over their counterparts on the moorland.

The arrival of vines in the Médoc did not spell the end of the seasonal movement of sheep flocks. On the contrary, wine growers concerned about the health of their vines continued to use sheep flocks to manure the land. As the growing season starts earlier in the Médoc (the peninsula being subject to the combined influences of the ocean and the river), shepherds had to move to the 'airial' as early as 1 March.

For the same reasons, shepherds in the high Pyrenean valleys were had to change location seasonally in order to ensure that their flocks survived. Each year, after spending the summer in the high-altitude grasslands, shepherds from three valleys (Aspe, Ossau and Baretous) headed to low-lying rangeland (Henri Cavailles: *la transhumance pyrénéenne et la circulation des troupeaux dans les plaines de Gascogne* - page 53).

In the winter, people were unable to feed an ever-increasing number of animals and keep them in the sheepfold. This lack of resources obliged the shepherds to leave their valleys for the plains and their rich rangeland. The wintertime migratory herding dictated by the climate was the only way to maintain sheep stocks and it enabled mountain communities to survive and to continue trading with the lowland regions at a time when moving goods and people was a very difficult task and low grain yields in the upper valleys were insufficient to safeguard the population.

As early as the 12th century, the cultivated plains of Gascony provided a home for Béarn ewes.

In the 18th century, Béarn shepherds settled in the northern parts of Aquitaine.

Shepherds were welcome on cropland once the harvests had been gathered. In 1771, the Bordeaux Parliament strictly regulated the grazing of transhumant flocks.

Médoc moorland shepherds who had moved to Médoc vineyards were required to leave them on 1 March, as the growing period of the vines started earlier than in inland vineyards.

Thus shepherds were invited to let their flocks graze on and around cropland. They had to be very careful when leading their animals across land that could be easily damaged.

The shepherds from the moors and Pyrenees who overwintered elsewhere – mostly in vineyards – reared their lambs exclusively on their mother's milk and kept them in the sheepfold until they were slaughtered. Shepherds such as Mr Gombeau and Mr Guillebeau regarded this practice as a technical constraint imposed by the owners of the land in question. 'It's not easy to lead ewes through rows of vines... So imagine what it's like with 3-month-old lambs!... All they want to do is play and look for their mother's teat!'

'Agneau de Pauillac' is an unweaned lamb aged not more 40 to 80 days. It is suckled and reared principally on its mother's milk. It is raised in a sheepfold.

The meat of 'Agneau de Pauillac' is characterised by a light colour.

'Agneau de Pauillac' is a product with an age-old reputation.

As the areas planted with vines were extended and demand for manure increased, the flocks from the Pyrenees and the Médoc moorland 'colonised' the wine-growing estates, where grazing rights were granted in return for only a gift of one or two lambs and the entire yield of manure. All the shepherds were subject to the same constraints relating to grazing in easily damaged growing areas, hence they adopted the same rearing method resulting in the same product: A lamb reared in a sheepfold (or pen) and suckled by its mother for a period of between 1 and 2,5 months, which is much longer than the usual 15 days.

'Agneau de Pauillac' is derived from this know-how related to transhumance in an area with mild and wet winters, where the grassland has the advantage of being abundant.

Transhumant shepherds have nowadays settled in one place, but the production method based on the grazing of ewes and the suckling of lambs by their mothers is still practised.

'Agneau de Pauillac' is an unweaned lamb that is suckled and reared principally on its mother's milk. It is raised in a sheepfold and suckled by its mother until the age of 80 days at the most.

The fact that it stays with its mother and is reared exclusively in a sheepfold limits the stress of the lamb, which in turn contributes to the tenderness of the meat.

'Agneau de Pauillac' owes its light colour to its milk diet and young age, with the absence of fodder in the diet ensuring that the meat retains its light colour.

The provision of a cereal-based supplement makes it possible to obtain well-conformed lambs.

'Agneau de Pauillac' is a product with an age-old reputation:

The reputation of a product is best illustrated by the activity it has generated.

Evidence of how important the lamb trade was can be found in documents dating back to the beginning of the 19th century. This suckling-lamb meat for which there was a ready market in Bordeaux was also sold in Paris and served up at the highest of tables: it appeared on the menu for the dinner hosted on 2 May 1903 by the French President Emile Loubet for His Majesty the King of England. Its outstanding quality was acknowledged in the 1938 edition of the *Larousse gastronomique*, and also in a report by the Gironde region's Director of Agricultural Services. 'The most promising livestock-rearing practice in the Gironde is the production of suckling lambs, which are highly prized in Bordeaux. [...]' Report on the revival of sheep farming: *la Gironde agricole et viticole Août, Novembre et Décembre 1938* - article by the Director of Agricultural Services. The reputation of 'Agneau de Pauillac' is as strong as ever: it appeared on the menu of the lunch hosted in 1994 by the French President François Mitterrand for their Majesties the Emperor and Empress of Japan.

This lamb is nowadays recognised and appreciated as a type of lamb with a very different taste and flavour from traditional heavy lamb and suckling lamb from dairy farms.

Reference to publication of the specification

https://info.agriculture.gouv.fr/boagri/document_administratif-e496be76-7b39-4ccc-b564-f6e3028f930a
