



C/2026/1835

20.3.2026

**Publication of the communication of an approved standard amendment to a product specification of a geographical indication in accordance with Article 5(4) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2025/27 <sup>(1)</sup>**

(C/2026/1835)

COMMUNICATION OF APPROVAL OF A STANDARD AMENDMENT

**(Article 24 of Regulation (EU) 2024/1143)**

**‘Saint-Nectaire’**

**EU Reference number: PDO-FR-0132-AM01 – 23.12.2025**

**1. Product name**

‘Saint-Nectaire’

**2. Geographical indication type**

- PDO
- PGI
- GI

**3. Sector**

- Agricultural produce
- Wines
- Spirit drinks

**4. Country to which the geographical area belongs**

France

**5. National authority communicating the standard amendment**

*Name*

Ministry for Agriculture, Agri-food and Food Sovereignty

**6. Qualification as standard amendment**

The application for an amendment to the ‘Saint-Nectaire’ PDO does not involve any of the three situations constituting a Union amendment; specifically, it does not:

- (a) involve a change in the name of the protected designation of origin;
- (b) risk voiding the link to the geographical area;
- (c) entail further restrictions on the marketing of the product.

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

<sup>(1)</sup> Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2025/27 of 30 October 2024 supplementing Regulation (EU) 2024/1143 of the European Parliament and of the Council with rules concerning the registration and the protection of geographical indications, traditional specialities guaranteed and optional quality terms and repealing Delegated Regulation (EU) No 664/2014 (OJ L, 2025/27, 15.1.2025, ELI: [http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg\\_del/2025/27/oj](http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_del/2025/27/oj)).

**7. Description of the approved standard amendment(s)***Title*

Responsible department in the Member State

*Description*

The name and contact details of the responsible department of the Member State have been updated.

The amendment affects the single document.

*Title*

Applicant group

*Description*

The contact details of the applicant group have been updated.

The composition of the applicant group has been replaced by the following wording:

‘Composition: any natural or legal person effectively involved in the production, processing or preparation set out in the “Saint-Nectaire” PDO specification.’

The information on the legal status of the applicant group has been deleted.

The amendment affects the single document.

*Title*

Type of product

*Description*

The section relating to the type of product, formerly defined by its class, has been deleted.

The amendment affects the single document.

*Title*

Demarcation of the geographical area

*Description*

It has been specified that the list of municipalities included in the territory of the area defined in point 4.7 of the single document is based on the 2025 Official Geographic Code. The list has been updated accordingly, but there has been no change to the boundaries of the area defined in point 4.7 of the single document.

The sentence ‘Maps showing the geographical area can be viewed on the website of the National Institute of Origin and Quality’ has been inserted.

The amendment affects the single document.

*Title*

Evidence that the product originates in the geographical area

*Description*

An obligation has been added whereby producers have to submit a declaration to the group when animals born and/or reared outside of the area defined in point 4.7 of the single document are added to the dairy herd, if they are eligible. This declaration makes it possible for the group to monitor these animals.

The amendment affects the single document.

*Title*

Description of the method of production

*Description*

The possibility has been added for producers to add animals born and/or reared outside the area defined in point 4.7 of the single document, irrespective of breed, within three years of the date on which they first set up as farmers or take over a farm.

Generational renewal and farm takeovers pose a major challenge for the future of the 'Saint-Nectaire' sector. This new provision is intended to make it easier for new producers setting up a dairy herd or taking over a farm where the existing herd is not large enough to ensure its viability. These producers need to have a large headcount available at any given time in order to guarantee their activity. The number of animals that are born and reared in the area defined in point 4.7 of the single document that are available for purchase is not enough to meet those needs.

The provisions on the origin of the dairy herd have been deleted from the single document as they do not directly concern the raw materials used.

The amendment affects the single document.

*Title*

References to the inspection bodies

*Description*

The contact details of the inspection services have been updated.

The amendment affects the single document.

*Title*

Specific labelling details

*Description*

The sentence 'The labelling must include the European Union's AOP [PDO] symbol' has been deleted. In order to inform consumers, it has been replaced by a statement indicating that the labelling on the cheeses must include in the same visual field the name of the PDO and the European Union's PDO symbol, as well as the mandatory particulars required under the rules on the labelling and presentation of foodstuffs.

The amendment affects the single document.

*Title*

National requirements

*Description*

The table of main points to be checked has been updated to take account of the amendment to the 'Description of the method of production' section and to adapt the assessment methods as necessary in line with the control plan.

The amendment affects the single document.

## SINGLE DOCUMENT

**Designations of origin and geographical indications of agricultural products****'Saint-Nectaire'**

**EU Reference number: PDO-FR-0132-AM01 – 23.12.2025**

**1. Name(s)**

'Saint-Nectaire'

**2. Geographical indication type**

PDO

PGI

GI

### 3. Country to which the defined geographical area belongs

France

### 4. Description of the agricultural product

#### 4.1. Classification of the agricultural product in accordance with the Combined Nomenclature heading and code, as referred to in Article 6(1) of Regulation (EU) 2024/1143

0406 – Cheese and curd

#### 4.2. Description of the agricultural product to which the registered name applies

'Saint Nectaire' is a cheese made exclusively from renneted cow's milk, with a semi-hard, pressed, uncooked, fermented and salted paste. It has a minimum fat content of 45 grams per 100 grams of completely desiccated cheese. The dry matter content must not be less than 50 g per 100 g of ripened cheese.

It is presented in the form of a slightly tapered cylinder 20 to 24 cm in diameter and 3,5 to 5,5 cm in height, with a weight ranging between 1 450 kg and 1 950 kg. The minimum ripening period of the cheese is 28 days after it has been placed in the cellar.

'Saint Nectaire' can also be made in a smaller size that is 12 to 14 cm in diameter and 3,5 to 4,5 cm high, with a weight ranging from 0,500 kg to 0,700 kg. In this case, the minimum ripening period is reduced to 21 days after the cheese has been placed in the cellar.

The smooth, supple paste, which yields to the touch, is ivory in colour and may have a few small holes evenly distributed throughout the cheese.

The cheese has a rind that is dotted with mould and similar on both sides. Depending on the degree of ripening, the mould is white, brown or grey and may reveal a cream-coloured to orange background, possibly with a yellow and/or red bloom. Cheeses that are uniformly white, orange or black are excluded.

The taste is clean, mild, slightly salty, without excessive acidity, with a variety of milky tastes (fresh milk, cream, butter) and flavours related to the ripening process (cellar, straw mats, earth or undergrowth), often enhanced by an overall subtle nuttiness.

Cheeses covered by the designation of origin 'Saint-Nectaire' may also be presented in packaged portions, with each piece having part of the designation's distinctive rind.

#### 4.3. Derogations on sourcing of feed (for products of animal origin designated by a protected designation of origin only) and restrictions on sourcing of raw materials (for processed products designated by a protected geographical indication only)

A minimum of 70 % of the dairy cows' total annual ration (basic ration and supplementary feed) of dry matter must be composed of grass from the area defined in point 4.7.

All the feed does not necessarily come from the area defined in point 4.7, because the altitude and climate do not make it technically possible to produce sufficient amounts of feed.

Because most of the dairy cows' basic ration comes from the geographical area, this use of feed from outside the area has a limited influence on the product characteristics that are primarily due to the geographical environment.

The dairy cows' basic ration is composed exclusively of grass.

The dairy cows must graze for a minimum period of 160 days a year. During the days of grazing all green feeding is prohibited.

Outside the grazing period, the grass distributed as dry feed with a dry matter content of over 80 % must make up at least 60 % of the dairy cows' daily basic ration, expressed as dry matter.

The raw materials and additives used in the supplementary feed of the dairy herd have been specified in a positive list. Their use is limited to 1 800 kg per dairy cow and year calculated as raw material, with the exception of whey, maize cob and grain maize, which are calculated as dry matter.

The heifers' annual basic ration is composed of grass, at least 40 % of which must come from the area defined in point 4.7, and possibly of straw.

Only plants, by-products and supplementary feed derived from non-transgenic products are authorised in the animal feed. The planting of transgenic crops is prohibited in all areas of holdings producing milk intended for processing into cheese with the designation of origin 'Saint-Nectaire'. This prohibition applies to all types of plant likely to be given as feed to animals on the farm and to all crops liable to contaminate such plants.

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

Milk production, cheesemaking and ripening must take place in the defined geographical area.

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

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

In addition to the compulsory information required by the rules on the labelling and presentation of foodstuffs, the labelling of cheeses bearing the designation of origin 'Saint-Nectaire' must include the following in the same field of vision:

- the name of the designation of origin in characters at least two-thirds the size of the largest characters on the label;
- the European Union's PDO logo.

Irrespective of the regulatory terms applicable to all cheeses, the use of any adjective or other words accompanying the designation of origin is prohibited in labelling, advertising, invoices and commercial documents, with the exception of:

- specific brand names or trade marks;
- the words 'The fodder on our farm(s) is composed exclusively of grazing and hay', 'produced from milk obtained entirely from the Salers breed', 'produced from milk obtained entirely from the Ferrandaise breed', 'ripened in a natural cellar', a specific ripening period of more than the minimum of 28 days, 'ripened on straw', 'ripened on the farm', 'ripened on firwood' and 'ripened on spruce wood'. At all events, the text may not be more than two thirds the size of the designation 'Saint-Nectaire';
- the words 'produced in a dairy' or any other indication suggesting dairy origin.

The labelling of the cheeses indicates whether they come from a farm or a dairy.

The dairy or farm origin is indicated in characters at least two thirds of the size of the designation 'Saint Nectaire'.

5. **Concise definition of the geographical area**

The geographical area of the designation of origin 'Saint-Nectaire' covers the territory of the municipalities of the Cantal and Puy-de-Dôme departments.

Milk production and cheesemaking must take place in an area where the natural and human factors referred to in point 5 are taken into account.

6. **Link with the geographical area**

*Summary of the link*

The geographical area of 'Saint Nectaire' is located in the centre of France, in the Massif Central.

Milk production and cheesemaking benefit from the special conditions to be found at an altitude above 700 m.

The prevailing winds from the west bring substantial moisture to the western slopes of the volcanic mountains, less so to their eastern slopes. Owing to the very fertile volcanic soil, there is grass everywhere and the flora is abundant and varied: thyme absolute, yellow gentian, spignel, yarrow, alpine clover, etc. Forage production is based principally on the use of permanent grassland, which is rich in flowering plants and covers at least 90 % of the holdings' area under grass.

'Saint Nectaire' has been produced in the Monts Dore region for several centuries. Its name made its first appearance in gastronomy in the 17th century. With the name of the cheese appearing in numerous publications (in particular in 1786 and 1787), the production of 'Saint Nectaire' developed in the 19th century and then further in the 20th century on small mountain farms which kept a small number of livestock, where making the cheese became the prerogative of the farmers' wives and where the production skills became established. Traditionally, cheesemakers only very rarely ripened their cheeses and they would take them to the many markets in the area without ripening them. The expert ripeners of Puy-de-Dôme and Cantal, who had the requisite facilities and know-how, bought the cheeses and ripened them close to consumption centres. This tradition has survived into the present, though nowadays unripened cheeses are collected directly at the place of production.

'Saint Nectaire' was recognised as a designation of origin by decision of the court of Issoire in 1955.

The resources employed in feeding the dairy cows used to produce milk for making 'Saint Nectaire' are those referred to in 'Natural factors'. The basic ration is composed solely of grass and grazing is obligatory during part of the year. The use of supplementary feed is limited.

The ripening phase is another important step in the production of 'Saint Nectaire'. The ripeners have skills that are essential for the treatment which the cheeses undergo. The cheeses are washed a number of times, then rubbed and turned regularly so that a rind develops.

'Saint Nectaire' is a cow's milk cheese with a pressed, uncooked paste. It is presented in the form of a slightly tapered cylinder with a maximum diameter of 24 cm and a maximum height of 5,5 cm, which is a modest size compared to other cheeses originating in mountain areas. The mould is white, brown or grey and may reveal a cream-coloured to orange background, possibly with a yellow and/or red bloom. The taste is clean, mild, slightly salty, without excessive acidity, with a variety of milky tastes (fresh milk, cream, butter) and flavours related to the ripening process (cellar, straw mats, earth or undergrowth), often enhanced by an overall subtle nuttiness.

The geographical area corresponds to the area where the different steps in the production of 'Saint Nectaire' have always taken place. Certain natural factors, such as the altitude of the grazing land and the flora, and human factors must come together in order to produce the milk and make 'Saint Nectaire'.

This area with its volcanic soil is favourable to the presence of permanent grassland, where the flora is abundant and perfumed. The frequency of the rainfall brought by the winds from the west that prevail in this high-altitude area allow a nearly continuous irrigation of the grassland, which enhances its richness. As a result of this botanical diversity, the flowers have a number of aromatic compounds (for example terpenes), which are consumed by the cows when they feed on fodder from this grassland.

These factors, together with the production know-how and the treatment which 'Saint Nectaire' undergoes during ripening, endow it with a variety of milky tastes (fresh milk, cream, butter) and flavours related to the ripening process (cellar, straw mats, earth or undergrowth), often enhanced by an overall subtle nuttiness.

In addition, the treatment processes administered to 'Saint Nectaire' by the ripeners determine how the surface mould will develop and vary in colour between whitish-grey and orangey-brown.

The size of 'Saint Nectaire' is linked to its history. Indeed, it was suitable both for farms with small herds (a few cows) and for bigger holdings that sought to increase the value of their relatively limited wintertime milk production and whose more abundant milk production in the summer was used to make 'Fourme de Cantal'.

#### **Electronic (URL) reference to publication of the product specification**

[https://info.agriculture.gouv.fr/boagri/document\\_administratif-77cf54d6-a0da-46f7-9e10-76f1e8d7f30c](https://info.agriculture.gouv.fr/boagri/document_administratif-77cf54d6-a0da-46f7-9e10-76f1e8d7f30c)