



C/2026/2420

28.4.2026

**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/2026/2420)

COMMUNICATION OF APPROVAL OF A STANDARD AMENDMENT

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

**‘Pecorino Toscano’**

**EU reference number: PDO-IT-0020-AM01 – 2.2.2026**

**1. Name of product**

‘Pecorino Toscano’

**2. Geographical indication type**

- PDO
- PGI
- GI

**3. Sector**

- Agricultural products
- Wines
- Spirit drinks

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

Italy

**5. Member State authority communicating the standard amendment**

*Name*

MASAF [Ministry of Agriculture, Food Sovereignty and Forestry]

**6. Qualification as standard amendment**

The amendments fall under the definition of a standard amendment since they do not include a change in the name or in the use of the name, do not risk voiding the link with the geographical area and do not entail further restrictions on the marketing of the product.

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

*Title*

Amendment to Article 2 of the product specification and point 4.2 of the single document on the description of the product

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<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)).

*Description*

- The following optional terms have been added: ‘semistagionato’ [semi-mature] for cheese matured for at least 60 days and ‘riserva’ [reserve] for cheese matured for at least 8 months.
- The diameter of the faces has been increased from 22 cm to 30 cm.
- The height of the heel has been increased from 11 cm to 20 cm.
- The weight has been increased from 3,50 kg to 10 kg.
- The entire article has been reworded so that the product description is exactly the same in the product specification and the single document.

## Current version:

‘Pecorino Toscano is a soft [Pecorino Toscano tenero] or semi-hard [Pecorino Toscano stagionato] cheese made of whole sheep’s milk coming from the production area. It has a distinctive texture, is matured for a short or long period depending on whether it is intended as table cheese or for grating, and has a cylindrical shape with flat faces and a slightly convex heel. Its size varies as follows: face diameter between 15 cm and 22 cm, heel height between 7 cm and 11 cm, weight between 0,75 kg and 3,50 kg. Pecorino Toscano may be produced in shapes other than cylindrical, but only if it is to be pre-packaged (in slices, cubes or as grated cheese). The fat content in dry matter is no less than 40 % for semi-hard cheeses and no less than 45 % for soft cheeses. The rind is yellow of varying hues up to deep yellow. The colour of the rind may depend on the treatments the cheese has undergone. The colour of the paste is white tending slightly towards straw-coloured for the soft type and between light straw-coloured and straw-coloured for the semi-hard type. The latter type has a compact consistency and is firm when cut, possibly with unevenly distributed small eyes. The intense, fragrant flavour is typical of the special production processes used. The minimum maturing period is 20 days for soft cheese and no less than 4 months for the semi-hard type.’

## New version:

‘The designation of origin “Pecorino Toscano” is reserved for cheese with the following characteristics: soft or semi-hard cheese made exclusively from whole sheep’s milk from the production area.

The minimum maturing period is 20 days for soft cheese and no less than 4 months for the semi-hard type.

The term “semistagionato” [semi-mature] may be used for soft cheese if it has been matured for at least 60 days. The term “riserva” [reserve] may be used for mature cheese if it has been matured for at least 8 months.

It is used as a table cheese or for grating.

It has the following characteristics:

Cylindrical in shape with flat faces and a slightly convex heel.

Size: diameter of the faces from 15 cm to 30 cm, heel height from 7 cm to 20 cm, with upwards or downwards variations for both characteristics depending on the technical production conditions.

Heel heights that are greater than the diameter of the faces are preferred for semi-hard cheeses.

Weight from 0,75 kg to 10,00 kg.

Outer layer: The rind is yellow of varying hues up to deep yellow. The colour of the rind may depend on the treatments the cheese has undergone.

Colour of the paste: white tending slightly towards straw-coloured for the soft type and between light straw-coloured and straw-coloured for the semi-hard type.

Texture of the paste: soft texture for the soft type; compact consistency and firm when cut, possibly with unevenly distributed small eyes, for the semi-hard type.

Taste: intense, fragrant flavour typical of the special production processes used.

Fat in dry matter: not less than 40 % for mature cheese and not less than 45 % for soft cheese.

In order to limit processing waste, subject to compliance with the above weight and height requirements, Pecorino Toscano may be produced in a shape other than cylindrical, but only when intended for pre-packaging (slicing, dicing, grating).'

The amendment affects the single document.

#### *Title*

Amendment to Article 8 of the product specification on methods of marking the product

#### *Description*

- The requirement to use ink to apply the mark to the product has been removed.
- It has been made optional to apply the mark to the plastic wrapping used to pre-package the product.

Current version:

'This mark is to be applied to the heel of the cheese, using ink in the case of Pecorino Toscano tenero and hot-stamped in the case of Pecorino Toscano stagionato. The mark is to be applied to the wrapping of pre-packaged cheese, provided that this is carried out in the area of origin.'

New version:

'This mark is to be applied to the heel of the cheese. The mark may be applied to the wrapping of pre-packaged cheese, provided that this is carried out in the area of origin.'

The amendment affects the single document.

#### *Title*

Amendment to Article 8 of the product specification on the mark to be applied to whole cheeses and the pre-packaged product

#### *Description*

- The logo to be applied to whole cheeses and the wrapping of pre-packaged cheese has been changed so that it is the same as the logo that appears on labels.
- The amendment affects the single document.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

### **Designations of origin and geographical indications of agricultural products**

**'Pecorino Toscano'**

**EU reference number: PDO-IT-0020-AM01 – 2.2.2026**

**1. Name(s)**

'Pecorino Toscano'

**2. Geographical indication type**

- PDO
- PGI
- GI

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

Italy

#### 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

The designation of origin 'Pecorino Toscano' is reserved for cheese with the following characteristics: soft or semi-hard cheese made exclusively from whole sheep's milk from the production area.

The minimum maturing period is 20 days for soft cheese and no less than 4 months for the semi-hard type.

The term 'semistagionato' [semi-mature] may be used for soft cheese if it has been matured for at least 60 days. The term 'riserva' [reserve] may be used for mature cheese if it has been matured for at least 8 months.

It is used as a table cheese or for grating.

It has the following characteristics:

Cylindrical in shape with flat faces and a slightly convex heel.

Size: diameter of the faces from 15 cm to 30 cm, heel height from 7 cm to 20 cm, with upwards or downwards variations for both characteristics depending on the technical production conditions.

Heel heights that are greater than the diameter of the faces are preferred for semi-hard cheeses.

Weight from 0,75 kg to 10,00 kg.

Outer layer: The rind is yellow of varying hues up to deep yellow. The colour of the rind may depend on the treatments the cheese has undergone.

Colour of the paste: white tending slightly towards straw-coloured for the soft type and between light straw-coloured and straw-coloured for the semi-hard type.

Texture of the paste: soft texture for the soft type; compact consistency and firm when cut, possibly with unevenly distributed small eyes, for the semi-hard type.

Taste: intense, fragrant flavour typical of the special production processes used.

Fat in dry matter: not less than 40 % for mature cheese and not less than 45 % for soft cheese.

In order to limit processing waste, subject to compliance with the above weight and height requirements, Pecorino Toscano may be produced in a shape other than cylindrical, but only when intended for pre-packaging (slicing, dicing, grating).

##### 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)

Sheep must mainly be fed with green or dried fodder from local natural pastures, possibly supplemented with hay and concentrated straight feedingstuffs.

In any case, the percentage of feed sourced from outside the 'Pecorino Toscano' production area must not exceed 30 % of dry matter on an annual basis.

The provenance of feed (fresh or hay) and feedingstuffs has been affected in recent years by sudden changes in climate, which have led to both excessive rainfall during the drying periods, resulting in the hay going bad, and excessive heat, resulting in a reduction in the production of fodder to be used fresh or as hay.

'Pecorino Toscano' is made from whole sheep's milk from the area of origin laid down in the product specification. It may be processed raw or undergo heat treatment until it is pasteurised. Only indigenous starter cultures from the strain collection are allowed.

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

All the phases of production of milk and Pecorino Toscano must take place in the area of origin until the cheese reaches its marketable level of maturation, which is after 20 days for Pecorino Toscano tenero and 4 months for Pecorino Toscano stagionato.

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

'Pecorino Toscano' may be marketed whole, in portions cut from the wheel or grated.

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

All 'Pecorino Toscano' cheeses must bear the PDO logo. The logo consists of the wording 'Pecorino Toscano DOP', a stylised image of a sheep's head and the identification number of the producing dairy/maturer or authorised packager in the area of origin. If the packager is not active in the area of origin, the number must identify the dairy or the maturer.



The cheeses, cheese portions, slices or grated cheese packages must bear a label with the wording 'Pecorino Toscano DOP' or 'Pecorino Toscano DOP stagionato' standing out in respect of other wording on the label in terms of size, font and position. The term 'semistagionato' [semi-mature] may be used for soft cheese if it has been matured for at least 60 days. The term 'riserva' [reserve] may be used for mature cheese if it has been matured for at least 8 months. In accordance with Article 5 of the product specification, the mark, in colour, must be applied one or more times and its diameter must measure at least 15 mm.



4.7. *Concise definition of the geographical area*

The production area of 'Pecorino Toscano' PDO comprises the whole of the Region of Tuscany, the whole of the municipalities of Alleronia and Castiglione del Lago in the Region of Umbria, and the whole of the municipalities of Acquapendente, Onano, San Lorenzo Nuovo, Grotte di Castro, Gradoli, Valentano, Farnese, Ischia di Castro, Montefiascone, Bolsena and Capodimonte in the Region of Lazio.

5. **Link with the geographical area**

*Summary of the link*

5.1. *Specificity of the geographical area*

As regards natural factors, note should be taken of the special characteristics of the areas used for rearing the sheep, which almost exclusively live freely in the wild, using natural pastures rich in wild plants giving distinctive qualities to the milk used for cheese-making.

As regards human factors, beside their historically proven economic importance, the farms involved play an important social role by using 'marginal' land, which would otherwise be progressively abandoned with the subsequent impoverishment of natural resources.

Alongside the production method, which, from the processing temperatures to the maturation method, respects all the qualities of sheep's milk, the rearing method and the plants, whether wild or cultivated, that constitute the animals' main fodder, give the milk and the finished product the special characteristics that have always helped define Pecorino Toscano as a 'mild' cheese.

#### 5.2. Specificity of the product

Yellow rind.

The taste is mild, never excessive or strong.

#### 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)

This cheese of ancient origin, whose existence in Etruscan times is the object of extensive historical evidence, has spread over the centuries in the 'Maremma' area, most of which lies in Tuscany. Traditionally, the product was designated by names referring to its geographical origin or by the more general term 'toscano' (Tuscan). Over time, given its largely common features, a single production standard and a designation related in etymological terms to its historical and geographical characteristics were established.

The special characteristics of 'Pecorino Toscano' derive from both the sheep's milk and the production method. Fed on pastures almost all year around, the animals get from wild and cultivated plants the flavours and fragrances that are characteristics of the climate of the area of origin, which are both mild and distinctive. The mostly strong flavour of sheep's milk is made milder by the quality of the climate and pastures, which have a positive impact on the animals' life and therefore their production. These characteristics are kept during the processing method by using the same temperatures as those of milk inside the sheep's udders, the traditional use of calf rennet, minimum salting and maturation temperatures respecting the starter cultures' natural activity. In line with the Tuscan tradition, the cheese keeps that distinctive albeit not exaggerated flavour, which is mild and never strong, that allows 'Pecorino Toscano' to please all palates.

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

<https://www.masaf.gov.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeBLOB.php/L/IT/IDPagina/3340>