

**COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING REGULATION (EU) 2023/1547****of 26 July 2023****entering a name in the register of protected designations of origin and protected geographical indications ('Gower Salt Marsh Lamb' (PDO))**

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Having regard to Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 November 2012 on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs <sup>(1)</sup>, and in particular Article 52(3)(b) thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) Pursuant to Article 50(2)(a) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012, the application from the United Kingdom to register the name 'Gower Salt Marsh Lamb' as protected designation of origin was published in the *Official Journal of the European Union* <sup>(2)</sup>.
- (2) On 8 March 2022, the Commission received from France a notice of opposition. The Commission forwarded the notice of opposition to the United Kingdom on 10 March 2022. On 6 May 2022, France submitted to the Commission a reasoned statement of opposition.
- (3) After examining the reasoned statement of opposition and finding it admissible, in accordance with Article 51(3) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012, the Commission invited the United Kingdom and France, by letter of 30 June 2022, to engage in appropriate consultations in view of reaching an agreement.
- (4) On 28 September 2022, on request of the United Kingdom, the Commission extended the deadline for consultations by one month. The consultations between the United Kingdom and France ended without an agreement being reached.
- (5) The Commission should therefore take a decision on the registration in accordance with the procedure provided for in Article 52(3)(b) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 taking into account the results of these consultations.
- (6) The main arguments of France as set out in its reasoned statement of opposition and in the consultations carried out with the United Kingdom can be summarised as follows.
- (7) France claimed that it should be specified as required by Article 7(1)(e) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 whether the freezing of the meat is authorised. The opponent stated that if the freezing is allowed, this could destabilise the market for the two French PDO 'Prés-salés de la baie de Somme' and 'Prés-salés du Mont-Saint-Michel' which are available on the market only from July to November and lead to unfair competition. The specifications of these products prohibit freezing and thawing of the meat.
- (8) Moreover, the opponent claimed that provisions defining the salt marshes that are provided in the product specification should be added to the single document considering that the link between the product claimed as a PDO and the demarcated geographical area requires to be defined in the single document in accordance with Article 8(1)(c)(ii) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012.
- (9) The United Kingdom specified that preferably the meat should be sold and eaten fresh, although the meat may be frozen. Once frozen the meat must be sold frozen. The product specification as well as the single document have been amended accordingly.

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 343, 14.12.2012, p. 1.

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ C 492, 8.12.2021, p. 8.

- (10) The United Kingdom has also included the maps and GPS coordinates which demarcate the salt marshes to the single document.
- (11) France considered those amendments insufficient to satisfy its claims and further requested clarifications on the period during which the product is available frozen on the market. As regards the definition of salt marshes, they requested the inclusion of certain parts of the product specification in the single document in particular the detailed definition of 'salt marsh' and the related specific requirements.
- (12) The Commission has assessed the arguments exposed in the reasoned statement of opposition from France in the light of the provisions of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012, taking into account the results of the appropriate consultations carried out between the applicant and the opponent and has reached the following conclusions.
- (13) As regards the alleged non-compliance of the PDO application with the conditions laid down in Article 7(1)(e) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012, freezing of the meat is not per se a method of obtaining the product. Article 7(1)(e) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 does not require the inclusion of a specific rule on the possibility to freeze the meat, nor the period during which the product can be sold frozen. This is left to the choice of the applicant whether to insert rules of that kind. Following the opposition the applicant chose to specify the regime of the frozen product. Rules on freezing the product are relevant to the description of the product.

In view of the foregoing, the condition referred to in Article 7(1)(e) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012, should be considered as fulfilled.

- (14) As regards the claim concerning alleged non-compliance with Article 8(1)(c)(ii) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012, the single document correctly and exhaustively describes 'the link between the product and the geographical environment or geographical origin'.

The characteristics and quality of the product are influenced by two key factors including the lamb's natural diet which consists of grazing the unique saltmarsh vegetation found on the north Gower coastline. The single document further specifies that the salt marshes have a unique range of halophytic plants dominated by mid and upper marsh plant communities with strong representation of the two Annex 1 EC habitats and Species directive: Atlantic Sea Meadows and Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand. A map and GPS coordinate showing the area covered by these salt marshes has also been included to the single document by the applicant in response to the claim made by France.

The single document is a summary of the product specification. The additional elements that the opponent requests to insert are not essential elements for the understanding of the production method.

In the light of the above, the requirements of Article 8(1)(c)(ii) of the said Regulation should be considered as fulfilled.

- (15) In the context of the consultations between the parties, both the single document and the product specification were amended. Since those amendments are not considered substantial, in accordance with Article 51(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012, the Commission did not repeat the scrutiny of the application and concluded that the conditions for registration were fulfilled.
- (16) In the light of the above, the name 'Gower Salt Marsh Lamb' should be entered in the register of protected designations of origin and protected geographical indications. The consolidated version of the single document should be published for information only.
- (17) The measures provided for in this Regulation are in accordance with the opinion of the Agricultural Product Quality Policy Committee,

HAS ADOPTED THIS REGULATION:

*Article 1*

The name 'Gower Salt Marsh Lamb' (PDO) is registered.

The name in the first paragraph identifies a product from Class 1.1 Fresh meat (and offal) set out in Annex XI to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 668/2014 <sup>(3)</sup>.

*Article 2*

The consolidated single document is set out in the Annex to this Regulation.

*Article 3*

This Regulation shall enter into force on the twentieth day following that of its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

This Regulation shall be binding in its entirety and directly applicable in all Member States.

Done at Brussels, 26 July 2023.

*For the Commission*  
*The President*  
Ursula VON DER LEYEN

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<sup>(3)</sup> Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 668/2014 of 13 June 2014 laying down rules for the application of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs (OJ L 179, 19.6.2014, p. 36).

## ANNEX

## SINGLE DOCUMENT

## 'Gower Salt Marsh Lamb'

EU No: PDO-GB-02452 – 1.4.2019

## PDO (X) PGI ( )

## 1. Name(s) [of PDO or PGI]

'Gower Salt Marsh Lamb'

## 2. Member State or third country

United Kingdom

## 3. Description of the agricultural product or foodstuff

## 3.1. Type of product [listed in Annex XI]

Class 1.1 Fresh meat (and offal)

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

'Gower Salt Marsh Lamb' is prime lamb that is born reared and slaughtered on the Gower peninsular in South Wales. It is the unique vegetation and environment of the salt marshes on the north Gower coastline, where the lambs graze, which gives the meat its distinctive characteristics.

'Gower Salt Marsh Lamb' is a natural seasonal product available from June until the end of December. There is no restriction on which breeds (or x breeds) of sheep can be used to produce 'Gower Salt Marsh Lamb'. However, the breeds which are the most suitable, are hardy, lighter more agile breeds which thrive well on the salt marsh vegetation.

'Gower Salt Marsh Lamb' is aged between 4 to 10 months at time of slaughter. All lambs must spend a minimum of 2 months in total, (and at least 50 % of their life) grazing the salt marsh although some lambs will graze the salt marsh for up to 8 months.

The lambs are, extensively reared and are naturally 'fit' animals, grazing over long distances on the saltmarshes. This contributes to the specific characteristics of 'Gower Salt Marsh Lamb', producing a slower maturing lamb, achieving the optimum balance of lean meat to fat with 'consistent distribution and configuration of fat marbling throughout the muscle fibres'. Leg joints are well defined with good muscle conformation and the raw meat is dark red in colour.

'Gower Salt Marsh Lamb' has a carcass weight at slaughter between 16-23kgs deadweight. 'Gower Salt Marsh Lamb' is EUROP carcass classified as 2L to 3L fat class and U to O conformation with the majority of lambs classifying as R conformation and fat class 3L.

When cooked (as described by an independent sensory analysis panel) 'Gower Salt Marsh Lamb' delivers a 'well rounded lamb flavour that is mild, sweet, and delicate with grassy, herby slightly salty fresh notes and leaves a pleasant savoury lamb residual aftertaste in the mouth'. The fat (which is well distributed and, remains visible when cooked) is creamy in colour and renders during cooking to leave a clean non greasy texture on the palate. The lamb has a 'sweet subtle aroma and is tender and succulent'. When assessed by a texture analyser, 'Gower Salt Marsh Lamb' maintained muscle fibre integrity which correlates to 'succulence on first bite'.

'Gower Salt Marsh Lamb' can be sold either in carcase or cuts of meat. Preferably it should be sold and eaten when fresh, although the meat may be frozen. Any meat which is frozen must be sold as frozen.

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

All forage both grazed and conserved must come from the designated area and the intention is to source 100 % of all feed. However, in exceptional circumstances bought in feed up to a maximum of 25 % annual dry matter is allowed. This is audited by grazing and conservation records and recording evidence of feed inputs imported onto the farm by producer diaries.

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

All 'Gower Salt Marsh Lamb' must be born, reared and slaughtered in the designated area.

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

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

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

The Gower Peninsular

The Gower Peninsular in South Wales as demarcated by the electoral constituency boundaries listed below and as shown in Map A;

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The Gower Peninsular's Electoral Constituency Boundaries

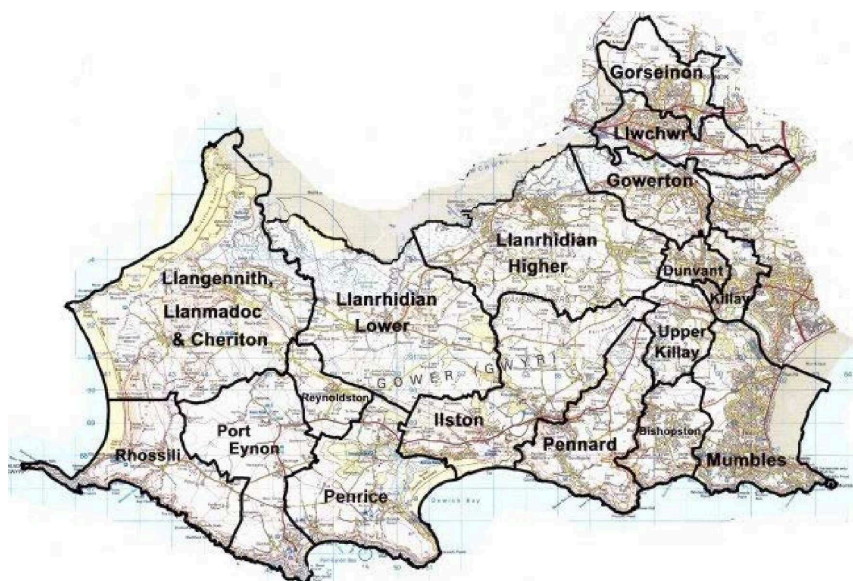
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Gorseinon, Llŵchwr, Gowerton, Dunvant, Killay, Upper Killay, Mumbles, Bishopston, Pennard, Llanrhidian Higher, Llanrhidian Lower, Ilston, Penrice, Reynoldstone, Port Eynon, Rhossili, Llangennith, Llanmadoc, Port Eynon, Rhossili, Llangennith, Llanmadoc, Cheriton

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Map A

**The Gower Peninsular showing electoral constituency boundaries**



The Gower Peninsular includes the coastal salt marshes on the northern coastline of the peninsular as shown in Map B below:

Map B

Showing the north Gower salt marshes



As can be seen from the map above, in totality, these salt marshes cover an area east of Whitford Burrows to the Loughor Bridge on the A484. This area comprises of:-

- 1) Llanrhidian and Landimore salt marsh – east of Whitford Burrows to Salt house Point

Whitford Burrows	Salthouse Point
Co-ordinates	Co-ordinates
OS X (Eastings) 244680	OS X (Eastings) 252330
OS Y (Northings) 195115	OS Y (Northings) 195847
Nearest Post Code SA3 1DL	Nearest Post Code SA4 3SN
Lat (WGS84) N51:38:00 (51.633343)	Lat (WGS84) N51:38:31 (51.641982)
Long (WGS84) W4:14:44 (-4.245646)	Long (WGS84) W4:08:08 (-4.135504)
Lat,Long 51.633343,-4.245646	Lat,Long 51.641982,-4.135504
Nat Grid SS446951 / SS4468095115	Nat Grid SS523958 / SS5233095847

- 2) Penclawdd and Crofty salt marsh – from Salthouse Point to the Loughor Bridge

Salthouse Point	Loughor Bridge
Co-ordinates	Co-ordinates
OS X (Eastings) 252330	OS X (Eastings) 256120
OS Y (Northings) 195847	OS Y (Northings) 198082
Nearest Post Code SA4 3SN	Nearest Post Code SA4 6TP
Lat (WGS84) N51:38:31 (51.641982)	Lat (WGS84) N51:39:47 (51.663047)
Long (WGS84) W4:08:08 (-4.135504)	Long (WGS84) W4:04:54 (-4.081691)
Lat,Long 51.641982,-4.135504	Lat,Long 51.663047,-4.081691
Nat Grid SS523958 / SS5233095847	Nat Grid SS561980 / SS5612098082

- 3) Cwm Ivy saltmarsh - as shown outlined dark blue on Map B and Map C below.

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Co-ordinates

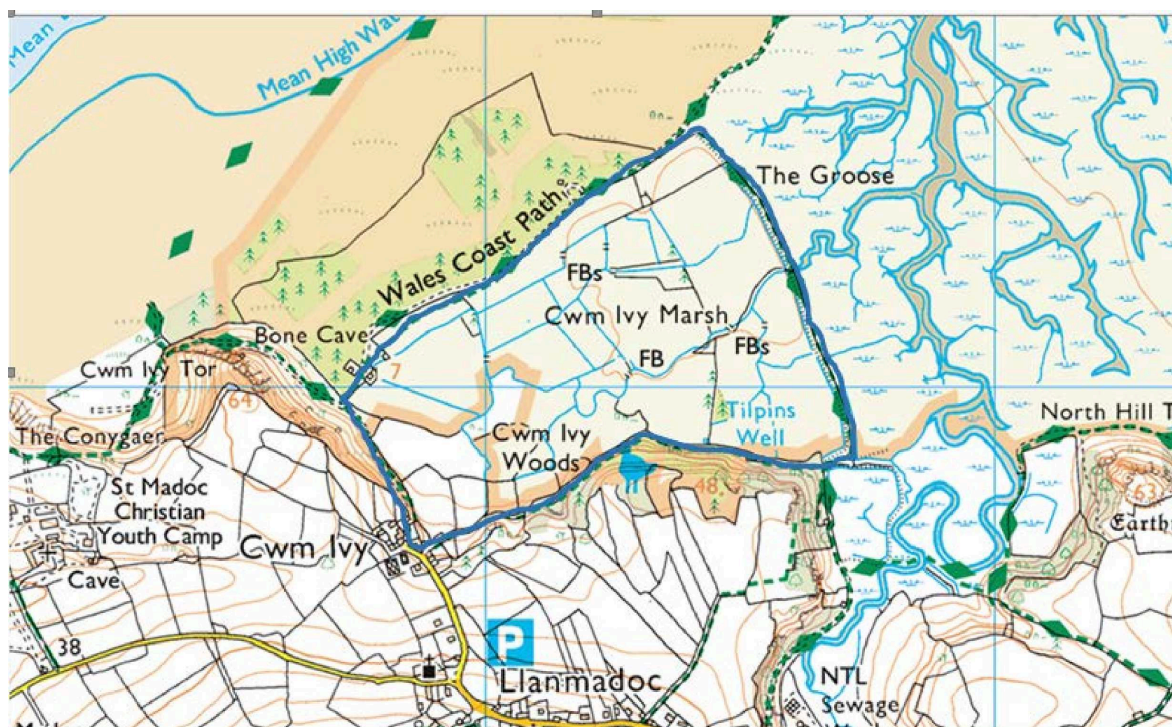
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OS X (Eastings) 244220  
 OS Y (Northings) 194094  
 Nearest Post Code SA3 1DL  
 Lat (WGS84) N51:37:27 (51.624043)  
 Long (WGS84) W4:15:07 (-4.251832)  
 Lat,Long 51.624043,-4.251832  
 Nat Grid SS442940 / SS4422094094

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Map C

**Cwm Ivy salt marsh**



5. **Link with the geographical area**

'Gower Salt Marsh Lamb' has the reputation of being a quality product that is born reared and slaughtered on the Gower peninsular in South Wales. It is a natural seasonal product available from June until the end of December.

The lamb is produced from an extensive traditional system of farming where the characteristics and qualities of the final product are influenced by the following 2 key contributory factors;

- The lamb's natural diet which consists of grazing the unique saltmarsh vegetation found on the north Gower coastline.
- Knowledge and skill base of producers which has developed and remained relatively unchanged for generations.

These factors provide a strong link between the geographical area and the final product and contribute to the unique flavour and characteristics of the product.

'Gower Salt Marsh Lamb' graze the salt-marshes on the northern coastline of the Gower peninsular for a minimum of 2 months but some lambs will be grazing the salt marshes for up to 8 months. These salt marshes cover approximately 4 000 acres and make up 22 % of Welsh salt marsh resource.

The natural salt marsh vegetation is derived from a combination of its climate and soils. Soil salinity and pH influences the unique type and distribution of vegetation. The salt marshes are naturally acidic with a typical pH of 4. A particular feature of North Gower salt marshes is that they have a high sand content and are well drained. This encourages the predominance of salt marsh grasses enabling the marshes to be a valuable resource for grazing on which, 'Gower Salt Marsh Lamb' thrives.

The salt marshes have a unique range of halophytic plants dominated by mid and upper marsh plant communities with strong representation of the two Annex 1 EC Habitats and Species directive;

- Atlantic Sea Meadows
- Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand.

It is the lamb's diet on the variety and range of these halophytes found on the north Gower saltmarshes which contributes to the 'grassy, herby taste with salty tones' flavour of 'Gower Salt Marsh Lamb'.

The feed value of the marshes is low compared to agriculturally improved grassland. Lambs forage over large open expanses of land producing a lean carcass with good muscle development and well defined leg joints. This extensive system of grazing results in 'Gower Salt Marsh Lamb' being slower maturing than more intensively reared lamb and contributes to the characteristics of the lamb carcass and its eating qualities. This slowness of growth provides more time for 'Gower Salt Marsh Lamb' to fully develop its 'well rounded, mild, sweet delicate flavour' with 'grassy, herby slightly salty fresh notes' from the lamb's diet of species rich halophytics.

It requires particular knowledge and specific skills to rear and produce 'Gower Salt Marsh Lamb' which graze a unique and physically challenging terrain. These skills, and traditions have developed over time, and been passed down through the generations. Specific skills are listed below;

- Understanding of the salt marsh and its tidal ranges to protect sheep and lambs against the danger of rising tides. The producer's work revolves around tides and the tide table which dictates the timing of all major jobs.
  - Knowledge of choosing and utilising sheep breeds (and crosses) that can cope with the physical constraints and challenges of grazing the salt marsh with its myriad of deep channels that dissect the marsh. Hardy agile animals are selected which have good feet and are suited to moving on unstable often waterlogged land.
  - Greater reliance on shepherding skills to manage sheep and lambs on the saltmarsh with its large vast expanses of open areas dissected by deep channels restricting sheep movement. As large areas of the terrain can only be accessible on foot, shepherds have to rely on their dog working skills.
  - Grazing management and knowledge of the salt marsh and its unique saltmarsh vegetation to optimise lamb production to match the availability and cycle of its vegetation.

Lambs have been grazing Gower salt marshes since medieval times and the grazing of the salt marshes has changed little over the years. In 1976, 30 farmers had grazing rights on Gower salt marshes and these salt marshes supported thousands of sheep. In 2018, approximately 3 500 lambs per year from 8 producers are reared on these salt marshes.

### Reference to publication of the specification

Gower Salt Marsh Lamb - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

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