

Publication of an amendment 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

(2006/C 321/08)

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

AMENDMENT APPLICATION

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006

Amendment application according to Article 9 and Article 17(2)

'ASIAGO'

EC No: IT/PDO/117/0001

PDO (X) PGI ()

Amendment(s) requested

Heading(s) in the specification:

- Name of product
- Description of product
- Geographical area
- Proof of origin
- Method of production
- Link
- Labelling
- National requirements

Amendment(s):

Description

The specific, chemical (moisture, protein, fat, fat in dry matter) and microbiological (pathogens, *S. aureus*, *E. coli*, coliforms 30°) characteristics of the two types of Asiago cheese, pressed and ripened, are described in detail.

It is clarified that, after the minimum maturation period, the surface of the cheeses may be treated with substances permitted in accordance with national rules, except for cheeses additionally marked as '*Prodotto della montagna*' (mountain product).

Geographical area

The following definition of 'mountain area' is added: an area at or above 600 metres.

Method of production

Details are given of prohibited fodder and feed. On cheeses additionally marked as mountain product it is specified that silage of any type is prohibited.

For both pressed and ripened 'Asiago', information is provided on the maximum storage period, and composition of the milk used for producing the cheese.

For both 'Asiago' types, physical and time parameters are given regarding the production methods used. For ripened 'Asiago', Lysozyme (E 1105) may be added to the processed milk, except for cheeses additionally marked as mountain product.

Detailed technical information (temperature and humidity) regarding the conditions in which the processing takes place is provided also for cheese maturation and storage. The minimum maturation period for ripened 'Asiago' is indicated (60 days or 90 days for cheeses additionally marked as mountain product).

For cheeses to be better identified, numbered casein plates are now used. A letter of the alphabet representing the month of production is stamped on the heel.

Whole PDO 'Asiago' cheeses may be cut into servings and pre-packaged in pieces allowing the heel to be seen. If the cutting operations entail scraping and/or removal of the rind, the cheese must be packaged in the production area so as not to bring into question the authenticity of the product.

Labelling

The following detailed information is added: any other definitions used for fresh or mature 'Asiago' as well as the different maturation periods of ripened 'Asiago' (*mezzano*, *vecchio*, *stravecchio* — semi-mature, mature, extra-mature), the possibility of indicating on the label that no Lysozyme (E 1105) has been used, and the requirements applicable to cheese marked 'mountain product', such indication being reserved for cheeses produced using mountain milk in mountain dairy factories.

UPDATED SUMMARY

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006

'ASIAGO'

EC No: IT/PDO/117/0001

PDO (X) PGI ()

This summary has been drawn up for information only. For full details, interested parties are invited to consult the full version of the product specification obtainable from the national authorities indicated in section 1 or from the European Commission ⁽¹⁾.

1. *Responsible department in the Member State:*

Name: Ministero politiche agricole e forestali
Address: Via XX Settembre, 20
I-00187 Roma
Tel.: (39-06) 481 99 68
Fax: (39-06) 42 01 31 26
E-mail: QTC3@politicheagricole.it

2. *Applicant group:*

Name: Consorzio Tutela formaggio Asiago
Address: Corso Fogazzaro, 18
I-36100 Vicenza
Tel.: (39-0444) 32 17 58
Fax: (39-0444) 32 62 12
E-mail: asiago@asiagocheese.it
Composition: Producers/processors (X) Other ()

⁽¹⁾ European Commission, Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development, Agricultural Product Quality Policy, B-1049 Brussels.

3. Type of product:

Class 1.3 — CHEESE

4. Specification (summary of requirements under Article 4(2))

4.1 Name: 'Asiago'

4.2 Description: The protected designation of origin 'Asiago' may be awarded only to semi-cooked cheese, produced only with cow's milk, in compliance with the specification, and existing in two versions: pressed 'Asiago' and ripened 'Asiago'.

4.2.1. **Technical characteristics of pressed 'Asiago' cheese matured for 20 days**

(a) visual organoleptic characteristics: White or slightly yellowish colour; marked, irregular eyes; pleasant and delicate flavour; thin rind with a springy texture;

(b) chemical characteristics:

		Specific tolerance
humidity	39,5 %	+/- 4,5
protein	24,0 %	+/- 3,5
fat	30,0 %	+/- 4,0
sodium chloride	1,7 %	+/- 1,0
fat/dry extract	44 % or more	None

(c) physical characteristics:

heel straight or slightly convex
 ftop and flat or almost flat
 bottom
 weight 11 to 15 kg
 height 11 to 15 cm
 diameter 30 to 40 cm

(d) microbiological and hygienic characteristics:

pathogens absent
 S. aureus (*)M < 1 000 per g
 E. coli (*)M < 1 000 per g
 coliform 30 °C (*)M < 100 000 per g

(*) These data are for cheese produced with heat-treated milk.

4.2.2. **Technical characteristics of pressed 'Asiago' matured for 60 days**

(a) visual organoleptic characteristics: white or slightly yellowish colour; small to medium eyes; Sweet flavour (semi-mature) and fragrant flavour (mature); smooth and regular rind;

(b) chemical characteristics:

		Specific tolerance
humidity	34,50 %	+/- 4,00
protein	28,00 %	+/- 4,00
fat	31,00 %	+/- 4,50
sodium chloride	2,40 %	+/- 1,00
fat/dry extract	34 % or more	None

(c) physical characteristics:

heel	straight or almost straight
top and bottom	flat or almost flat
weight	8 to 12 kg
height	9 to 12 cm
diameter	30 to 36 cm

(d) microbiological and hygienic characteristics:

pathogens	none
<i>S. aureus</i>	M < 10 000 per g
<i>E. coli</i>	M < 100 000 per g

The surface of 'Asiago' cheeses may be treated, after the minimum maturation period, with substances permitted by current legislation. The surface of the cheeses (rind) is not edible.

The surface treatment of the cheeses must not reduce the legibility of the casein plate identifying the cheese and the designation logo. The surface of 'Asiago' cheeses additionally marked as mountain product may not be treated with colouring or antimould agents.

Whole PDO 'Asiago' cheeses may be cut and pre-packaged in pieces allowing the heel to be seen.

- 4.3 Geographical area: PDO 'Asiago' is produced with milk obtained from cows kept within the area and in dairies in that same area, corresponding to the administrative territories of the provinces of Vicenza, Trento, Padua and Treviso, as referred to in the product specifications. The abovementioned production areas, lying at or above 600 metres, are identified as mountain areas.
- 4.4 Proof of origin: Each processing phase is monitored. The inspection body is responsible for managing the list of milk producers, collectors, processors, ripeners and packagers of rindless cheese. These are subject to the checks and controls provided for in the product specifications and the relevant control plan as a way of ensuring product traceability. If the processing and/or the product are found not to comply, the product may not be marketed as 'Asiago'.
- 4.5 Method of production: According to the product specifications, cows whose milk is intended for the production of PDO 'Asiago' must not be given with feed or fodder prohibited by the product specifications. If the milk is used to produce PDO 'Asiago' marked as mountain product, silage of any type is also banned.

In the case pressed of 'Asiago', the milk used must comply with current health legislation, be obtained from one or two milkings and must be raw or pasteurised at 72°C for 15 seconds in accordance with current legislation. For the production of ripened 'Asiago', the milk used must comply with current health legislation, be obtained from two milkings partially skimmed at the surface or two milkings of which only one is partially skimmed at the surface or else only one milking partially skimmed at the surface, and must be raw or thermised at 57/68°C for 15 seconds. For the production of PDO 'Asiago' marked as mountain product, only milk deriving from two to four milkings, processed within 18 hours of collection if deriving from two milkings, and within 24 hours of collection if deriving from four milkings is allowed.

For the production of ripened 'Asiago', Lysozyme (E 1105) may be added to the milk within the limits of the law. The use of Lysozyme is banned for the production of 'Asiago' marked as mountain product.

Pressed 'Asiago' must mature for at least 20 days after the date of production; for ripened 'Asiago', the minimum maturation period is 60 days starting from the last day of the month of production; for 'Asiago' marked as mountain product, it is 90 days starting from the last day of the month of production in the case of ripened cheese and 30 days from the date of production in the case of pressed cheese.

The cheese must mature in the production area.

The mountain product version must mature in dairies located in mountain areas, in rooms where temperature and humidity may be determined by natural environmental conditions. If the cutting operations entail the scraping and/or the removal of the rind, which would make the original marking invisible (cubes, slices, etc.), the packaging must be done in the production area to ensure tracing of the product. Only 'Asiago' made from milk produced in cow houses in mountain areas, processed in cheese-factories located in mountain areas and matured in mountain areas may have 'mountain product' marked on the label.

- 4.6 Link: With regard to natural factors, the soil and climatic and conditions of the area are substantially uniform and have an impact on the fodder intended for feeding dairy cows. As to human aspects, the cheese originated historically on the Asiago Plateau and, following the migration of the local population during the First World War, its production spread to the adjoining foothills.

4.7 Inspection body:

Name: CSQA S.r.l. Certificazioni

Address: Via S. Gaetano, 74
I-36016 Thiene (VI)

Tel.: (39-0445) 36 60 94

Fax: (39-0445) 38 26 72

E-mail: csqa@csqa.it

- 4.8 Labelling: PDO 'Asiago' cheeses are identified by means of numbered casein plates and stamped with special bands owned by the protection body (*Consorzio di Tutela*) which may be used by all those entitled. The stamping bands contain the designation logo which is an integral part of the product specifications, the producer's alphanumerical identification, the 'Asiago' designation repeated several times. The size of the latter is 25 mm for pressed cheese and 20 mm for the ripened version.

In addition, a letter of the alphabet is stamped on the heel of ripened 'Asiago' cheeses indicating the month of production, in accordance to the product specifications. For 'Asiago' cheeses marked as mountain product, the wording '*Prodotto della montagna*' is stamped once in the stamping bands. At the end of the minimum maturation period, 'Asiago' cheeses marked as mountain product are further branded on the heel with tools owned by the supervisory body, which may be used by the entitled cheese-dairies. The branded device contains the logo described in the product specifications.

Pressed 'Asiago' may also be labelled as 'fresco' (fresh cheese).

Ripened 'Asiago' may also be labelled as 'stagionato' (mature).

Ripened 'Asiago' matured for 4 to 6 months may be labelled as 'mezzano' (semi-mature).

Ripened 'Asiago' matured for over 10 months may also be labelled as 'vecchio' (mature).

Ripened 'Asiago' matured for over 15 months may also be labelled as 'stravecchio' (extra-mature).

The label may also indicate whether Lysozyme (E 1105) has been used or not.

Any company information on labels, stamps, silkscreen prints must not reduce the legibility of the marking of the PDO 'Asiago' (stamped by means of special wooden bands) and of the casein plates identifying 'Asiago' cheeses.

- 4.9 National requirements: —
-