Publication of an amendment application pursuant to Article 50(2)(a) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs

(2014/C 103/09)

This publication confers the right to oppose the application pursuant to Article 51 of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council [1].

AMENDMENT APPLICATION

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006

on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin for agricultural products and foodstuffs [2]

AMENDMENT APPLICATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE 9

'CROTTIN DE CHAVIGNOL'/'CHAVIGNOL'

EC No: FR-PDO-0217-01004-15.06.2012

PGI ( ) PDO (X)

1. **Sections of the specification affected by the amendments**

— ☐ Name of product

— ☒ Description of product

— ☐ Geographical area

— ☒ Proof of origin

— ☒ Method of production

— ☐ Link

— ☒ Labelling

— ☒ National requirements

— ☐ Other [to be specified]

2. **Type of amendments**

— ☐ Amendments to the Single Document or Summary Sheet

— ☒ Amendments to the specification of the registered PDO or PGI for which neither the Single Document nor the Summary Sheet has been published

— ☒ Amendments to the specification which require no amendments to the published Single Document [Article 9(3) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006]

— ☐ Temporary amendments to the specification resulting from the adoption of mandatory sanitary or phytosanitary measures by the public authorities [Article 9(4) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006]

3. **Amendments:**

Description of product

The clarifications provided make it possible to preserve the characteristics of the product and avoid derivatives:

— The mixed character of the curds, which are predominantly lactic, has been clarified.

[1] OJ L 343, 14.12.2012, p. 1.
[2] OJ L 93, 31.3.2006, p. 12. Replaced by Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012.

— The shape of 'Crottin de Chavignol'/'Chavignol' has been clarified (rounded edges, central diameter is greater than the top and bottom diameters). This results from the mandatory turning in the mould.

— The dry matter and the fat content are extremely important as regards the product's organoleptic characteristics. A total dry matter content has therefore been set (between 37 g and 45 g per cheese).

— It was necessary to set a maximum weight for the cheeses (90 g) because the weight also influences the maturing process (and therefore the organoleptic characteristics) through the ratio of surface area to volume.

The type of cheese referred to as 'repassé' has been included in order to take into account the practices of some farm-based maturers and producers who have chosen to increase the maturing period for certain cheeses not restricted by the specification by applying traditional know-how with regard to maturing in a confined atmosphere. Although this concerns only a small proportion of the 'Crottin de Chavignol'/'Chavignol' placed on the market, the group wished to refer specifically to this possibility in the specification so as to perpetuate this practice, which has a positive influence on the cheeses' taste. The characteristics of the cheese obtained have been described as follows: the colour may become darker, even brown, and the texture becomes soft.

Proof of origin

Owing to developments in national legislation and regulations, the text under the heading 'Evidence that the product originates from the defined geographical area' has been consolidated to bring together, in particular, provisions on declaration requirements and the keeping of registers for tracing the product and monitoring production conditions. Monitoring compliance with the PDO specification is carried out according to a monitoring plan drawn up by an inspection body.

Method of production

Herds, breed, reproduction, feed

It has been clarified that, by 1 January 2017 at the latest, the herds must comprise only goats of the Alpine breed. The common Sancerrois goat, which historically was very widespread, has now disappeared. The Alpine breed is the most similar to the common Sancerrois in terms of morphology, low productivity and the ability to adapt to an undulating environment comprising areas of small shrubs. Other goat breeds, which are larger and more productive, are adapted to plains and are not suitable for the hillier terrain of the PDO area. The use of the Alpine breed is in keeping with a custom which already existed in the geographical area when the designation of origin was recognised in 1976, but which at that time had not been codified.

In order to ensure the preservation of an ecosystem which is favourable to the presence of a natural microbial flora in the milk and in the interests of better animal welfare, straw-covered areas and minimum exercise areas per goat have been specified. Thus, from 1 January 2017 onwards, the goats living permanently in a goat shed will each have a straw-covered area of at least 2 m^2, the goats going to pasture will each have a straw-covered area of at least 1,5 m^2, and the goats with an exercise area will each have a straw-covered area of at least 1,5 m^2 and an exercise area of at least 1,5 m^2.

The rules on feed for the herds have been clarified:

— A central position has been given to roughage in the herds' feed in order to strengthen the link with the geographical area through this feed which comes from the soil. Fodder makes up at least 50 % of the dry matter in the daily ration and comprises at least 70 % grass, hay or wrapped fodder. Ensilaged fodder is banned from the goats' feed. In order to secure the farms' fodder supply, particularly in the event of a wet spring, wrapped fodder is authorised up to a maximum of 50 % of the dry matter in the fodder ingested daily. By 1 January 2017 at the latest, all the fodder must be produced in the 'Crottin de Chavignol'/'Chavignol' geographical area.

— The feed supplementing the fodder, consisting of concentrated and/or dehydrated feed, must make up at most 50 % of the dry matter in the daily ration and must comprise incorporable raw materials determined in accordance with a positive list. At least half of the supplementary feed must be produced in the geographical area.

— Consequently, by 1 January 2017 at the latest, in total at least 75 % of the dry matter in the overall daily feed ration supplied to the dairy herds must be produced in the geographical area.

— Also, a provision relating to the forage area available at farm level has been inserted: by 1 January 2017 at the latest, the minimum forage area actually used each year for feeding the goat herds must be 1 hectare for every 12 goats and must be located in the geographical area. The area of grassland on each farm must be at least 1 ha for every 24 goats. In order to satisfy this requirement, it is nevertheless permitted to buy fodder originating from the geographical area. In that case, an equivalent area is determined on the basis of 4 tonnes of dry matter = 1 hectare of forage area. This equivalence is limited to half the annual consumption of the herd in question.

Milk used

It has been specified that the milk used must be raw whole goat's milk which has not been homogenised and has not undergone any heat treatment. The milk's natural microbial flora is thus preserved. The milk may be stored only for a limited time, since it must be used within 24 hours of the last milking.

Production

Renneting is well supervised and the mixed, predominantly lactic, character of the curds is preserved. The purpose of pre-maturing is to multiply the milk's acidifying flora. Since this renneting technique requires a degree of precision, it is necessary to stipulate the temperature and the time.

Pre-draining on cloth followed by draining in a truncated cone mould, with at least one turn, is an essential stage in the 'Crottin de Chavignol'/'Chavignol' production process. It has an impact on the cheese's texture and shape.

Deferment by freezing the curds is permitted and is carried out in order to supplement the efforts made to stagger production and respond to winter demand during the Christmas and New Year period. Pre-draining on cloth is compatible with deferment by freezing the curds. Studies have shown that deferment by freezing the curds does not affect the cheeses' organoleptic characteristics when the reincorporation of frozen curds is limited to 50 %. The storage period for the frozen curds has been limited to 15 months in order to avoid any risk of them denaturing during storage. It is not permitted to label the cheese obtained from frozen curds with the word 'farm' or any indication suggesting farm origin. The clarification provided corresponds to current practices.

The salting requirements have been clarified: salting must be carried out with dry salt, in the mass or on the surface. This practice makes it possible to adjust correctly the quantity of salt to be applied depending on the development of the curds' characteristics.

Maturing, packing

Inoculation by means of complex surface floras (yeasts and moulds) is permitted. These are maturing or surface floras which are made up of natural floras present in the raw milk, floras developed in the whey and commercial floras belonging to the family of moulds of the genus Geotrichum or Penicillium and to the family of yeasts.

The specification previously sent contains an error: it refers to calculating the maturing period from when the cheese is removed from the mould, whereas the corresponding national text referred to the production date (corresponding for operators to the moulding date). In order to clarify the provision, it is proposed to specify that the maturing period must be calculated from the moulding date. On no account does this mean reducing that period.

Maturing plays a very important role in the development of the product's organoleptic characteristics. The drying speed and conditions (temperature above 10 °C and relative humidity of more than 70 %) make it possible to adjust the implantation of the surface floras which will be key to the continuation of maturing. A second stage, the parameters for which — except the positive temperature requirement — have been left to the cheesemakers' discretion, makes it possible to carry out maturing that leads to 'repassés' cheeses. In this case, after a conventional maturing phase enabling the cheeses to acquire a bluish covering, they are matured in a confined atmosphere.

Storage at below 10 °C (but at a positive temperature) is permitted for a maximum of 72 hours so that maturers can collect the cheeses which have not been matured.

Labelling

The labelling of each cheese or batch of cheeses must include the mandatory information laid down.

The label must include the European Union's AOP [PDO] symbol; the 'INAO' logo has been abolished.

Clarifications regarding the use of the designation and regarding the terms authorised in labelling, advertising, invoices and commercial documents have been added.

National requirements

A table setting out the main points to be checked has been added.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006

on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin for agricultural products and foodstuffs ([3])

'CROTTIN DE CHAVIGNOL'/'CHAVIGNOL'

EC No: FR-PDO-0217-01004-15.06.2012

PGI ( ) PDO (X)

1. **Name**

'Crottin de Chavignol'/'Chavignol'

2. **Member State or third country**

France

3. **Description of the agricultural product or foodstuff**

3.1. *Type of product*

Class 1.3 — Cheeses

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

The cheese covered by the protected designation of origin 'Crottin de Chavignol'/'Chavignol' is obtained by lactic coagulation of raw whole goat's milk, with the addition of a small quantity of rennet. The curds are pre-drained on cloth. The minimum maturing period is 10 days from the moulding date. The cheese has a thin, ivory-coloured rind with or without white or blue moulds, and may at a later stage become darker, even brown, in the case of cheeses referred to as 'repassé': i.e. cheeses covered in a blue Penicillium and matured in a confined atmosphere which makes them soft. 'Crottin de Chavignol'/'Chavignol' has the shape of a flat cylinder, very slightly curved at the periphery. The edges are rounded. The central diameter is greater than the top and bottom diameters.

'Crottin de Chavignol'/'Chavignol' cheeses have the following analytical characteristics:

— the total dry matter content is between 37 g and 45 g per cheese,

([3]) Replaced by Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012.

— the fat content is at least 45 % of the dry matter content,

— the weight upon leaving the business is between 60 g and 90 g.

3.3. *Raw materials (for processed products only)*

By 1 January 2017 at the latest, the milk used must come from herds comprising only goats of the Alpine breed.

3.4. *Feed (for products of animal origin only)*

Fodder represents at least 50 % of the dry matter in the daily ration and is made up of at least 70 % grass, hay or wrapped fodder.

Wrapped fodder is limited to at most 50 % of the dry matter in the fodder ingested daily. Ensilaged fodder is not permitted.

By 1 January 2017 at the latest, all the fodder must be produced in the geographical area.

The feed supplementing the fodder, consisting of concentrated and/or dehydrated feed, must make up at most 50 % of the dry matter in the daily ration and must comprise incorporable raw materials determined in accordance with a positive list.

At least half of the supplementary feed must be produced in the geographical area.

Consequently, by 1 January 2017 at the latest, at least 75 % of the dry matter in the overall daily feed ration supplied to the dairy herds must be produced in the geographical area defined at point 4 below.

In addition, by 1 January 2017 at the latest the minimum forage area actually used each year for feeding the goat herds must be 1 hectare for every 12 goats and must be located in the geographical area defined at point 4 below. The area of grassland on each farm must be at least 1 ha for every 24 goats. In order to satisfy this requirement, it is nevertheless authorised to buy fodder originating from the geographical area. In that case, an equivalent area is determined on the basis of 4 tonnes of dry matter = 1 hectare of forage area. This equivalence is limited to half the annual consumption of the herd in question.

3.5. *Specific steps in production that must take place in the defined geographical area*

The milk must be produced, and the cheeses made and matured in the geographical area defined at point 4 below.

3.6. *Specific rules on slicing, grating, packaging, etc.*

None

3.7. *Specific rules on labelling*

The labelling of each cheese or batch of cheeses covered by the designation of origin ‘Crottin de Chavignol’/‘Chavignol’ must include:

— the name of the designation of origin in characters at least two-thirds the size of the largest characters on the label,

— the words ‘appellation d’origine protégée’ [‘protected designation of origin’],

— the European Union’s AOP [PDO] symbol.

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

— specific brand names or trademarks,

— maturing terms.

Every cheese sold by an intermediary must bear an individual label.

The name 'Crottin de Chavignol'/'Chavignol' followed by the words 'Appellation d'origine protégée' [protected designation of origin] must appear on the invoices and commercial documents.

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

The milk must be produced and the cheeses made and matured in the geographical area, which covers the Pays-Fort sancerrois farming region and neighbouring areas, comprising municipalities located in the following departments:

— Cher:

The cantons of: Aix-d'Angillon, Baugy, La Chapelle-d'Angillon, Henrichemont, Léré, Levet, Mehun-sur-Yèvre, Nérondes, Saint-Doulchard, Saint-Martin-d'Auxigny, Sancergues, Sancerre, Vailly-sur-Sauldre: all the municipalities.

And the following municipalities: Argent-sur-Sauldre, Aubigny-sur-Nère, Blancafort, Bourges, Bussy, Cerbois, Civray, Corquoy, Lantan, Lazenay, Limeux, Lunery, Mareuil-sur-Arnon, Morthomiers, Nançay, Neuvy-sur-Barangeon, Oizon, Osmery, Plou, Poisieux, Preuilly, Primelles, Quincy, Raymond, Saint-Denis-de-Palin, Saint-Florent-sur-Cher, Saint-Germain-des-Bois, Saint-Laurent, Serruelles, Le Subdray, Villeneuve-sur-Cher, Vouzeron.

— Loiret:

The canton of Châtillon-sur-Loire: all the municipalities.

And the following municipalities: Bonny-sur-Loire, Cerdon, Coullons, Faverelles, Ousson-sur-Loire, Poilly-lès-Gien, Saint-Brisson-sur-Loire, Saint-Martin-sur-Ocre, Thou.

— Nièvre:

The cantons of: Cosne-Cours sur Loire Nord and Cosne-Cours sur Loire Sud: all the municipalities.

And the following municipalities: Arquian, Bulcy, Donzy, Garchy, La Charité-sur-Loire, Mesves-sur-Loire, Narcy, Pouilly-sur-Loire, Raveau, Saint-Andelain, Saint-Laurent-l'Abbaye, Saint-Martin-sur-Nohain, Saint-Quentin-sur-Nohain, Suilly-la-Tour, Saint-Vérain, Tracy-sur-Loire, Varennes-lès-Narcy.

5. **Link with the geographical area**

5.1. *Specificity of the geographical area*

The geographical area is centred around the Pays-Fort sancerrois farming region and extends into the neighbouring regions: Champagne berrichonne, Coteaux de la Loire et Sologne, characterised by the presence of grassland on clayey and clayey-chalky soils, favourable to supplying fodder for the goats.

Historically this area was a poor farming region where farms growing mixed crops, fodder, vines and orchards and rearing small hardy ruminants developed subsistence goat production. On those farms, the women reared the goats and processed the milk into cheese. The practice of pre-draining was one of the means for berrichon women to free themselves from the constraints of moulding by deferring that task in order to best manage the many other domestic or professional priorities which they had on those mixed-crop and mixed-livestock farms.

The word 'crottin' is thought to have come from the berrichon word 'crot', which means hole and referred in particular to the river banks where the women came to do their washing. The clayey soil which bordered those 'crots' was used by the farmers for pottery, initially to make small oil lamps and then small cheese moulds.

Rearing goats and using their milk to make cheese have therefore constituted a supplementary resource for farmers in the geographical area since at least the 16th century. In the berrichon farming and winegrowing areas, those small cheeses were often intended as food for the workers and day labourers in the fields or vineyards. Depending on the season and whether or not the milk was plentiful, 'Crottin de Chavignol'/'Chavignol' had or did not have white or blue moulds, or was even of the 'repassé' version in the middle of winter.

Today's production methods stem from those used in the past. The cheese is obtained by predominantly lactic coagulation of raw whole goat's milk, with the addition of a small quantity of rennet. During production, the curds must be pre-drained on cloth. The curds are then shaped in a truncated-cone mould of specified dimensions and turned at least once in the mould. Maturing takes at least 10 days at a controlled temperature and humidity. The confinement stage for making 'repassé' cheeses is in addition to the minimum maturing period.

5.2. *Specificity of the product*

'Crottin de Chavignol'/'Chavignol' is a small cheese made from raw whole goat's milk and has the shape of flat cylinder, very slightly curved at the central diameter. It has a thin rind, with or without white or blue moulds.

The 'repassé' version of the cheese is covered in a blue Penicillium and is soft.

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)*

The use of a truncated-cone mould of specified dimensions gives 'Crottin de Chavignol'/'Chavignol' its characteristic shape, which is accentuated by turning the mould's contents half way through draining. The shape of 'Crottin de Chavignol'/'Chavignol' is also linked to a production process which includes pre-draining the curds.

The pre-draining stage, which gives the fresh cheese the moisture level expected upon removal from the mould, and its shape (weight/surface area ratio) influences the maturing floras in order to give 'Crottin de Chavignol'/'Chavignol' its characteristics. The shape is also linked to the use of the mould whose local origin is recognised.

'Crottin de Chavignol'/'Chavignol' is also characterised by the diversity of its appearance (thin rind, with or without white or blue moulds, and brown with blue moulds for the 'repassé' version).

Reference to publication of the specification

(Article 5(7) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 ([4]))

https://www.inao.gouv.fr/fichier/CDCChavignol.pdf

([4]) See footnote 3.