OTHER ACTS

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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 356/11)

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 ACCORDING TO ARTICLE 9

'COMTÉ'

EC No: FR-PDO-0217-0116-30.6.2009

PGI ( ) PDO (X)

1. **Heading in the product specification affected by the amendment**

— ☐ 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**

— ☐ Amendment to the Single Document or Summary Sheet

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

— ☐ Amendment to the Specification that requires no amendment to the published Single Document (Article 9(3) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006)

— ☐ Temporary amendment to the Specification resulting from the imposition of obligatory sanitary or phyto-sanitary measures by the public authorities (Article 9(4) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006)

[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.

3. **Amendment(s)**

3.1. *Amendment to point (2) Description of product*

The stage corresponding to the description of the product has been clarified. The term 'renneted' has been deleted (the addition of rennet is described under the heading 'Method of production'), as has the term 'firm', which is not very precise.

The maximum fat content has been defined in order to avoid an excess of non-traditional fat.

Stricter criteria have been laid down for the sizes and weights of the cheese in order to better characterise the product.

A new type of packaging (grated) has been included in the specification.

The organoleptic characteristics have been added in order to better describe the product.

The minimum maturing period is reiterated in this chapter.

3.2. *Amendment to point (5) Method of production*

5.1. Milk production

The addition of the breed types (46 and 35) helps facilitate checks. Replacing the former name of the breed, 'Pie-Rouge de l'Est', with its new name, 'Simmental française', does not change the list of authorised traditional breeds. The authorisation of products obtained by crossing the two breeds (Montbéliarde and Simmental française), which used to be implicit, is now explicit.

Clarifications regarding the seeding of grassland in order to promote a more diverse flora have been added: 'Grassland that has been seeded with one type of legume, either alone or in combination with one type of grass, for less than five years is authorised on at most 15 % of the forage area of the farm. For the re-seeding of other grassland, it is obligatory to use long-duration mixtures combining at least three types of complementary species: hay grass, pasture grass and legumes.'

Clarifications regarding the fertilisation conditions make it possible to strengthen the link with the region by maintaining a diverse natural flora and avoiding the addition of artificial agents.

'The amount of nitrogenous mineral manure may not exceed an average of 50 units per hectare of forage area per farm. Any use of the forage area (grazing or mowing) is prohibited for one month after the date of spreading the organic manure and for three weeks after the spreading of any mineral manure. The only organic fertilising substances authorised in the forage areas of the farm come from the geographical area and include compost, manure, slurry and liquid manure. They must meet certain conditions.

3.2.1.

The following are forbidden: organic fertilising substances from animals fed silage, unless the substances have first been composted to destroy any butyric spores, composts of green waste unless they are from the farm, co-composts of green waste except agricultural co-composts of the "manure with green waste" type.

The spreading of organic manure of non-agricultural origin on the farm land is authorised, but it must be ploughed in immediately.

Only co-composts where at least one-third of the co-compost is manure from the farm may be spread on the forage areas of the farm.'

With a view to maintaining the grazing tradition, provisions on feeding ('Feeding systems with no grazing are forbidden. Supplementary green feed is limited to one meal a day during the growing season, so that grazing provides at least half of the minimum daily ration of roughage.') have been added, as well as grazing requirement applicable as soon as the soils' bearing capacity allows and for as long as the weather conditions, the soil's bearing capacity and the presence of grass allow.

The provisions banning GMOs make it possible to maintain the link to the region.

Provisions on milk productivity per hectare of forage area have been added. Productivity is limited in order to maintain the special characteristics of the region in the cheese. 'In order to preserve the quality and specificity of "Comté", milk productivity in forage areas and potential forage areas reserved for the feeding of dairy herds is limited for each farm to the level reached during the best marketing year between 2008/09 and 2012/13, plus 10 %. This productivity may under no circumstances exceed 4 600 litres of milk per year and per hectare of forage area or potential forage area.' The farm's stocking density is limited to 1,3 LU/ha in order to preserve the link to the region.

A provision on fermented feed (a farm that switches over to the production of 'Comté' must have ceased feeding its dairy herd with fermented feed at least a year earlier) makes it possible to limit the risk of contamination by butyric bacteria. The conditions for the cohabitation of herds (the dairy herd used in the production of 'Comté' must be separated from the other herds) are clarified in order to facilitate checks.

By banning the supply of concentrate mixtures with the chopped roughage feed given to the dairy herd, it is possible to limit the risk of contamination by butyric bacteria.

Compliance with the different provisions on feeding means that at least 70 % of the herd's feed comes from the geographical area. Provisions on the quality of the feed supplied have been added, including a list of forbidden feeds, the conditions applied to supplementary green feed and the conditions for the distribution of beetroot, because of either an adverse effect on the smell or taste of the milk or the risks of contamination by butyric bacteria.

These clarifications make it possible to avoid the use of any supplementary feed that might radically change or alter the characteristics of the milk and consequently of the cheese.

In order to facilitate checks, the conditions for supplying supplementary feed have been clarified: 'The supply of supplementary feed (grains, flours, oilmeals, dried plants produced outside the farm, etc.) is limited to an average per herd of 1 800 kg/dairy cow/year. The annual consumption of supplementary feed by the heifer herd is calculated on the basis of 500 kg per heifer LU.' The milking conditions are clarified, as these affect the milk's flora. 'Prior to attaching the milking cluster, it is forbidden to use milking grease or to disinfect the teats using impregnated wipes, a spray or any other procedure. The first streams must be eliminated. After calving, the milk may not be used for production for at least eight days.' A qualified technician must regularly inspect the functioning of the milking installations and of the refrigeration and cooling equipment for the milk. Furthermore, 'the use of disinfectants for cleaning, disinfection and rinsing is authorised only if necessary'

5.2. Milk transport

The milk storage conditions are clarified, as they affect the milk's flora: 'the milk is stored either at the farm, at the processing plant or at a place to which producers take the milk themselves. There may be no other intermediate storage centres.' The storage temperatures for milk are laid down in detail. 'it must be stored at a temperature of 10 °C to 18 °C.,' Experience shows that by not cooling the milk to less than 10 °C the specific organoleptic qualities of the cheese are brought out more fully.

It is reiterated that 'Comté' may only be produced from a mixture of milk from several farms. The aim is to uphold the tradition of a 'collective product'. The conditions for keeping the milk intended for the production of 'Comté' separate from other milk have been clarified.

5.3. Processing of the milk into cheese

The production plant and its equipment are defined in detail. The time limit for renneting has been redefined in order to facilitate checks. Instead of 'renneting takes place at the latest within 24 hours of the first milking' the following wording is proposed: 'Milking takes place at the latest: — before noon, when the first milking is that of the morning of the previous day; — before midnight, when the first milking is that of the evening of the previous day.' The provision on heating equipment for milk has been clarified by adding that, in order to facilitate checks, the heating appliance may not have a chambering section.

The authorised leavens and the type of rennet that may be used have been defined in more detail in order to preserve the specificities of the product.

'Heating and pressing are the only production stages that may be programmed beforehand' and 'Production in closed vats is forbidden.' Indeed, the production method must remain manual, so as to allow cheesemakers to demonstrate their know-how.

'The maximum capacity of the vats is limited to a maximum of 12 cheeses per vat' in order to preserve the quality of the cheeses.

'Over a period of 24 hours not more than three production rounds may be carried out in the same vat. The vat must be scrubbed, washed and rinsed between each production round,' in order to allow a sufficient release of copper ions, which is indispensable for the selection of the cheese's microflora. As regards the pressure during pressing, '150 g/cm²' is replaced with '100 g/cm²'. This is changed in order to correct a mistake in the previous specification.

5.4. Maturation

The provision on the frequency of turning over the cheeses during pre-maturation is removed, because it is not applicable to all lots. The characteristics of the wheels vary greatly, in particular depending on the season. Maturers must be able to demonstrate their know-how by adjusting the frequency of treatment to the drying capacity of the cheese. While this treatment is necessary in most cases, that is not the case for the most moist wheels, especially those on the periphery. In such situations, the treatment may impair the quality (risk of a sticky rind); it is then better to postpone the treatment until the wheel is less moist. The practices of dry salting and brining, both of which are traditional methods, have been defined in detail, as they are essential to revealing the special character of 'Comté'. 'Dry salting may be replaced with brining, which must be carried out within 24 hours of removal from the mould, and the cheese must be treated within 48 hours of removal from the brine.' The use of an international measuring method is specified for the maturity index. 'Proteolysis measured using a minimum maturity index such as the non-protein nitrogenous content must make up at least 15,5 % of the total nitrogenous content, on the basis of the nitrogen content measured with the Kjeldahl method. For cheeses where the fat content in dry matter exceeds 52 %, this ratio must be 17,5 % or more.' The addition of provisions on the necessity to measure and register the humidity facilitates checks.

5.5. Portioning and packaging

The term 'pre-packaging' is defined.

The grating conditions are laid down. When packaging small portions of 'Comté', especially when it is grated, there is a risk that the quality of the product will be impaired and therefore specific know-how is required. By identifying these operators as packers, it is possible to impose inspection obligations on them and consequently to guarantee good traceability in order to protect consumers. 'The rind may be removed from portions weighing less than 40 grams each or intended to be grated. If the rind is very moist or if it has deteriorated, it must be removed immediately after the cheese has been cut into portions. If the rind is in good condition, it must be removed within 8 hours of the first cutting. Pieces whose rind has been removed may not be stored in the open air for more than 72 hours; after that, they must be vacuum-packed. Vacuum-packing must take place within 15 days.'

5.6. Technological innovations

A paragraph on technological innovations has been added.

3.3. *Amendment to point (6) Elements justifying the link with the geographical area*

The heading 'Link to the origin' has been divided into three parts: 'specificity of the geographical area', 'specificity of the product' and 'causal link between the geographical area and the quality or characteristics of the product' in order to ensure consistency with the single document. This chapter has been rewritten for the sake of clarity.

3.4. *Amendment to point (8) Specific rules on labelling*

— Abolition of the INAO logo, which is replaced with the European Union's AOP (PDO) symbol.

— Obligation to affix clearly the name and address of the producer, maturer or prepacker in order to provide consumers with better information.

— Size of the name 'Comté' (at least two thirds of the other characters), prohibition on the use of additional wording, description of the identification marks, etc.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006

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

'COMTÉ'

EC No: FR-PDO-0217-0116-30.6.2009

PGI ( ) PDO (X)

1. **Name**

'Comté'

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 the product to which the name in point 1 applies*

'Comté' is made entirely of whole cow's milk used in raw condition. It is a cheese with pressed, cooked paste that is salted on the surface or in brine. At the time of marketing, which takes place after a minimum maturation period of 120 days, the cheese's paste has an ivory to yellow colour and an 'opening' that may reach the size of a small cherry.

'Comté' contains a minimum of 45 g and a maximum of 54 g of fat per 100 g of cheese after total desiccation and the dry matter must not weigh less than 62 g per 100 g of cheese. The salt content is not less than 0,6 g of sodium chloride per 100 g of cheese. The water content of the defatted cheese does not exceed 54 %.

'Comté' is presented to consumers in the form of a wheel that weighs 32 to 45 kg and has a diameter of 55 to 75 centimetres and a straight or slightly convex heel 8-13 cm in height. It has a scrubbed, solid and grainy rind that is golden yellow to brown in colour. The cheese must not be more than 1,4 times higher at the centre than at the outer rim.

'Comté' may also be presented in packaged portions or grated.

'Comté' has a complex taste. While the general sensorial features of all the wheels are the same, no two wheels of Comté are identical. Six main groups of aromas can be distinguished in 'Comté' (fruity, milky, roasted, plant-like, animal-like, spicy) and they include more than 90 nuances.

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

The milk used to produce 'Comté' must come solely from a dairy herd of Montbéliarde cows of breed type 46, or from French Simmental cows of breed type 35, or from crosses of these two breeds of certified descent.

The milk must be collected from within a circular area measuring no more than 25 km in diameter. This rule limits the duration of transport and therefore protects the milk from structural degradation. This ensures that the milk is processed in the conditions laid down in the specification (raw milk). These conditions favour the development of endogenous lactic flora.

In order to maintain the quality and specificity of the product, milk productivity is limited per hectare of potential forage areas.

As regards the use of the milk, the capacity of the vats is limited to a maximum of 12 cheeses per vat in order to guarantee the quality of the product. Over a period of 24 hours not more than three production rounds may be carried out in the same vat.

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

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

In order to guarantee a close link between the region and the product by using specific feed from the geographical area, supplementary feed is limited to 1 800 kg per dairy cow per year. On the farm, the grazing area actually used must be at least equal to 1 hectare per dairy cow. Grazing is obligatory for as long as the weather conditions, the soils' bearing capacity and the presence of grass allow. Compliance with these provisions means that at least 70 % of the herd's feed comes from the geographical area. The dairy cows' basic intake comes entirely from the geographical area.

In order to maintain the traditional practice of grazing, farm production systems where all the feed is supplied in troughs during the growing season are forbidden and grazing should remain the main practice.

Fermented fodder, whether silage products or other, are not to be used in the feed of the dairy herd at any time of the year owing to the technological risks related to these practices during the production and maturing of cheeses.

Only raw materials and supplementary feed derived from non-transgenic products are authorised for the dairy herd so as to preserve the traditional nature of the feed.

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

The milk is produced and the cheese manufactured and matured in the geographical area.

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

The procedure of cutting and packaging pieces of 'Comté' is part of an extended maturation process. It requires particular know-how and has a direct and definite effect on the quality of the product, because it is necessary to sort the wheels to remove those that may not be fit for prepacking. These conditions make it possible to comply fully with the conditions for preserving the cheese after it has been formed into wheels and to guarantee the physical and organoleptic integrity of 'Comté' until it reaches the consumer.

If the cheese is prepacked, these are the reasons for cutting or grating it in the geographical area.

If the cheese is prepacked,

— the wheels may be cut within not more than 15 days of leaving the maturing cellar. During this time they must be kept at a temperature of 4 °C to 8 °C with a humidity level at least equal to 85 %.

— the rind may be removed from portions weighing less than 40 grams each or intended to be grated. If the rind is very moist or if it has deteriorated, it must be removed immediately after the cheese has been cut into portions. If the rind is in good condition, it must be removed within 8 hours of the first cutting. Pieces whose rind has been removed may not be stored in the open air for more than 72 hours; after that, they must be vacuum-packed. Vacuum-packing must take place within 15 days.

— no simultaneous operations involving a product other than 'Comté' may take place on the cutting and packaging line.

The cheese may be cut and grated outside the geographical area if this is done in front of the consumer.

3.7. *Specific rules on labelling*

All cheeses with the registered designation of origin 'Comté' must bear a label showing the designation in a font at least two thirds as large as the largest font shown on the label.

The labelling must include the European Union's PDO symbol. It may also include the words 'appellation d'origine protégée' ['protected designation of origin'].

The producer, maturer or prepacker must affix its name and address clearly, and the address must be located in the geographical area.

The use of any term or other reference accompanying the designation is prohibited on the labelling and in advertising, invoices or commercial documents, with the exception of specific trademarks.

Cheeses sold under the designation of origin 'Comté' must bear the required identifying marks. Prior to the cheese leaving the maturing cellar, a green or brick-brown band must be affixed to the side of each wheel. Each packaged portion must bear the 'Comté clochettes vertes' logo. For consumer portions, it is obligatory to affix the 'Comté clochettes vertes' logo and the name 'Comté' on the front in a font at least two thirds as large as the largest font using the Pantone 349C green colour code.

If the wheel is sold whole, it must bear on the side under the band an oval-shaped green casein plate bearing the following words printed in black: France, Comté, the number of the production plant and the production month. The production day must be indicated using a casein plate placed near the green casein plate.

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

Definition of the geographical area

The geographical area extends over the territory of the following municipalities:

The department of Ain:

The cantons of Bellegarde-sur-Valserine, Brénod, Ceyzériat, Champagne-en-Valromey, Hauteville-Lompnes, Izernore, Lhuis, Nantua, Oyonnax, Poncin, Saint-Rambert-en-Bugey, Seyssel and Treffort-Cuisiat: all municipalities;

The canton of Ambérieu-en-Bugey: the municipalities of L'Abergement-de-Varey, Ambérieu-en-Bugey, Ambronay, Bettant and Douvres;

The canton of Coligny: the municipalities of Bény, Coligny, Domsure, Pirajoux, Salavre, Verjon and Villemotier;

The canton of Collonges: the municipalities of Chézery-Forens, Collonges, Confort, Farges, Lancrans, Léaz, Péron and Saint-Jean-de-Gonville;

The canton of Ferney-Voltaire: the municipalities of Sergy and Thoiry;

The canton of Gex: the municipalities of Cessy, Crozet, Divonne-les-Bains, Echenevex, Gex, Grilly, Lélex, Mijoux and Vesancy;

The canton of Lagnieu: the municipalities of Ambutrix, Lagnieu, Saint-Sorlin-en-Bugey, Sault-Brénaz, Souclin, Vaux-en-Bugey and Villebois;

The canton of Pont-d'Ain: the municipalities of Druillat, Journans, Neuville-sur-Ain, Pont-d'Ain, Saint-Martin-du-Mont and Tossiat.

The department of Doubs:

The cantons of Amancey, Audeux, Baume-les-Dames, Besançon, Boussières, Clerval, Levier, Maîche, Marchaux, Montbenoît, Morteau, Mouthe, Ornans, Pierrefontaine-les-Varans, Pontarlier, Quingey, Roulans, Le Russey, Saint-Hippolyte and Vercel-Villedieu-le-Camp: all the municipalities;

The canton of Hérimoncourt: the municipalities of Autechaux-Roide, Blamont, Dannemarie, Ecurcey, Glay, Pierrefontaine-lès-Blamont, Roches-lès-Blamont and Villars-lès-Blamont;

The canton of L'Isle-sur-le-Doubs: the municipalities of Hyémondans and Lanthenans;

The canton of Pont-de-Roide: the municipalities of Dambelin, Feule, Goux-lès-Dambelin, Neuchâtel-Urtière, Noirefontaine, Péseux, Pont-de-Roide, Remondans-Vaivre, Rosière-sur-Barbèche, Solemont, Valonne, Villars-sous-Dampjoux and Vernois-lès-Belvoir;

The canton of Rougemont: the municipality of Rillans.

The department of Jura:

All the municipalities, with the exception of the municipalities of the canton of Chemin.

The department of Saône-et-Loire:

The canton of Beaurepaire-en-Bresse: the municipalities of Beaurepaire-en-Bresse, Sagy, Saillenard and Savigny-en-Revermont;

The canton of Cuiseaux: the municipalities of Champagnat, Cuiseaux, Flacey-en-Bresse and Joudes;

The canton of Pierre-de-Bresse: the municipalities of Beauvernois, Bellevesvre, Fretterans, Mouthiers-en-Bresse and Torpes;

The department of Haute-Savoie:

The canton of Seyssel: the municipalities of Challonges solely for parcels No 562 (a) and 563 (a) of section A, sixth leaf.

5. Link with the geographical area

5.1. *Specificity of the geographical area*

5.1.1. Natural factors

The geographical area comprises the arc of the Jura mountains, a set of limestone plateaux, and its extension into a small part of the adjoining plain.

The agricultural areas in question are characterised by their poor soils and significant contours and by the calcareous and molassic nature of the geological substratum.

The climate of the area tends towards both continental and northern with a big difference between winter and summer temperatures and rainfall that, although it is even throughout the year, is heavy in the summer, with a low annual average temperature, despite summer heatwaves, and a large number of days of frost.

It is a very wet mountain or sub-mountain environment with annual rainfall always in excess of 900 mm and generally in excess of 1 000 mm. This rainfall is already considerable at low altitude and increases towards the interior of the mountain range. Seasonal distribution is characterised by the lack of a dry season.

This area is divided between woodland, half of which is composed of spruce, and grassland. The area's particular geo-climatic conditions (heavy rainfall, no summer drought, limestone substrate) contribute very favourably to high-quality grass production. Indeed, they allow the development of natural grassland that has a very rich flora (especially as regards dicotyledons) and a specific limestone flora.

5.1.2. Human factors

In this area which is well-suited to grazing, dairy cows feed in this manner for as long as the weather conditions, the soils' bearing capacity and the presence of grass allow. Breeders have selected the Montbéliarde breed, which is well adapted to the conditions in the area and makes up nearly all of the dairy herds in the geographical area. The extensive farming of grassland has been maintained (stocking density, the use of nitrogen and concentrates etc. are limited). In addition, the geographical area has a particular cheese-making tradition. This tradition, based on the pooling of milk for the purpose of making a large cheese, has led to a strong sense of solidarity and common rules.

Since the 11th century farmers in this region have worked together to pool every day the milk produced by their various herds in order to make a large wheel. Still today the great majority of milk producers belong to cooperatives and pool their milk in a processing plant called 'fruitière', the local cheese dairy.

The traditional methods of making this cheese live on and are maintained, on the one hand, in the way the animals are bred using a specific system for the management of pastures and the drying of mowed grass and, on the other, in the way the cheese is made by carefully timing the cutting of the curd, its stirring and heating, the extraction and pressing and then the salting, prematuring and maturing.

5.2. *Specificity of the product*

'Comté' is a cheese made from raw cow's milk. It has a cooked pressed paste and is in the shape of a large wheel 55 to 75 cm in diameter. It is matured for a long time and is therefore a long-keeping cheese.

'Comté' has a limited fat content and this distinguishes it from other cheeses with a cooked pressed paste.

It contains at least 62 grams of dry matter per 100 grams of cheese and the water content of the defatted cheese does not exceed 54 %.

The salt content is not less than 0,6 g of sodium chloride per 100 g of cheese.

'Comté' has a complex taste. While the general sensorial features of all the wheels are the same, no two wheels of Comté are identical. Six main groups of aromas can be distinguished (fruity, milky, roasted, plant-like, animal-like, spicy) and they include more than 90 nuances.

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)*

It is in this difficult environment, where the landscape is divided between woodland and grassland and where it was impossible to develop other resources, that large hard cheeses became the product of choice. For the people living on this land, a long-keeping cheese was the only preserved food that could be made from the abundant supply of summer milk and that would keep through the long winter. Therefore local breeders selected a cow breed that was particularly well suited to the local conditions and to the making of this particular cheese. The milk was pooled in the 'fruitières' for the purpose of producing a large, long-keeping cheese that would allow the breeders to make the best use of the richness of this land outside the geographical area. The choice of a cheese with a cooked paste was based on the abundance of firewood in the area.

The distinctive characteristics of the grassland are expressed in the cheese with the help of specific expertise applied at every production stage.

First of all, the great floral richness of the natural environment of the geographical area contributes strongly to the development of the cheese's aromatic components. This diversity is preserved through the extensive farming of the grassland. The close link between floral diversity and the rich aroma of 'Comté' has been demonstrated by two scientific studies in 1994. By limiting the fat content during cheese-making it is possible to avoid off-tastes due to lipolysis and reinforce the typical aromas of 'Comté'. By laying down a minimum dry matter content and a maximum water content for the defatted cheese, it is possible to avoid excess water in the cheese and help bring out all the aromas. The aromas are enhanced also by the minimum salt content of the cheese. The obligation to use open vats allows the cheesemakers to maintain their skills, such as the correct timing of the cutting and extraction of the curd. Finally, the maturers use their know-how to carefully adjust the maturing conditions of each lot. The cheese's aroma, which is the result of natural factors such as the grass and the microbe ecosystem, is fully developed only after a long period of maturation on spruce boards, which are particularly well suited to the maturation of 'Comté'. The production of 'Comté' allows the maintenance of traditional agricultural activities and contributes greatly to achieving a balanced local economy.

Reference to publication of the specification

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

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

([4]) See footnote 3.