

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

(2017/C 205/13)

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

APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF AN AMENDMENT TO THE PRODUCT SPECIFICATION OF A PROTECTED DESIGNATION OF ORIGIN/PROTECTED GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION THAT IS NOT MINOR

Application for approval of an amendment in accordance with the first subparagraph of Article 53(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012**'QUARTIROLO LOMBARDO'****EU No: PDO-IT-02160 – 27.7.2016****PDO (X) PGI ()****1. Applicant group and legitimate interest**

Consorzio di Tutela Quartirolo Lombardo, headquarters:

Via Rodi 5
IT-25100 Brescia
ITALIA

Administrative offices:

Viale Francesco Crispi 24
IT-25034 Orzinuovi (BS)

Tel. +39 030944320

Fax +39 0309946772

Email: info@quartirololombardo.com; Pec: tutelaquartirolo@legalmail.it.

The above protection association is entitled to submit an amendment application pursuant to Article 13(1) of Ministry of Agricultural, Food and Forestry Policy Decree No 12511 of 14 October 2013.

2. Member State or Third Country

Italy

3. Heading in the product specification affected by the amendment(s)

- Product name
- Product description
- Geographical area
- Proof of origin
- Production Method
- Link

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 343, 14.12.2012, p. 1.

- Labelling
- Other: formal amendment to the specification; inspection body; geographical area adjusted to take account of administrative changes.

4. Type of amendment(s)

- Amendment to product specification of registered PDO or PGI not to be qualified as minor in accordance with the third subparagraph of Article 53(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012.
- Amendment to product specification of registered PDO or PGI for which a Single Document (or equivalent) has not been published not to be qualified as minor in accordance with the third subparagraph of Article 53(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012.

5. Amendment(s)

Product description

In the first sentence of the current specification (Article 3 of the Prime Ministerial Decree of 10 May 1993) the words 'raw or pasteurised' have been added.

Thus the current wording:

'Quartirolo Lombardo' is a soft table cheese made from cow's milk from at least two milkings ...'

has been replaced as follows:

'Quartirolo Lombardo' is a soft table cheese made from raw or pasteurised cow's milk from at least two milkings ...'.

Given that this was already specified in the report annexed to the registration application, this is just a formal amendment intended to harmonise the content of the various documents sent to the Commission.

The current 'Quartirolo Lombardo' specification provides for an ageing period of 5-30 days for the soft cheese; after 30 days the product is marketed as mature 'Quartirolo Lombardo'. Specifically, the last paragraph of Article 3(A) of the current specification reads:

'The ageing period lasts from 5 to 30 days from the date of production for the soft cheese, while after 30 days the product is marketed as mature 'Quartirolo Lombardo'.'

This has been replaced as follows in the amended specification:

'The ageing period lasts from 2 to 30 days from the date of production for the 'fresh' cheese, while after 30 days the product is marketed as 'Quartirolo Lombardo' 'mature' ('aged').'

The word 'soft' has been replaced with 'fresh' to describe young 'Quartirolo Lombardo' cheese and 'aged' has been added to describe mature 'Quartirolo Lombardo'. The amendment does not therefore introduce two specific categories or types of the cheese, which already exist, but only concerns information to be included on the label. The reason for the amendment is that consumers easily understand these terms which are now widely used. Adding them to the specification means that they can be used on the label.

Furthermore, the ageing period for fresh 'Quartirolo Lombardo' (which is a soft cheese) has been shortened from 5-30 to 2-30 days.

This amendment is required to meet consumer demand for an ever fresher product.

Proof of origin

Article 4 of the specification regarding proof of origin has been improved and updated. In addition, the PDO logo, which is currently annexed to the product specification, has been inserted into the specification itself.

Thus the current wording:

'When put on the market, 'Quartirolo Lombardo' PDO cheese must bear a specific label stating its geographical origin and the details of the legislation recognising the designation so as to guarantee its compliance with the relevant legislation'

has been replaced as follows:

Producers are listed in registers managed by the inspection body and are responsible for ensuring, through the records they keep, which may be checked by the inspection body, that they can prove the origin of the feed, raw materials and product that come from the area of origin and must keep accounts of the lots entering and exiting and the correlation between them. When placed on the market, 'Quartirolo Lombardo' PDO whole cheeses must bear a mark of origin: this marking should be carried out during the heat treatment at the turning stage, after the curds have been moulded but before salting to ensure the stamp is clear, using plastic food-grade stamps impressed on one of the cheese's flat surfaces and bearing the producer's identification number, which is allocated by the protection body appointed by the Ministry of Agricultural, Food and Forestry Policy to all the producers listed in the inspection body's register. The origin mark of 'Quartirolo Lombardo' PDO cheese consists of the figure reproduced below (image 1), which contains the following letters:

- a. the letter Q in the top left-hand corner;
- b. the letter L in the top right-hand corner;
- c. the letter L in the bottom left-hand corner;
- d. the letter Q in the bottom right-hand corner.

The producer's identification number is in the centre.

Image 1



This is a formal amendment where all the information on the proof of origin currently annexed to the specification and included in the inspection plan approved by the Ministry has been added in the relevant article.

Production method

As the current specification does not specify what proportion of the dairy cattle's feed originates from the demarcated area, the following phrase has been added:

'on an annual basis, at least 50 % of the dry matter in the feed comes from the geographical area of origin'.

With regard to the coagulation temperature, the upper value has been slightly increased.

The original specification provides for a coagulation temperature of between 35 and 40 °C.

The new specification proposes a coagulation temperature of between 35 and 44 °C.

In the light of developments in cheese-making techniques, there is a need to slightly increase the coagulation temperature (from 35/40 °C to 35/44 °C), given that the thermophilic lactic cultures develop better at a temperature of just over 40 °C. Furthermore, a higher temperature facilitates the dehydration of the curds, thereby enhancing the cohesion of the granules and the selection of the strains of thermophilic micro-organisms required for maturing the cheese, with fewer risks that undesirable micro-organisms will develop.

In the paragraph stating 'adding starter culture from earlier batches from the same dairy where the cheese is made is allowed' the words 'as are selected cultures' have been added.

It therefore now reads:

'Adding starter culture from earlier batches from the same dairy where the cheese is made is allowed, as are selected cultures'.

Given that this was already specified in the report annexed to the registration application, this is just a formal amendment intended to harmonise the content of the various documents sent to the Commission.

The heat-treatment temperature range has been slightly increased from 26-28 °C to 24-30 °C.

Decreasing the lower temperature limit is justified by improved milk hygiene practices on the farm, thanks to regular application of the legislation in force with regard to production techniques, which has had positive knock-on effects on every stage in the production chain. The milk that is now delivered to the cheese producers and suitable for processing into cheese is checked at every stage and the bacterial count is always monitored. Increasing the upper temperature limit for the heat-treatment of the cheese ensures better curd structure and produces better 'Quartirolo Lombardo' cheeses, with less wastage due to cheeses of the wrong shape.

The reference in the current specification to a temperature of between 10 and 14 °C in the premises where salting takes place has been deleted.

This amendment is justified by the fact that, in the majority of production sites, salting takes place in traditional premises without air conditioning. Years of checks have shown that this constraint does not affect the characteristics of the product, but does risk penalising small-scale cheese-makers for whom it is more difficult to maintain exact temperatures in the premises where several production stages take place.

The humidity levels of the maturation areas have been changed from 85-90 % to 80-95 %.

This amendment responds to the need expressed by producers, especially small-scale dairies, to also be able to mature cheeses in premises that are not refrigerated or air-conditioned. This amendment ensures a better management of the product maturing phase, and factors in the conditions in premises that are not air-conditioned.

The following phrase has been added by way of clarification as to how the product can be sold:

'Quartirolo Lombardo' PDO cheese may be marketed whole or in portions.'

Link

A specific article on the link that was not included in the current specification but was in the summary sheet has been added.

The amendments to the article are only formal in that the contents are the same as in the summary sheet, but better explained.

The following sentences in the summary sheet:

'The natural factors are linked to climatic conditions that influence both the properties of the fodder for the dairy cows and the process of ageing the cheese. With respect to human factors, the cheese is traditionally consumed in the production area and produced using methods that have remained constant over time and are based on local practices.'

have been amended as follows:

'The natural factors are linked to the climatic conditions in the defined geographical area, situated between the plain to the left of the river Po and bordering the foothills of the Alps between Bergamo and Lecco. In the upper well-irrigated areas of the Po Valley, the continental climate, with its marked differences between the seasons, provides the right conditions for the growth of abundant quality fodder for the dairy cows. The production of milk suitable for the production of both fresh and mature (aged) cheese depends on the cows' diet. It is precisely thanks to the organoleptic qualities of the milk used, combined with the human factor in the form of an age-old cheese-making tradition passed down from generation to generation, involving tools and technologies with strong links to the territory, that the 'Quartirolo Lombardo', once processed, assumes its characteristic taste, which is slightly acidic and aromatic in the young (fresh) cheese and more aromatic and intense in the mature (aged) cheese. The tradition of 'Quartirolo Lombardo' PDO cheese, such that it has become a local speciality, is closely linked to the cycle of the seasons, local livestock farming practices and the cheese-making and maturing processes. There is no substitute for the cheese-makers' traditional knowledge, passed down through the centuries: this know-how is critical not just at the stage of processing the milk, but also at the later stages of heat treatment, salting and ageing, which is still done in time-honoured fashion in the traditional premises.'

Labelling

The wording in the current specification:

'When put on the market, 'Quartirolo Lombardo' PDO cheese must bear a specific label stating its geographical origin and the details of the legislation recognising the designation so as to guarantee its compliance with the relevant legislation'.

has been amended as follows:

"Quartirolo Lombardo' PDO cheese may be marketed whole or in portions.

When it is placed on the market, each wrapper and/or packaging of 'Quartirolo Lombardo' PDO cheese, whole and/or in portions, must bear the name 'Quartirolo Lombardo' and may be accompanied by the word 'fresh' for the product placed on the market that has been aged between 2 and 30 days, or the name 'Quartirolo Lombardo' accompanied by the word 'mature' or 'aged' for the product that has been matured for over 30 days.

It must also bear the logo shown below (Image 2), which comprises the following letters:

- the letter Q in the top left-hand corner;
- the letter L in the top right-hand corner;
- the letter L in the bottom left-hand corner;
- the letter Q in the bottom right-hand corner.

Image 2



The logo must be followed by a reference to the Regulation on the registration of the 'Quartirolo Lombardo' PDO, namely 'Regulation (EC) No 1107/96'.

In order to ensure the authenticity of 'Quartirolo Lombardo' PDO cheese, and so that consumers can identify it correctly, the presence of the specific logo on the labelling, which is now required only on whole cheeses, has been made mandatory for both whole cheeses and portions.

In addition, the words 'formaggio fresco' ('fresh cheese') may also be added to the label where applicable (for cheeses aged between 2 and 30 days). For cheeses that have been aged for more than 30 days, provision is made for using the word 'stagionato' ('aged') as an alternative to the mandatory 'maturo' ('mature') already provided for in the current specification, given that this term is more familiar to the consumer.

Other

The structure of the product specification, now divided into four articles, has been changed. The proposed specification is divided into eight articles, where information has been added that was included in the attached reports or the summary sheet at the time of registering the designation. An article has also been added on inspections, listing the name and contact details of the inspection body.

The boundaries of the geographical area remain unchanged. The production area has been updated in line with recent administrative changes. The administrative provinces of Lecco, Lodi, Monza and Brianza, which were established pending or after the recognition of the 'Quartirolo Lombardo' designation of origin, have therefore been included. The province of Lecco includes municipalities that previously fell within the provinces of Bergamo and Como. The province of Lodi includes municipalities that were previously part of the province of Milan. The province of Monza and Brianza includes municipalities that previously fell within the province of Milan.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

‘QUARTIROLO LOMBARDO’EU No: **PDO-IT-2160 – 27.7.2016****PDO (X) PGI ()****1. Title**

‘Quartirolo Lombardo’

2. Member State or Third Country

Italy

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

‘Quartirolo Lombardo’ is a soft table cheese made from raw or pasteurised cow’s milk from at least two milkings. The milk from the first milking must be used whole; the milk from the second or subsequent milkings may be used whole or partially skimmed.

‘Quartirolo Lombardo’ (PDO) cheese has the following characteristics:

- a. Shape: a rectangular brick or cube with flat sides and a straight heel.
- b. Dimensions: width of the flat surfaces from 18 to 22 cm, heel height 4 to 8 cm with slight variations in the minimum and maximum figures for both characteristics depending on the technical production conditions.
- c. Weight: varies from 1,5 kg to 3,5 kg.
- d. Rind: thin, soft and pinkish white for the young (fresh) cheese and reddish grey-green for the mature (aged) cheese.
- e. Paste – texture: compact, slightly grainy with possible flakes, crumbly (without a yellowish layer under the rind), becoming firmer, soft and melting as the cheese matures. White to yellowish white in colour, which may become more intense in the case of the mature (aged) cheese.
- f. Taste: distinctive, slightly acidic-aromatic in the young (fresh) cheese and more aromatic in the mature (aged) cheese.
- g. Fat content in the dry matter: not less than 30 % for the product made from semi-skimmed milk.

The ageing period lasts from 2 to 30 days from the date of production for the ‘fresh’ cheese, while after 30 days the product is marketed as ‘Quartirolo Lombardo’ ‘mature’ (‘aged’).

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

On an annual basis, at least 50 % of the dry matter in the feed comes from the geographical area of origin.

The cattle feed consists of cereals, dry and green fodder and silage. It may be supplemented with concentrates and/or protein cattle-cake.

The use of mineral and vitamin supplements is authorised.

‘Quartirolo Lombardo’ PDO cheese is made from raw or pasteurised cow’s milk, from cows reared in the geographical area.

Calf rennet, salt.

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

All the stages in the production process: stockbreeding, milking, cheese making and maturing must take place in the defined geographical area.

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

—

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

When placed on the market, 'Quartirolo Lombardo' PDO whole cheeses must bear a mark of origin, impressed on one of the cheese's flat surfaces using plastic food-grade stamps. The origin mark of 'Quartirolo Lombardo' PDO cheese consists of the logo reproduced below containing the following letters:

- a. the letter Q in the upper left-hand corner;
- b. the letter L in the top right-hand corner;
- c. the letter L in the bottom left-hand corner;
- d. the letter Q in the bottom right-hand corner.

The producer's identification number is in the centre.



'Quartirolo Lombardo' PDO cheese may be marketed whole or in portions.

When it is placed on the market, each wrapper and/or packaging of 'Quartirolo Lombardo' PDO cheese, whole and/or in portions, must bear the name 'Quartirolo Lombardo' and may be accompanied by the word 'fresh' for the product placed on the market that has been aged between 2 and 30 days from the date of production, or the name 'Quartirolo Lombardo' accompanied by the word 'mature' or 'aged' for the product that has been matured for over 30 days. It must also bear the PDO logo shown below, which comprises the following letters:

- the letter Q in the upper left-hand corner;
- the letter L in the top right-hand corner;
- the letter L in the bottom left-hand corner;
- the letter Q in the bottom right-hand corner.



The logo must be followed by a reference to the Regulation on the registration of the 'Quartirolo Lombardo' PDO, namely 'Regulation (EC) No 1107/96'.

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

The area of origin of the milk and where the 'Quartirolo Lombardo' cheese is produced comprises the administrative territory of the provinces of Brescia, Bergamo, Como, Lecco, Cremona, Milan, Lodi, Monza and Brianza, Pavia and Varese.

5. Link with the geographical area

The natural factors are linked to the climatic conditions in the defined geographical area, situated between the plain to the left of the river Po and bordering the foothills of the Alps between Bergamo and Lecco.

In the upper well-irrigated areas of the Po Valley, the continental climate, with its marked differences between the seasons, provides the right conditions for the growth of abundant quality fodder for the dairy cows. The production of milk suitable for the production of both fresh and mature (aged) cheese depends on the cows' diet. It is precisely thanks to the organoleptic qualities of the milk used, combined with the human factor in the form of an age-old cheese-making tradition passed down from generation to generation, involving tools and technologies with strong links to the territory, that the 'Quartirolo Lombardo', once processed, assumes its characteristic taste, which is slightly acidic and aromatic in the young (fresh) cheese and more aromatic and intense in the mature (aged) cheese. The tradition of 'Quartirolo Lombardo' PDO cheese, such that it has become a local speciality, is closely linked to the cycle of the seasons, local livestock farming practices and the cheese-making and maturing processes.

There is no substitute for the cheese-makers' traditional knowledge, passed down through the centuries: this know-how is critical not just at the stage of processing the milk, but also at the later stages of heat treatment, salting and ageing, which is still done in time-honoured fashion in the traditional premises.

Reference to publication of the specification

(the second subparagraph of Article 6(1) of this Regulation)

The full text of the product specification is available on the following website:

<http://www.politicheagricole.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeBLOB.php/L/IT/IDPagina/3335>

or alternatively:

by going directly to the home page of the Ministry of Agricultural, Food and Forestry Policy (www.politicheagricole.it) and clicking on 'Prodotti DOP e IGP' (at the top right-hand side of the screen), then on 'Prodotti DOP, IGP e STG' (on the left-hand side of the screen) and finally on 'Disciplinari di produzione all'esame dell'UE'.
