

Publication of an application for approval of an amendment, which is not minor, to a product specification pursuant to Article 50(2)(b) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs

(2021/C 392/07)

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⁾ within three months from the date of this publication.

APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF AN AMENDMENT TO THE PRODUCT SPECIFICATION OF TRADITIONAL SPECIALITIES GUARANTEED WHICH 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

‘SCHAF-HEUMILCH’/‘SHEEP’S HAYMILK’/‘LATTE FIENO DI PECORA’/‘LAIT DE FOIN DE BREBIS’/‘LECHE DE HENO DE OVEJA’

EU No: TSG-AT-2289-AM01 – 25 February 2021

1. Applicant group and legitimate interest

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Statement on the legitimate interest of the group:

The application for an amendment is being submitted by the producer group that submitted the application for registration of ‘Sheep’s Haymilk’.

The indication of the designation ‘Sheep’s Haymilk’ in the languages of countries with a tradition of producing ‘Sheep’s Haymilk’ constitutes a commitment to the traditional production method and the traditional speciality guaranteed. In doing so, it helps strengthen the protected designation ‘Sheep’s Haymilk’, which also benefits the applicant group..

2. Member State or Third Country

Austria

3. Heading in the product specification affected by the amendments

- Name of product
- Description of product
- Method of production
- Other. [to be specified]

4. Type of amendment(s)

- Amendment to product specification of registered TSG not to be qualified as minor in accordance with the fourth subparagraph of Article 53(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 343, 14.12.2012, p. 1.

5. Amendments

5.1. Addition of the Slovenian designation for 'Sheep's Haymilk':

In point '1. Name(s) to be registered', the Slovenian designation for 'Haymilk' is added, together with an indication of the respective languages (de, en, it, fr, es, sl):

'Schaf-Heumilch' (de)/'Sheep's Haymilk' (en)/'Latte fieno di pecora' (it)/'Lait de foin de brebis' (fr)/'Leche de heno de oveja' (es)/'Ovčje seneno mleko' (sl)

Reason: As 'Sheep's Haymilk' is produced in Slovenia following the traditional production method set out in the product specification, the Slovenian designation should also be protected. Indicating the respective languages makes it clear in which languages the designation is protected as a TSG.

5.2. Including potatoes in the list of forbidden types of feed

In point '4.2. Description of the production method of the product to which the name under point 1 applies that the producers must follow', the word 'potatoes' has been added under the fifth indent of the point 'Forbidden types of feed'.

Instead of '- Animals may not be fed garden waste, fruit waste or urea.', the fifth indent of the point 'Forbidden types of feed' now reads as follows:

'- Animals may not be fed garden waste, fruit waste, potatoes or urea.'

Reason: Potatoes have never been commonly used – nor permitted – as feed in the production of 'Sheep's Haymilk'. The fact that they were not specifically mentioned in the specification was merely an oversight on the author's part, which now needs to be corrected.

PRODUCT SPECIFICATION OF A TRADITIONAL SPECIALITY GUARANTEED

'SCHAF-HEUMILCH'/ 'SHEEP'S HAYMILK'/ 'LATTE FIENO DI PECORA'/ 'LAIT DE FOIN DE BREBIS'/ 'LECHE DE HENO DE OVEJA'/ 'OVČJE SENENO MLEKO'

EU No: TSG-AT-2289-AM01 – 25 February 2021

'Austria'

1. Name(s)

'Schaf-Heumilch' / 'Sheep's Haymilk' / 'Latte fieno di pecora' / 'Lait de foin de brebis' / 'Leche de heno de oveja' / 'Ovčje seneno mleko'

2. Type of product

Class 1.4. Other products of animal origin (eggs, honey, various dairy products except butter, etc.)

3. Grounds for registration

3.1. Whether the product:

- results from a mode of production, processing or composition corresponding to traditional practice for that product or foodstuff;
- is produced from raw materials or ingredients that are those traditionally used.

Haymilk production is the most natural form of milk production. The milk comes from animals on traditional, sustainable dairy farms. The key difference between standard milk and haymilk, and haymilk's traditional character, stem from the fact that as in the earliest form of milk production, animals are not fed fermented fodder. Since the 1960s, and due to mechanisation, the industrialisation of farming has increasingly relied upon the production of silage (fermented fodder), thus reducing fresh-fodder farming. Moreover, regulations forbid the use of animals and feed which are to be identified as 'genetically modified' under prevailing legislation. The feeding procedure is adapted to match seasonal changes: in the 'green-feeding period', animals are fed fresh grass and foliage and some hay and forms of feed permitted under point 4.2; in the winter period, animals are fed hay, or other forms of feed permitted under point 4.2.

3.2. *Whether the name:*

- has been traditionally used to refer to the specific product;
- identifies the traditional character or specific character of the product.

The sheep is one of the oldest domesticated animals in the world. As far back as the Early Stone Age, sheep have been providing humans with meat, milk, pelts and wool. Sheep breeding most likely started in the steppes of south-west Asia and was brought to central Europe via Persia and the Balkans. The Alpine regions have historically been suitable for sheep breeding. A special form of intensive livestock production, called 'Schwaigen', has commonly been used in the Tyrol since the mid-twelfth century. The word 'Schwaig' comes from Middle High German and denotes a special form of settlement and, in particular, farming in the Alpine region. 'Schwaighof' farms were often established as permanent settlements by land-owners for purposes of cattle and sheep breeding. Evidence of their existence in the Tyrol dates back to the twelfth century. Later the term 'Schwaige' was sometimes used to refer to mountain pastures cultivated only in the summer months. Alpine dairy farmers are also called 'Schwaiger' or 'Schwaigerin'. Until the late fourteenth century Tyrolean 'Schwaighof' farms were primarily engaged in sheep breeding. Sheep farming on wide alpine meadows is therefore a tradition in the Tyrol dating back hundreds of years.

However, from the fourteenth to the nineteenth century sheep breeding in Austria largely faded and was gradually replaced by pig breeding. Today the sheep is once again gaining in importance for milk and meat production.

4. **Description**

4.1. *Description of the product to which the name under point 1 applies, including its main physical, chemical, microbiological or organoleptic characteristics showing the product's specific character (Article 7(2) of this Regulation)*

Sheep's milk in accordance with the applicable legislation.

4.2. *Description of the production method of the product to which the name under point 1 applies that the producers must follow including, where appropriate, the nature and characteristics of the raw materials or ingredients used, and the method by which the product is prepared (Article 7(2) of this Regulation)*

'Sheep's Haymilk' is produced according to traditional production conditions that comply with the 'Heumilchregulativ' (regulations on haymilk production). This form of milk is distinguished by rules forbidding the use of fermented fodder, such as silage, and rules forbidding the use of animals and feed which are to be identified as 'genetically modified' under prevailing legislation.

'Heumilchregulativ'

'Sheep's Haymilk' is a form of sheep's milk extracted from lactating ewes, produced by dairy farmers who have undertaken to comply with the following criteria. No animals or feed which are to be identified as 'genetically modified' under prevailing legislation may be used.

The entire agricultural livestock holding must be managed according to these rules of haymilk production.

Permitted types of feed

- The animals are mainly fed fresh grass, leguminous plants and foliage during the 'green-feeding period', and hay in the winter period.
- The following are included and permitted as further roughage: green rapeseed, green maize, green rye and fodder beets, as well as hay, lucerne and maize pellets.
- Roughage must make up at least 75 % of the yearly ration of dry feed.
- The cereal crops wheat, barley, oats, triticale, rye and maize are also permitted, in their conventional marketed form and in composites with minerals (e.g. bran, pellets).
- The following may also be used as feed: beans, field peas, oleaginous fruits, and extraction meal or cakes.

Forbidden types of feed

- The following types of feed are prohibited: silage (fermented fodder), moist hay and fermented hay.
- Animals may not be fed by-products from breweries, distilleries or fruit pressing, or other by-products from the food industry, such as wet brewer's grains or wet cuttings. Exceptions are dry cuttings and molasses as a by-product of sugar manufacturing, and dry protein feed produced during grain processing.
- Lactating animals may not be fed any form of wet fodder.
- Animals may not be fed products of animal origin, except for young animals, which may be fed milk and whey.
- Animals may not be fed garden waste, fruit waste, potatoes or urea.

Fertilisation conditions

- The use of sewage sludge, sewage sludge products or compost from municipal treatment plants, with the exception of green compost (composted mixture of vegetable matter), is prohibited on all areas agriculturally exploited by the livestock holding.
- Livestock holdings must wait at least three weeks after manure spreading before using the land to graze livestock.

Use of chemical auxiliary substances

- Only the selective use of synthetic chemical pesticides under the expert supervision of agronomic specialists and the targeting of specific sites in any of the green fodder areas of the livestock holding is permitted.
- Permitted fly sprays may be used in dairy stalls only when the lactating ewes are absent.

Delivery prohibitions:

- Milk may not be delivered as 'Sheep's Haymilk' within 10 days after lambing.
- When sheep that have been fed silage (fermented fodder) are used, there must be a waiting period of at least 14 days.
- As regards alpine animals which have been fed silage (fermented fodder) on their farms, either they must be fed silage-free food for 14 days before they are driven up to alpine pastures, or their milk can be classed as 'Sheep's Haymilk' only once they have spent 14 days on alpine pastures (owned by the 'Sheep's Haymilk' supplier). No silage may be produced or used as feed on the alpine pasture.

Prohibition of genetically modified food and feed:

- In order to preserve the traditional production of 'Sheep's Haymilk', no animals or feed which are to be identified as 'genetically modified' under prevailing legislation may be used.

Other regulations:

- No silage (fermented fodder) may be produced or stored at the livestock holding.
- No film-wrapped round bales of any type may be produced or stored at the livestock holding.
- No moist hay or fermented hay may be produced at the livestock holding.

4.3. Description of the key elements establishing the product's traditional character (Article 7(2) of this Regulation)

Haymilk's traditional character stems from the fact that as in the earliest form of milk production, animals are not fed fermented fodder. Since the 1960s, and due to mechanisation, the industrialisation of farming has increasingly relied upon the production of silage (fermented fodder), thus reducing fresh-fodder farming.

Livestock farming was based on the one hand on pasture grazing and on the other hand on grass and hay production in meadows. According to written records, harvesting hay — or hay and 'grummet' [green fodder] — at least twice a year (*fenum primum et secundum*) has been common practice in the Tyrol since the 13th century. (Stolz, O., *Rechtsgeschichte des Bauernstandes und der Landwirtschaft in Tirol und Vorarlberg* [Legal history of farmers and agriculture in the Tyrol and Vorarlberg], 1949.)

The land register of the archbishopric of Salzburg contains highly detailed information about the number of livestock on 'Schwaig' settlements and all other property belonging to the archbishopric in the Ziller valley in 1607. Specifically, at the end of each detailed description of the individual property parcels there is a statement which reads: 'during the winter, holds so-and-so many horses, cattle, sheep or goats'. The alpine farmers had fewer livestock in the winter than in the summer, when the pastures were available. There is no doubt that grazing on village pastures was intensely practised in the 'Schwaig' settlements and served as a primary source of feed for the livestock. There is documentary evidence from an even earlier period, specifically the 13th and 14th centuries, that the 'Schwaighof' farms included meadows and fields as well as pastures and alpine grasslands. This means that grass and hay production was carried out on 'Schwaighof' farms from the earliest periods. At some distance from the farms there are mountain ridges which also belong to the 'Schwaig' settlements. These ridges traditionally consist of pastures to which the livestock is sent for grazing for a few weeks in the spring and autumn, and which are used for making hay the rest of the year. Among the various types of pastureland, these mountain or high-altitude meadows are particularly characteristic of the Alps. These meadows are mown no more than once per year, and in some places once every two to four years. The quantity of hay they produce is small, but it is very fragrant and nutritious. (Stolz, O., *Die Schwaighöfe in Tirol* [Schwaighof farms in the Tyrol], 1930.)

A barn must be available for the hay. The hay supply must be stored until the following spring, because it is frequently the case that snow falls soon after the livestock is brought to the alpine meadows. (Trientl, A., *Die Landwirtschaft in den Gebirgsländern* [Agriculture in mountainous countries], 1892.)
