

**Publication of an approved standard amendment to a product specification of a protected designation of origin or protected geographical indication in the agricultural products and foodstuffs sector, as referred to in Article 6b(2) and (3) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 664/2014**

(2023/C 185/17)

This communication is published in accordance with Article 6b(5) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 664/2014 <sup>(1)</sup>.

**Communicating the approval of a standard amendment to the product specification of a protected designation of origin or protected geographical indication originating in a Member State**

**(Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012)**

**‘Prés-salés du Mont-Saint-Michel’**

**EU No: PDO-FR-0813-AM01 – 27.2.2023**

**PDO (X) PGI ( )**

**1. Name of product**

‘Prés-salés du Mont-Saint-Michel’

**2. Member State to which the geographical area belongs**

France

**3. Member State authority communicating the standard amendment**

Ministry of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty

**4. Description of the approved amendment(s)**

*1. Geographical area*

Description

The definition of the geographical area has been amended. The geographical area covered by the ‘Prés-salés du Mont-Saint-Michel’ PDO has been extended to include the following four municipalities in the department of Manche: Montsenelle, Bauppte, Auvers and Méautis.

The list of municipalities in the geographical area covered by the product specification has been updated to bring it into line with the 2021 Official Geographical Code, in accordance with national requirements.

The amendment affects the single document.

*2. References to the inspection structures*

Description

In accordance with the requirements established by the French authorities, the heading ‘References to the inspection structures’ has been amended.

The amendment does not affect the single document.

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<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 179, 19.6.2014, p. 17.

## SINGLE DOCUMENT

**'Prés-salés du Mont-Saint-Michel'**

EU No: PDO-FR-0813-AM01 – 27.2.2023

PDO (X) PGI ( )

**1. Name(s) [of PDO or PGI]**

'Prés-salés du Mont-Saint-Michel'

**2. Member State or Third Country**

France

**3. Description of the agricultural product or foodstuff****3.1. Type of product [as in Annex XI]**

Class 1.1. Fresh meat (and offal)

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

Meat bearing the 'Prés-salés du Mont-Saint-Michel' designation of origin is obtained from lambs which are up to 12 months old and which feed on maritime pasture, which gives them their distinctive features. These lambs are the offspring of rams of the following breeds: 'Suffolk', 'Roussin', 'Rouge de l'Ouest', 'Vendéen', 'Cotentin', 'Avranchin', 'Charollais', or of rams born of mothers reared by breeders entitled to use salt marshes as pasturage. The breeding females are the offspring of ewes which were reared in the geographical area by breeders using salt marshes as pasturage.

The carcasses have the following features:

- minimum weight: 14 kg;
- slim carcass profile: 'straight to subconcave profile' and 'good to generous muscle development' (classes U, R and O on the EUROP grading scale);
- fat cover: 'slightly to well covered' (class 2 or 3 on the EUROP grading scale);
- firm, white to creamy-white external and internal fat, spread evenly around the body.

The meat is offered for sale chilled. It may not be sold thawed and chilled.

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

The lambs and ewes feed mainly on salt marsh pastures. The lambs are reared over the course of successive periods: the post-natal period, the period of maritime pasture and sometimes a finishing period.

In all cases, the maritime pasture period, including grazing in retreat zones on days when the salt marsh is covered by the spring tides, is equal to at least half of the animal's lifetime.

The fodder consumed by the animals during the various rearing periods comes from the geographical area and consists of fresh grass, grazing grass or grass preserved as hay or haylage with a dry matter content of over 50 %, roots, tubers and vegetables.

The distribution of maize silage has been forbidden since 1 June 2013.

100 % of the forage comes from the geographical area, compared to 50 % for the concentrates.

Only plants, co-products and feedstuffs derived from non-transgenic products may be used in the animal feed. No product of animal origin, apart from dairy products, may be added to the lambs' feed.

- During the post-natal period, which lasts for at least 45 days and up to a maximum of 105 days after birth, the lambs feed mainly on their mother's milk, sometimes supplemented by powdered milk, fodder or concentrates.

- During the maritime pasturing, which lasts for at least 70 days, the lambs are kept on the salt marshes within specific, independent tracts of pasturage. The animals withdraw to retreat zones when the pastures are flooded. They feed mainly or exclusively on grass (a maximum of 400 g of concentrates per day, served in the evening, can be tolerated on top of grazing).
- During the (optional) finishing period, which lasts for a maximum of 30 or 40 days according to the season and concerns lambs having fed exclusively on grass during the maritime grazing period, the lambs feed on fodder and concentrates and no longer graze on the salt marshes.

The concentrates given to the ewes and/or lambs during the various rearing periods are made up of the following ingredients:

- cereals and their products and by-products: barley, maize, wheat, triticale, oats,
- oil seeds and their products and by-products: soya, sunflower, colza and linseed oilcakes, soya beans and husks,
- protein crops; lupin, beans and field beans,
- tubers and roots and their products and by-products: beet pulp,
- forage: alfalfa, straw,
- molasses: sugar-cane molasses,
- additives,
- minerals, vitamins.

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

Birth, rearing and slaughter.

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

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

At the end of the chilling period carcasses of lambs covered by the designation of origin 'Prés-salés du Mont-Saint-Michel' are identified and labelled with a permanent stamp in indelible ink marked 'Prés-salés MSM' on the main areas (shoulders, ribs and legs).

Up to the final distribution stage, the carcass and pieces of meat cut from it are accompanied by a label displaying at least:

- the designation,
- the abbreviation 'PDO' or the words 'protected designation of origin'.
- the European Union PDO logo,
- the breeder's name,
- the number of the holding,
- the national identification number of the lamb,
- the date of slaughter,
- the place of slaughter and slaughter number,
- the sentence 'the meat matures on the bone for at least 4 full days between the date of slaughter and the date of retail sale to the final consumer'.

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

The geographical area within which the birth, rearing and slaughter of the lambs takes place comprises the following 26 cantons, 14 of which belong in part to the departments of Manche and Ille et Vilaine:

Department of Manche:

All of the municipalities belonging to the cantons of Bréhal, Bricquebec-en-Cotentin, Cherbourg-en-Cotentin (1, 2, 3, 4, 5), Granville, La Hague, Les Pieux and Pontorson.

In the canton of Agon-Coutainville, the municipalities of Agon-Coutainville, Blainville-sur-Mer, Geffosses, Gouville-sur-Mer, Muneville-le-Bingard, Saint-Malo-de-la-Lande and Saint-Sauveur-Villages (only for the territory of the delegated municipalities of Ancteville and La Ronde-Haye).

In the canton of Carentan-les-Marais, the municipalities of Auvers, Baupte, Méautis, Picauville (only for the territory of the delegated municipality of Les Moitiers-en-Bauptois).

In the canton of Isigny-le-Buat, only the municipalities of Avranches, La Godefroy, Saint-Brice, Saint-Loup, Saint-Senier-sous-Avranches, Isigny-le-Buat and Tirepiéd-sur-Sée (only for the territory of La Gohannière).

In the canton of Quetteville-sur-Sienne, the municipalities of Annoville, Hauteville-sur-Mer, Lingreville, Montmartin-sur-Mer, Quetteville-sur-Sienne (only for the territory of the delegated municipalities of Contrières, Hérenguerville, Hyenville, Quetteville-sur-Sienne and Trelly).

In the canton of Valognes, the municipalities of Brix, Huberville, Lieusaint, Montaigu-la-Brisette, Saint-Joseph, Saussemesnil, Tamerville, Valognes and Yvetot-Bocage.

In the canton of Villedieu-les-Poêles-Rouffigny, only the municipality of Le Tanu.

The municipalities of the canton of Avranches, with the exception of the delegated municipality of Braffais in the municipality of Le Parc.

The municipalities of the canton of Coutances, with the exception of the municipalities of Camprond and Monthuchon.

In the canton of Créances, with the exception of the municipality of Le Plessis-Lastelle.

The municipalities of the canton of Saint-Hilaire-du-Harcouët, with the exception of the municipalities of Savigny-le-Vieux and Buais-Les-Monts.

The department of Ille-et-Vilaine:

All the municipalities in the cantons of Fougères-2.

In the canton of Vitré, the municipalities of Balazé, Châtillon-en-Vendelais, Montautour, Princé, Saint-M'Hervé and Vitré.

The municipalities of the canton of Dol-de-Bretagne, with the exception of the municipalities of Châteauneuf-d'Ille-et-Vilaine, Lillemer, Miniac-Morvan, Plerguer, Saint-Guinoux, Saint-Père-Marc-en-Poulet, Saint-Suliac, Le Tronchet and La Ville-ès-Nonais.

The municipalities of the canton of Fougères-1, with the exception of Livré-sur-Changeon.

The municipalities of the canton of Val-Couesnon, with the exception of the municipalities of Aubigné, Feins, Mouazé and Montreuil-sur-Ille.

## 5. Link with the geographical area

The geographical area is located around the Norman-Breton Gulf, including the coastal part of the departments of Manche and Ille-et-Vilaine. Its most notable features are its extensive coastal area and the strong maritime and oceanic influence on its climate. In the heart of this geographical area lies grassland which is regularly covered over by the sea, known as salt or grass marshes, which provide most of the animals' food. These salt marshes make up the upper part of the intertidal zone. They have developed locally within the Bay of Mont-Saint-Michel and the estuaries on the western seaboard of the Cotentin region, shielded from waves and strong currents and characterised by fine sedimentation. The substrate of the salt marsh is known as sea sand ('tangué'), which is made up of very fine silt and sand which are rich in calcium. The marshlands are deeply perforated by channels which break down into secondary channels, forming an extremely dense network which divides the grassland into several operational units and creates obstacles hindering the movement of the sheep.

The vegetation is made up of plants known as halophytes, which are adapted to the saltness of the soil and to flooding. Several of these plants, including puccinellie (*Puccinellia maritima*), troscart (*Triglochin maritima*) and obione (*Halimione portulacoides*), especially when frozen, are much appreciated by 'Prés-salés du Mont-Saint-Michel' lambs and therefore account for most of their diet.

Lamb production in the Mont-Saint-Michel Bay can be traced back to the 10th century, when local monks had the right to 'brebiage' (lamb rearing). Sheep production also took place at the same time in the Contentin port region according to the founding charter of the Lessay abbey, whereby the abbey was endowed with two sheepfolds; by 1181, sheep wool made up two thirds of the abbey's 'tithe' (tax income) under the Charter of Henry II Plantagenet.

Up until the first half of the 20th century the sheep were herded in groups of two to four, tied together, except in the polders of Mont-Saint-Michel where relatively large herds were led by shepherds onto the salt marsh. As from the second half of the 20th century, sheep rearing became more specialised with the use of sheepfolds.

In order to overcome the geographical constraints of the area, farmers have always selected their breeding stock in a specific manner so as to make the best use of the females' reproductive capacity and the ability of the animals to move on unstable ground, whilst ensuring that the lambs' growth is adapted to the growth cycle of the plants on the salt marsh. Thus the females belong to the flock while the males, which are bought from outside, belong to breeds which are well suited to the living conditions of the salt marsh and whose muscle growth is relatively slower.

The rearing of 'pré-salés' lambs also developed thanks to the construction of sheepfolds and when the meadows located on firmer ground near the maritime marsh were made fit for that purpose. The sheepfolds are crucial for sheltering the ewes when they give birth and when the maritime meadows are flooded by the spring tides.

Farmers have developed breeding and dietary strategies which are well suited to the geographical area so as to take account of weather hazards and the rate of growth in individual lambs within the herd, which varies greatly. When the animal shelters are near the coastline, feed supplements are sometimes distributed in the evening after grazing. When the shelters are far away, all breeders can do is carry out finishing procedures before slaughter. This feed is produced mainly within the geographical area, although part of it can come from outside, especially feed with nitrogenous content.

Built on local relations between breeders, butchers and slaughterers, this particular sheep-rearing tradition has resulted in consistent use being made of nearby slaughterhouses where the means and know-how for slaughtering sheep have been maintained over time. The main features of the specific expertise used in slaughtering the animals are a short waiting period in comfortable conditions between arrival at the slaughterhouse and slaughter, and a particularly careful form of slaughter, cutting-up and evisceration which preserves the fat cover and prevents any contamination of the carcass. There are also rules governing primary chilling and maturing. The conformity of the carcasses is assessed following these operations, particularly in relation to the quality of the fat and the appearance of the carcasses.

The carcasses have a white, firm and evenly spread fat cover. They range between slightly covered in fat to well covered and are relatively slim. The legs are slender. Distinguishing features of the meat are its strong pink colour, fibre length and marbled appearance (from intramuscular fat). The meat remains very juicy after cooking and when chewed and produces intense, lasting flavours in the mouth, with no taste of wool grease.

The specific qualities of the meat have been recognised for a long time, as reflected in the words of Pierre Thomas du Fosse, a scholar and man of letters from Rouen who went to Pontorson during the summer of 1691: 'The grass near the coast is like wild thyme: it gives the mutton and lamb such an exquisitely delicious taste that one would be tempted to give up partridges and pheasants.'

This long-standing fame was also confirmed more recently in a ruling of the Caen appeal court of 24 January 1986, stating that sheep bred at regular intervals on pastures which are periodically flooded by the sea are normally known as 'pré-salés' sheep and that high-quality meat is obtained from animals bred in that way.

The link between 'Prés-salés du Mont-Saint-Michel' meat and its production area is explained by the specific vegetation of the salt marshes on which the sheep feed, as well as the physical exercise they have to do to reach it. Physical exercise plays an important role in the link to the geographical area in the salt marshes of the Mont-Saint-Michel Bay, which provide large open spaces in which to graze, and also in the salt marshes of the port region of Cotentin, even though the grasslands are smaller there. This is because the feed value of the salt marshes is fairly low, and the rarity of the particular type of grass on which the sheep graze means that they have to cover long distances to find sufficient food. This results in slim carcasses and strongly coloured meat.

The meat's distinguishing features are reinforced by the other constraints of this area of loose terrain, which is divided up by a network of deep channels and exposed to a harsh climate. Given these rough conditions, often the animals cannot arrive on the salt marshes too young and must stay there long enough for their specific diet to have its full effect on the meat obtained from them.

These rearing conditions result in animals with slim carcass conformations, a light and firm fat cover and a distinctive flavour without any taste of wool grease.

The fact that slaughtering takes place near the holdings helps preserve these features. This proximity limits travelling times, thus sparing the animals any stress which might cause the meat to deteriorate and allowing its organoleptic qualities, acquired as a result of the rearing process, to be preserved. In addition, this sheep-rearing tradition has made it possible for slaughterhouses in the geographical area to develop and maintain a specific know-how which respects the quality of the raw material (for example by keeping the fat cover intact and prohibiting spraying), while facilitating compliance checks on the carcasses.

The succulence of 'pré-salés' meat, recognised by gourmets, has given it a strong reputation which is reflected in its sale price: for more than a century the price has been 50-100 % higher than that of common lambs' meat.

**Reference to publication of the specification**

[https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/download/pdf?id=yUNSnznfq\\_FUS9VY3CTgn4PCIFRafx3LLgujSD-i24w=](https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/download/pdf?id=yUNSnznfq_FUS9VY3CTgn4PCIFRafx3LLgujSD-i24w=)

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