

Publication of an application for registration pursuant to Article 6(2) of Council Regulation (EEC) No 2081/92 on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin

(2000/C 131/03)

This publication confers the right to object to the application pursuant to Article 7 of the abovementioned Regulation. Any objection to this application must be submitted via the competent authority in the Member State concerned within a time limit of six months from the date of this publication. The arguments for publication are set out below, in particular under point 4.6, and are considered to justify the application within the meaning of Regulation (EEC) No 2081/92.

COUNCIL REGULATION (EEC) No 2081/92

APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION: ARTICLE 5

PDO (x) PGI ()

National application No: —

1. Responsible department in the Member State:

Name: Institut national des appellations d'origine

Address: 138, Champs Élysées, F-75008 Paris

Tel.: (33-1) 53 89 80 00

Fax: (33-1) 42 25 57 97

2. Applicant group:

2.1. Name: Syndicat interprofessionnel du bleu du Vercors

2.2. Address: Maison du Parc, F-38250 Lans-en-Vercors

2.3. Composition: producer/processor (x) other ()

3. Type of product: Class 1-3 — Cheese

4. Specification:

(Summary of requirements under Article 4(2)):

4.1. Name: Bleu du Vercors-Sassenage

4.2. Description: Bleu du Vercors-Sassenage is an unpressed, uncooked blue-veined cheese in flat cylinders, 27 cm to 30 cm in diameter and 7 cm to 9 cm high, with convex sides, weighing between 4 kg and 4,5 kg, ripend, with a fine bloom on the rind consisting of a light white mould-type down that may have orange to ivory coloured marbling of the kind caused by yeast and ripening bacteria.

4.3. Geographical area: The geographical area in which Bleu du Vercors-Sassenage with a registered designation of origin is made is located within the Vercors massif and includes 13 municipalities in the department of Drôme and 14 in the department of Isère.

4.4. Proof of origin: Evidence exists of this cheese having been produced in the Vercors massif since the 14th century. Baron Albert de Sassenage, in a deed of June 1338, granted authorisation to the inhabitants of the region to sell their cheese freely. The product's renown is attested to by a great many documents, including Pierre Larousse's *Grand Dictionnaire Universel* of the 19th century in which King Francis I is described as a great enthusiast. Production in the traditional way on farms was carried on up to the early years of the 20th century. In 1933 a dairy started manufacturing the cheese following the traditional formula. More recently, on-farm production has been enjoying a new boom. Any cheese marketed using the name of the registered designation of origin must bear a sign allowing the production unit to be identified and the product to be traced.

- 4.5. *Method of production:* Milk used to produce Bleu du Vercors-Sassenage with a registered designation of origin must be from dairy herds made up of cows of the Montbéliard, Abondance and Villard breeds only. Their feed must comprise fodder from the defined geographical area. Milk used in the production process is whole, or possibly partly skimmed, cow's milk from the last four milkings of the day only. The cheese is manufactured from milk heated to a maximum temperature of 76 °C and injected with *Penicillium roqueforti*. Coagulation must be carried out using rennet at a temperature of between 31 °C and 35 °C. The curd is stirred and poured into moulds in several layers without pressing. Salting takes place in individual moulds over a period of not more than three days. The ripening process of at least 21 days from the date of coagulation up to the time of removal from the cellar means that the cheese can develop in a balanced way.
- 4.6. *Link:* The Vercors massif is a highly distinctive limestone citadel dominating the surrounding plains at a height of 1 000 m. It has long, flat-bottomed humid valleys and cirques and closed coombs towered over by cliffs. It has an upland climate featuring brief summers, invariably cool nights, early autumns and snowfall that can occur from October to April or May. The climate is softened by the mitigating effects of the Atlantic and the Mediterranean. Its altitude, clay and limestone soils and relatively rainy upland climate make the massif a favoured location for pasture. This combination of factors also gives the Vercors massif its specific character from a botanical point of view. The contrasting reliefs of the natural environment mean that it is possible to use different but complementary areas of pasture offering abundant supplies of excellent quality feed. This represents the basis for the feed given to the herd and confers on the milk, and consequently on the cheese, its typical characteristics.
- 4.7. *Inspection body:*
- INAO — 138, Champs Élysées, F-75008 Paris
 - DGCCRF — 59, boulevard Vincent-Auriol, F-75703 Paris Cedex 13
- 4.8. *Labelling:* Cheese qualifying for the registered designation of origin Bleu du Vercors-Sassenage must include in its labelling the name of the registered designation of origin, the words 'appellation d'origine contrôlée' and a logo with the letters INAO, the words 'appellation d'origine contrôlée' and the name of the registered designation of origin.
- The words 'farm produced' (fabrication fermière), 'farm cheese' (fromage fermier) or any other words implying that the product comes from a farm may be used only by producers who are farmers.
- 4.9. *National requirements:* Decree of 30 July 1998.

EC-No: FR/00077/98.10.30.

Date of receipt of the full application: 18 January 2000
