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⁽¹⁾ Text with EEA relevance

II

*(Information)*INFORMATION FROM EUROPEAN UNION INSTITUTIONS, BODIES, OFFICES
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EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Non-opposition to a notified concentration**(Case M.8154 — Alpiq/GETEC Energie/JV)****(Text with EEA relevance)**

(2016/C 334/01)

On 25 August 2016, the Commission decided not to oppose the above notified concentration and to declare it compatible with the internal market. This decision is based on Article 6(1)(b) of Council Regulation (EC) No 139/2004 ⁽¹⁾. The full text of the decision is available only in the German language and will be made public after it is cleared of any business secrets it may contain. It will be available:

- in the merger section of the Competition website of the Commission (<http://ec.europa.eu/competition/mergers/cases/>). This website provides various facilities to help locate individual merger decisions, including company, case number, date and sectoral indexes,
- in electronic form on the EUR-Lex website (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/homepage.html?locale=en>) under document number 32016M8154. EUR-Lex is the online access to the European law.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 24, 29.1.2004, p. 1.

IV

(Notices)

NOTICES FROM EUROPEAN UNION INSTITUTIONS, BODIES, OFFICES AND
AGENCIES

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Euro exchange rates ⁽¹⁾**9 September 2016**

(2016/C 334/02)

1 euro =

Currency	Exchange rate	Currency	Exchange rate
USD US dollar	1,1268	CAD Canadian dollar	1,4600
JPY Japanese yen	115,85	HKD Hong Kong dollar	8,7393
DKK Danish krone	7,4428	NZD New Zealand dollar	1,5299
GBP Pound sterling	0,84558	SGD Singapore dollar	1,5280
SEK Swedish krona	9,5020	KRW South Korean won	1 244,18
CHF Swiss franc	1,0969	ZAR South African rand	16,1404
ISK Iceland króna		CNY Chinese yuan renminbi	7,5276
NOK Norwegian krone	9,2470	HRK Croatian kuna	7,4838
BGN Bulgarian lev	1,9558	IDR Indonesian rupiah	14 796,65
CZK Czech koruna	27,022	MYR Malaysian ringgit	4,6100
HUF Hungarian forint	308,61	PHP Philippine peso	53,337
PLN Polish zloty	4,3345	RUB Russian rouble	72,5475
RON Romanian leu	4,4495	THB Thai baht	39,201
TRY Turkish lira	3,3440	BRL Brazilian real	3,6552
AUD Australian dollar	1,4836	MXN Mexican peso	21,1869
		INR Indian rupee	75,2030

⁽¹⁾ Source: reference exchange rate published by the ECB.

Explanatory Notes to the Combined Nomenclature of the European Union

(2016/C 334/03)

Pursuant to Article 9(1)(a) of Council Regulation (EEC) No 2658/87 ⁽¹⁾, the Explanatory Notes to the Combined Nomenclature of the European Union ⁽²⁾ are hereby amended as follows:

On page 16, in the Explanatory Notes to Chapter 2, under the heading '**General**', the following point 6 is added:

- '6. Meat and meat offal containing preservatives, stabilisers or antioxidants added for stopping the degradation of those products, remain classified in this chapter.'

⁽¹⁾ Council Regulation (EEC) No 2658/87 of 23 July 1987 on the tariff and statistical nomenclature and on the Common Customs Tariff (OJ L 256, 7.9.1987, p. 1).

⁽²⁾ OJ C 76, 4.3.2015, p. 1.

Opinion of the Advisory Committee on restrictive agreements and dominant position given at its meeting of 30 November 2015 regarding a draft decision relating to Case AT.39767 — BEH Electricity

Rapporteur: Belgium

(2016/C 334/04)

1. The Advisory Committee shares the Commission's concerns expressed in its draft Decision as communicated to the Advisory Committee on 15 November 2015 under Article 102 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU).
 2. The Advisory Committee agrees with the Commission that the proceedings concerning Bulgarian Energy Holding EAD ('BEH') can be concluded by means of a decision pursuant to Article 9(1) of Regulation (EC) No 1/2003. A minority of Member States abstain. The majority of Member States agree.
 3. The Advisory Committee agrees with the Commission that the commitments offered by BEH are suitable and proportionate and should be made legally binding on BEH.
 4. The Advisory Committee agrees with the Commission that, in light of the commitments offered by BEH, there are no longer grounds for action by the Commission against BEH, without prejudice to Article 9(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1/2003.
 5. The Advisory Committee recommends the publication of its opinion in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.
-

Final Report of the Hearing Officer ⁽¹⁾**BEH Electricity****(AT.39767)**

(2016/C 334/05)

- (1) On 27 November 2012, the European Commission (the 'Commission') initiated proceedings pursuant to Article 11(6) of Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2003 ⁽²⁾ and Article 2(1) of Commission Regulation (EC) No 773/2004 ⁽³⁾ against Bulgarian Energy Holding EAD ('BEH') for alleged infringement of Article 102 TFEU on the market for the wholesale supply of electricity at freely negotiated prices in Bulgaria.
- (2) The Commission adopted a Statement of Objections ('SO') on 12 August 2014. According to the SO, BEH holds a dominant position on the relevant market and the inclusion of territorial restrictions on resale in contracts for the sale of electricity by BEH's subsidiaries NEK EAD, Thermal Power Plant Maritsa East 2 EAD and Nuclear Power Plant Kozloduy EAD amounts to an abuse of that dominant position.
- (3) On 25 August 2014, BEH received access to the Commission file and subsequently submitted its reply to the SO on 25 November 2014, following a four-week extension to the original period of 9 weeks set by the Commission. In its written reply to the SO, BEH requested the opportunity to develop its arguments at an oral hearing.
- (4) The oral hearing took place on 16 January 2015.
- (5) On 15 May 2015, BEH offered commitments pursuant to Article 9 of Regulation (EC) No 1/2003 to meet the concerns expressed in the SO. On 19 June 2015, the Commission published a Communication pursuant to Article 27(4) of Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2003, summarising the concerns of the Commission and the commitments submitted by BEH on 15 May 2015 and inviting interested third parties to submit observations within one month of this publication ⁽⁴⁾. A total of 7 substantive responses were received.
- (6) On 8 September 2015, the Commission informed BEH of the result of the market test. On 16 October 2015, BEH submitted a revised version of the commitments.
- (7) The draft decision makes the revised commitments binding upon BEH and any legal entity controlled by it, and concludes that in light of these, there are no longer grounds for action on its part, and thus the proceedings in this case should be brought to an end.
- (8) I have not received any request or complaint with respect to the submitted commitments ⁽⁵⁾.
- (9) Pursuant to Article 16 of Decision 2011/695/EU, I have examined whether the draft decision deals only with objections in respect of which the parties have been afforded the opportunity of making known their views, and I have come to a positive conclusion.
- (10) In conclusion, I consider that the effective exercise of procedural rights has been respected in this case.

Brussels, 2 December 2015.

Wouter WILS

⁽¹⁾ Pursuant to Articles 16 and 17 of Decision 2011/695/EU of the President of the European Commission of 13 October 2011 on the function and terms of reference of the hearing officer in certain competition proceedings (OJ L 275, 20.10.2011, p. 29).

⁽²⁾ Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2003 of 16 December 2002 on the implementation of the rules on competition laid down in Articles 81 and 82 of the Treaty (OJ L 1, 4.1.2003, p. 1).

⁽³⁾ Commission Regulation (EC) No 773/2004 of 7 April 2004 relating to the conduct of proceedings by the Commission pursuant to Articles 81 and 82 of the EC Treaty (OJ L 123, 27.4.2004, p. 18).

⁽⁴⁾ OJ C 202, 19.6.2015, p. 2.

⁽⁵⁾ According to Article 15(1) of Decision 2011/695/EU, parties to the proceedings offering commitments pursuant to Article 9 of Regulation (EC) No 1/2003 may call upon the hearing officer at any stage of the procedure in order to ensure the effective exercise of their procedural rights.

Summary of Commission Decision
of 10 December 2015
relating to a proceeding under Article 102 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union
(Case AT.39767 — BEH Electricity)
(notified under document number C(2015) 8860)
(Only the English text is authentic)
(2016/C 334/06)

On 10 December 2015, the Commission adopted a decision relating to a proceeding under Article 102 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. In accordance with the provisions of Article 30 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2003⁽¹⁾, the Commission herewith publishes the names of the parties and the main content of the decision, including any penalties imposed, having regard to the legitimate interest of undertakings in the protection of their business secrets.

1. Introduction

- (1) The case concerns territorial restrictions on resale in contracts for the sale of electricity on the market for the wholesale supply of electricity at freely negotiated prices in Bulgaria by Bulgarian Energy Holding EAD ('BEH')'s wholly owned subsidiaries, Natsionalna Elektricheska Kompania EAD ('NEK'), TPP Maritsa East 2 EAD ('TPP Maritsa East 2') and NPP Kozloduy EAD ('NPP Kozloduy') (collectively 'BEH's subsidiaries').

2. Procedure

- (2) On 27 November 2012, the Commission opened proceedings with a view to adopting a decision under Chapter III of Regulation (EC) No 1/2003 and on 12 August 2014, the Commission adopted a statement of objections ('SO') which set out the Commission's preliminary competition concerns; those concerns related to the territorial restrictions on the resale of electricity, contained in the contracts that BEH's subsidiaries enter into with third parties. The SO constitutes a preliminary assessment for the purposes of Article 9(1) of Regulation (EC) No 1/2003. This assessment was notified to BEH by letter of 14 August 2014.
- (3) On 25 November 2014, BEH submitted its reply to the SO. An oral hearing took place on 16 January 2015.
- (4) On 15 May 2015, BEH offered commitments to meet the concerns expressed by the Commission (the 'Initial Commitments').
- (5) On 19 June 2015, a notice was published in the *Official Journal of the European Union* ⁽²⁾ pursuant to Article 27(4) of Regulation (EC) No 1/2003, summarising the case and the Initial Commitments and inviting interested third parties to give their observations on those commitments within one month following publication.
- (6) On 8 September 2015, the Commission informed BEH of the observations received from interested third parties following the publication of the notice. On 16 October 2015, BEH offered revised commitments ('the Final Commitments').
- (7) On 30 November 2015, the Advisory Committee on Restrictive Practices and Dominant Positions was consulted. On 2 December 2015, the Hearing Officer issued his final report.

3. Concerns expressed in the preliminary assessment

- (8) According to the preliminary assessment the relevant product market was considered to be the market for the wholesale supply of electricity at freely negotiated prices. Further, the Commission took the preliminary view that the market for the wholesale supply of electricity at freely negotiated prices was national in scope. The Commission's preliminary assessment was that BEH holds a dominant position on the wholesale market for the supply of electricity at freely negotiated prices in Bulgaria, on the basis of the share of supply of electricity at freely negotiated prices accounted for by sales by BEH's subsidiaries and the absence of any significant competitive pressure from other producers or imports.
- (9) According to the preliminary assessment BEH was abusing its dominant position on the free wholesale market for the supply of electricity in Bulgaria, contrary to Article 102 of the Treaty, by way of the destination clauses in the contracts entered into by BEH's subsidiaries, for the wholesale supply of electricity at freely negotiated prices to entities other than end-users.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 1, 4.1.2003, p. 1.

⁽²⁾ Communication from the Commission published pursuant to Article 27(4) of Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2003 in Case AT.39767 — BEH Electricity (OJ C 202, 19.6.2015, p. 2).

- (10) The Commission considers that BEH has not provided sufficient evidence that its conduct could be objectively justified or that it is necessary for the achievement of efficiency gains which could counteract any likely negative effects on competition, without eliminating effective competition.
- (11) The Commission's preliminary assessment concludes that BEH's practice has the potential effect of raising barriers to trade between Bulgaria and other Member States, thus distorting the allocation of electricity within the Single Market, and affecting liquidity and efficiency of electricity markets.

4. The commitments and the market test

- (12) BEH did not agree with the Commission's preliminary assessment. It has nevertheless offered commitments, the key elements of which were as follows:
 - a) BEH will set up a power exchange in Bulgaria, with the assistance of an independent third party with expertise in the operation of power exchanges.
 - b) BEH will offer at least stipulated volumes of electricity on the day-ahead market of the exchange (which will increase each year in line with volumes traded by power exchanges in the region during their first years of operation) by means of liquidity provider agreements entered into between BEH and its subsidiaries and the power exchange; the pattern of volumes offered will vary on a monthly, daily and hourly basis following load profile patterns in Bulgaria;
 - c) the volumes will be offered by BEH and its subsidiaries on the day-ahead market of the exchange at a maximum offer price based on the costs of BEH subsidiaries;
 - d) initially, the volumes of electricity offered by BEH and its subsidiaries will be hourly products only; as from the second year of operation, a proportion of the products can be offered as block products (of between 3 and 24 hours);
 - e) BEH will divest ownership of the power exchange within six months after formal notification of the Commission's decision and transfer its capital to the Bulgarian State, whose rights will be exercised by the Ministry of Finance.
- (13) The duration of the commitments will start on the date of notification of the commitments decision and will end five years from the start of operation of the power exchange. BEH will also appoint a trustee that will monitor its compliance with the commitments.
- (14) Further, BEH and its subsidiaries will cease and desist from including destination clauses, or any measure of equivalent effect, in their bilateral electricity supply contracts.
- (15) The observations received in response to the market test notice pursuant to Article 27(4) of Regulation (EC) No 1/2003 raised some doubts as to guarantees of sufficient liquidity on the day-ahead market. In order to take account of the results of the market test, BEH offered to commit to only offer hourly products on the day-ahead market of the power exchange and to ensure that sufficient volumes offered by BEH and BEH's subsidiaries on the day-ahead market will be made available for third parties to purchase.
- (16) BEH subsequently amended its Initial Commitments and submitted a revised proposal on 16 October 2015

5. Conclusion

- (17) The Commission considers that the Final Commitments offered by BEH are appropriate and necessary in order to address the concerns expressed by the Commission in its preliminary assessment. BEH has not offered less onerous commitments in response the preliminary assessment that would adequately address the Commission's concerns.
 - (18) The Commission makes binding the Final Commitments offered by BEH to meet the Commission's concerns expressed in its preliminary assessment.
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V

(Announcements)

PROCEDURES RELATING TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF COMPETITION
POLICY

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Prior notification of a concentration**(Case M.8183 — Avnet/Premier Farnell)****(Text with EEA relevance)**

(2016/C 334/07)

1. On 1 September 2016, the Commission received notification of a proposed concentration pursuant to Article 4 of Council Regulation (EC) No 139/2004 ⁽¹⁾ by which the undertaking Avnet, Inc. ('Avnet', USA) acquires within the meaning of Article 3(1)(b) of the Merger Regulation control of the whole of the undertaking Premier Farnell plc ('Premier Farnell', UK) by way of public bid announced on 28 July 2016.

2. The business activities of the undertakings concerned are:

- for Avnet: global distributor of electronic components, enterprise and data centre products and software. Avnet also offers assembly and other value-added services, including engineering and design support, materials management and logistics services, system integration and configuration and supply chain services customised to meet specific requirements of customers and suppliers;
- for Premier Farnell: global high service distributor of technology products and solutions for electronic system design, production, maintenance and repair. Premier Farnell distributes electronic components and related products, and finished electrical and electronic products.

3. On preliminary examination, the Commission finds that the notified transaction could fall within the scope of the Merger Regulation. However, the final decision on this point is reserved.

4. The Commission invites interested third parties to submit their possible observations on the proposed operation to the Commission.

Observations must reach the Commission not later than 10 days following the date of this publication. Observations can be sent to the Commission by fax (+32 22964301), by email to COMP-MERGER-REGISTRY@ec.europa.eu or by post, under reference M.8183 — Avnet/Premier Farnell, to the following address:

European Commission
Directorate-General for Competition
Merger Registry
1049 Bruxelles/Brussel
BELGIQUE/BELGIË

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 24, 29.1.2004, p. 1 (the 'Merger Regulation').

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

(2016/C 334/08)

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 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**‘SPECK ALTO ADIGE’/‘SÜDTIROLER MARKENSPECK’/‘SÜDTIROLER SPECK’****EU No: PGI-IT-02125 – 14.3.2015****PDO () PGI (X)****1. Applicant group and legitimate interest**

Consorzio Tutela Speck Alto Adige
Via Portici No 71
39100 Bolzano
ITALIA

Tel. +39/0471/300381
Fax +39/0471/302091
info@speck.it

The ‘Consorzio Tutela Speck Alto Adige’ [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)

- ☐ Name of product
- ☐ Description of product
- ☐ Geographical area
- ☐ Proof of origin
- ☒ Method of production
- ☐ Link
- ☒ Labelling
- ☐ Other [to be specified]

4. Type of amendment(s)

- ☒ Amendment to product specification of a 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.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 343, 14.12.2012, p. 1.

- ☐ 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)

Method of production

Article 4 of the product specification

- Subparagraph 8 of Article 4, which reads:

‘8. When delivered, their temperature must be between 0 °C and 4 °C measured at the core.’

is amended as follows:

‘8. When delivered, their temperature must be between 0 °C and 7 °C measured at the core.’

The temperature range has been broadened to bring it into line with common delivery conditions for fresh legs used to produce ‘Speck Alto Adige’.

This is to prevent the legs being transported at temperatures significantly below 0 °C before delivery, which may be required by a narrower temperature range such as the 0 °C – 4 °C range currently applicable.

- The sentence:

‘be aged at an ambient temperature of between 10 °C and 15 °C and a humidity level of between 60 % and 90 %;’

has been amended as follows:

‘be aged at an ambient temperature of between 10 °C and 16 °C and a humidity level of between 55 % and 90 %;’

The temperature and humidity conditions of the ageing environment have been broadened. These measures introduce minor variations by allowing both a wider ambient temperature range, which helps activate the osmosis that is essential to the production process, and lower humidity levels in the premises, which is sometimes necessary to make them better adjusted to the ageing process.

- The paragraph:

‘Salting and flavouring, using the dry method, shall take place within four days of the starting date of production, which must be marked indelibly and directly on each whole ham in such a way that it can be identified until the end of the production process.’

has been amended as follows:

‘Salting and flavouring, using the dry method, shall take place within four days of the starting date of production. Producers must put in place a registration system that, for each whole ham, allows the starting date of production, including a reference to the relevant uniform batch, to be clearly identified until the end of the production process.’

The amendment enables producers to use, in line with internal corporate traceability procedures, more up-to-date systems for identifying whole hams, rather than the time-consuming and unsystematic procedure of time-stamping the rind, allowing them to use the full range of solutions now available through technological progress, benefiting the entire production process.

Article 5 of the product specification

- The paragraph:

“‘Speck Alto Adige PGI’/“Südtiroler Markenspeck PGI”/“Südtiroler Speck PGI” must be dry-cured in accordance with local practices and traditions in premises where sufficient air circulation, a temperature between 10 °C and 15 °C and a humidity level between 60 % and 90 % are guaranteed.”

is amended as follows:

“‘Speck Alto Adige PGI’/“Südtiroler Markenspeck PGI”/“Südtiroler Speck PGI” must be dry-cured in accordance with local practices and traditions in premises where sufficient air circulation, a temperature between 10 °C and 16 °C and a humidity level between 55 % and 90 % are guaranteed.”

The amendment reflects and incorporates the changes to the temperature and humidity conditions of the production environment referred to in Article 4.

— The paragraph:

'The weight of the hams must fall by at least 35 % as follows, depending on the weight class:

Weight of the whole ham in kg.	Minimum time for achieving 35 % weight loss	Minimum dry-curing time in weeks
3,4 to < 4,3	at least 15 weeks	at least 20 weeks
4,3 to < 4,9	at least 17 weeks	at least 22 weeks
4,9 to < 5,5	at least 18 weeks	at least 24 weeks
5,5 to < 6,0	at least 20 weeks	at least 26 weeks
6,0 to < 6,5	at least 21 weeks	at least 28 weeks
6,5 to < 7,0	at least 23 weeks	at least 30 weeks
7,0 to < 7,5	at least 24 weeks	at least 32 weeks'

has been amended as follows:

'The weight of the hams must fall by at least 35 % within the minimum dry-curing times indicated in the table below according to their weight class:

Weight of the whole ham in kg.	Start of refinement as from the beginning of the dry-curing process.	Minimum dry-curing time in weeks
3,4 to < 4,3	at least 15 weeks	at least 20 weeks
4,3 to < 4,9	at least 17 weeks	at least 22 weeks
4,9 to < 5,5	at least 18 weeks	at least 24 weeks
5,5 to < 6,0	at least 20 weeks	at least 26 weeks
6,0 to < 6,5	at least 21 weeks	at least 28 weeks
6,5 to < 7,0	at least 23 weeks	at least 30 weeks
7,0 to < 7,5	at least 24 weeks	at least 32 weeks

Once the ham has lost 35 % of its weight, it may undergo a stage of refinement from the time indicated in the table above, expressed in weeks according to the weight class.'

The producers saw a need to indicate that the 35 % minimum weight loss is to be reached within the minimum dry-curing period set out in the third column of the table in the current specification, and to replace the heading 'Minimum time for achieving 35 % weight loss' in the central column of the table by 'Start of refinement as from the beginning of the dry-curing process', followed by an explanation in the following paragraph of the conditions for starting the refinement process. Thus the obligation to reach the minimum weight loss within a specific period is removed and a refinement stage is included in the overall dry-curing process, the length of which has remained unchanged. The refinement stage begins a number of weeks, varying according to the weight, after the start of the dry-curing process, as set out in the second column of the table.

A specific refinement period enables producers to carry out a number of good practices, described below, to bring out the specific characteristics of the product.

— Following this amendment a specific description of the refinement stage was inserted in the product specification.

'Refinement takes place after the minimum weight loss required has been achieved and before the end of the minimum dry-curing process has been reached. Its purpose is to obtain the product characteristics described in Article 6 of this product specification once it has been established that the specified weight loss has been achieved.

The refinement procedure makes use of special cling film that is protective and safe for food.'

The paragraph clarifies and lays down the conditions for the refinement stage. During the refinement period the product is wrapped in a protective film which allows it to soften and reach an appropriate texture, preventing dry edges or grooves from developing and deformation owing to weight loss from occurring.

— The sentence:

'Weights refer to both the weight of individual hams and the average weight of the relevant production batch.'

is amended as follows:

'Weights refer to the average weight of the production batch.'

This introduces a non-ambiguous way of determining weight, based on production batches and no longer on individual hams, simplifying this stage of production and bringing it into line with other stages, where production batches also serve as a reference.

— The sentence:

'Throughout the dry-curing period the temperature of "Speck Alto Adige PGI"/"Südtiroler Markenspeck PGI"/"Südtiroler Speck PGI" may vary only between 10 and 15 °C measured at the core'.

is amended as follows:

'Throughout the dry-curing period the temperature of "Speck Alto Adige PGI"/"Südtiroler Markenspeck PGI"/"Südtiroler Speck PGI" may vary only between 10 and 16 °C measured at the core'.

The amendment reflects and incorporates the changes to the temperature and humidity conditions of the production environment referred to in Article 4.

Article 8 of the product specification

— The sentence:

'Whole hams meeting the requirements of this specification shall be identified by at least four indelible marks on the rind at the end of the compulsory dry-curing period after the minimum 35 % weight loss has been reached;'

is amended as follows:

'Whole hams meeting the requirements of this specification shall be identified by at least one indelible mark on the rind at the end of the compulsory dry-curing period after the minimum 35 % weight loss has been reached;'

The indelible mark is affixed on the rind at least once instead of four times. This provision meets certain needs expressed by producers of 'Speck Alto Adige PGI'/Südtiroler Markenspeck PGI'/Südtiroler Speck PGI' whose products are pre-packaged and cut into portions. Most products are marketed pre-packaged or cut into portions, in which case all the product details are on the label, including the logo, which is printed in four colours and is therefore better visible than a dark brown mark on a rind which is already dark. Moreover, the mark has become redundant given that the whole ham may be cut into as much as thirty parts or even into slices. In addition, affixing only one mark on the rind simplifies production and is sufficient to guarantee the product's origin when transferred internally or intermediately for processing, until it is finally packaged and cut into portions.

— The paragraph:

'This mark consists of a linear frame containing a stylised representation of mountains at the bottom and the word "Südtirol" at the top, as follows:



is amended as follows:

‘This mark is a representation of a bodice containing in the centre a stylised image of mountains with the word “Südtirol” on top, as follows:



The amendment consists in redesigning the mark to improve its visibility and that of the product logo.

— The sentence:

‘It must appear on the label in clear, indelible characters that can be clearly distinguished from all other writing on the label and must be followed by the phrase “Protected Geographical Indication” and the abbreviation “PGI”, which must be translated into the language in which the product is being marketed.’

is amended as follows:

‘It must appear on the label in clear and indelible lettering that can be clearly distinguished from all other writing on the label and must be followed by the phrase “Protected Geographical Indication” and/or the abbreviation “PGI”, which must be translated into the language in which the product is being marketed.’

This amendment allows the abbreviation PGI to be used as an alternative to the phrase ‘Protected Geographical Indication’ in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 1151/2015.

— The paragraphs:

‘A representation of a bodice in the centre of which is a rectangular field with curved sides containing the word “SÜDTIROL” in stylised capital letters over a stylised, multi-coloured mountain chain, on either side of which are two stylised acorns along the horizontal axis of the bodice; along the upper undulating edge of the bodice the words “Speck Alto Adige PGI Südtiroler Speck PGI” are written in stylised letters, and along the lower undulating edge the words “Protected Geographical Indication” in stylised letters; along the edges of the bodice runs a decorative border consisting of a line parallel to the edge and a sequence of three-petal symbols; all of this is surrounded by a white border parallel to the edges of the bodice.’

‘The coloured elements in the centre of the logo are reproduced in CMYK four-colour print and the dark green in Pantone 575C or Pantone 3435C, using appropriate printing plates;’



are amended as follows:

‘The logo is a representation of a bodice in the centre of which is a rectangular field with convex sides at the top and bottom and a line around the edge. The rectangle shows a multicoloured stylised mountain range on a white background, with the word “SÜDTIROL” on top, also stylised. Parallel to the upper and lower undulating edges are the words “Südtiroler Speck PGI” and “Speck Alto Adige PGI” respectively, also in stylised characters. Finally, the decorative border of the bodice consists of a sequence of dots parallel to a white contour line.

The coloured elements in the centre of the logo are reproduced in CMYK four-colour print and the green elements in Pantone 575C or Pantone 3435C.



The product logo has been redesigned by making the name-related elements stand out more. Its description and graphic features have been updated accordingly.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

‘SPECK ALTO ADIGE’/‘SÜDTIROLER MARKENSPECK’/‘SÜDTIROLER SPECK’

EU No: PGI-IT-02125 – 14.3.2015

PDO () PGI (X)

1. Name(s)

‘Speck Alto Adige’/‘Südtiroler Markenspeck’/‘Südtiroler Speck’

2. Member State or Third Country

Italy

3. Description of the agricultural product or foodstuff

3.1. Type of product

Class 1.2. Meat products (cooked, salted, smoked, etc.)

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

‘Speck Alto Adige’ (in Italian), ‘Südtiroler Markenspeck’/‘Südtiroler Speck’ (in German) is produced from boned pork hams moderately salted and spiced, cold-smoked in special premises at a maximum temperature of 20 °C and appropriately aged in accordance with local customs and traditions. It has specific organoleptic qualities.

When released for consumption, ‘Speck Alto Adige’, ‘Südtiroler Markenspeck’ or ‘Südtiroler Speck’ is brown on the outside, while its slices are red with pinkish white parts. It has a pleasant aroma of smoke and spices and a characteristic intense flavour. Its chemical, chemico-physical and microbiological characteristics are as follows:

Total protein greater than or equal to 20 %;

Water-to-protein ratio less than or equal to 2,0;

Fat-to-protein ratio less than or equal to 1,5;

Sodium chloride less than or equal to 5 %;

Potassium nitrate less than 150 mg/kg;

Sodium nitrite less than 50 mg/kg;

Mesophilic microbe content in accordance with standard UNI ISO 4833 (2003);

Lactic acid bacteria at a maximum level of 1×10^8 colony-forming units/gram (CFU/g).

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

Before boning, the whole hind legs used to produce ‘Speck Alto Adige’, ‘Südtiroler Markenspeck’ or ‘Südtiroler Speck’ must weigh no less than 10,5 kg. The boned and trimmed legs (also referred to as ‘baffe’ in Italian) must weigh at least 5,2 kg. When delivered, their temperature must be between 0 °C and 7 °C measured at the core.

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

‘Speck Alto Adige PGI’/‘Südtiroler Markenspeck PGI’/‘Südtiroler Speck PGI’ must be trimmed using the traditional method with or without the rump, dry salted and spiced, smoked and dry-cured at a temperature not exceeding 20 °C and aged at an ambient temperature of 10 °C to 16 °C with a level of humidity between 55 % and 90 %.

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

‘Speck Alto Adige’/‘Südtiroler Markenspeck’/‘Südtiroler Speck’ may be released for consumption loose or packaged under vacuum or in a modified atmosphere and it may be whole, cut or sliced.

‘Speck Alto Adige’/‘Südtiroler Markenspeck’/‘Südtiroler Speck’ may be cut, sliced and packaged only in the production area identified in point 4 in order to ensure that the final consumer receives a product in which the characteristic flavour and most delicate aromas have been preserved.

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

The name of the protected geographical indication, ‘Speck Alto Adige’/‘Südtiroler Markenspeck’/‘Südtiroler Speck’, may not be translated into other languages

and must appear on the label in clear, indelible characters that can be clearly distinguished from all other writing on the label. It must be followed by the phrase ‘Protected Geographical Indication’ and/or the abbreviation ‘PGI’, which must be translated into the language in which the product is being marketed.

All labels must feature the logo of the ‘Speck Alto Adige’/‘Südtiroler Markenspeck’/‘Südtiroler Speck’ PGI.



The additional words ‘prodotto di montagna’ [mountain product] may appear on the label when production takes place in areas that are located at least 600 m above sea level and thus geographically classified as mountain areas.

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

The pork legs may be processed only by undertakings located in the autonomous province of Bolzano-Alto Adige.

5. **Link with the geographical area**

The production area of ‘Speck Alto Adige IGP’/‘Südtiroler Markenspeck’/‘Südtiroler Speck’ is entirely hilly or mountainous. Thanks to the presence of variable breezes and winds that blow through the numerous Alpine valleys, the area’s climatic conditions are moderately dry; in addition, it enjoys more than 300 days of sun a year.

Moreover, this border area has always been the meeting point between the cultures of the Mediterranean and of Mitteleuropa, allowing the conditions to be created for the development of a very distinctive method of preserving pig meat that combines the smoking typical of Mitteleuropa and Mediterranean dry-curing.

Unlike the hams of the Po Valley area, ‘Speck Alto Adige’/‘Südtiroler Markenspeck’/‘Südtiroler Speck’ is produced from boned, opened and drawn pork leg that is subsequently smoked and dry-cured. Its appearance is characterised by its brown outer colour resulting from the smoking process. When sliced, the lean part is red while the fatty part has a delicate pinkish white colour. ‘Speck Alto Adige’/‘Südtiroler Markenspeck’/‘Südtiroler Speck’ has the typical aroma of dry-cured meat, which is characterised by pleasant smoky hints. The flavour of the meat is intense although not salty.

The causal link between ‘Speck Alto Adige’/‘Südtiroler Markenspeck’/‘Südtiroler Speck’ and the area in which it is produced is based on the specific microclimatic conditions in Alto Adige, which have influenced the distinctive, unique experience of the historical/cultural enclave of the South Tyrol. This border territory has since time immemorial been an area of historical, ethnic, economic and cultural transition between Europe north and south of the Alps, and has therefore been open to contributions from the experience of both areas of development. The breezes and winds from the north and south of the mountain system that blow through Alto Adige and meet in its valleys have made the climate particularly suitable for dry-curing ‘Speck Alto Adige’/‘Südtiroler Markenspeck’/‘Südtiroler Speck’, encouraging the establishment of this form of meat processing whose roots can be traced to the Alpine tradition of farmsteads. The technique of preservation with the assertive use of smoke, of northern origin, has taken root in combination with the use of salt and gradual, slow drying under natural conditions, a technique originating in the Po Valley. The result is a product with a very balanced taste that is milder than the strongly smoked cold cuts of northern Europe and stronger than the mild hams of the Mediterranean area. It is perfectly aged and enriched by the aromas and local essences carried both by the air that circulates during dry-curing and the seasonings used during the initial processing stages. These are additional reasons why the reputation of Speck Alto Adige/Südtiroler Markenspeck/Südtiroler Speck is that of a flagship product of its geographical area of origin.

Reference to publication of the specification

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

The Ministry launched the national objection procedure with the publication of the proposal for recognising 'Speck Alto Adige'/'Südtiroler Markenspeck'/'Südtiroler Speck' as a PGI in Official Gazette of the Italian Republic No 13 of 18 January 2016.

The consolidated text of the product specification is available on the internet:
<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 IGP' (at the top right-hand side of the screen), then on 'Prodotti DOP IGP STG' (on the left-hand side of the screen) and finally on 'Disciplinari di Produzione all'esame dell'UE'.

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

(2016/C 334/09)

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⁾.

APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF AN AMENDMENT TO THE PRODUCT SPECIFICATION OF A PROTECTED DESIGNATION OF ORIGIN/PROTECTED GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION 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

‘OSSAU-IRATY’

EU No: FR-PDO-0517-01391 – 21.10.2015

PDO (X) PGI ()

1. Applicant group and legitimate interest

Syndicat de défense du fromage d'appellation d'origine contrôlée OSSAU — IRATY (Ossau-Iraty registered designation of origin Cheese Defence Union)

Maison Apezetxea
64-120 Ostabat-Asme
FRANCE

Tel. +335 59378661
Fax +335 59378104
Email: contact@ossau-iraty.fr

Composition: The group is made up of milk producers, processors and ripeners. It therefore has a legitimate right to propose the amendment.

2. Member State or Third Country

France

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

- ☐ Name of product
- ☒ Description of product
- ☒ Geographical area
- ☒ Proof of origin
- ☒ Production method
- ☐ Link
- ☒ Labelling
- ☒ Other contact details of the group, inspection

4. Type of amendment(s)

- ☒ Amendments to the product specification of a registered PDO or PGI not to be qualified as minor within the meaning of the third subparagraph of Article 53(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012
- ☐ Amendments to the product specification of a registered PDO or PGI for which a Single Document (or equivalent) has not been published and which cannot be qualified as minor within the meaning of the third subparagraph of Article 53(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 343, 14.12.2012, p. 1.

5. Amendment(s)

1. *Description of the product*

- The dimensions of the moulds have been deleted and replaced by the dimensions of the cheeses, with the corresponding paragraph now reading as follows: ‘Dimensions and weights of the cheeses:
 - 22,5 to 27 cm in diameter, and 8 to 14 cm in height for matured cheeses of between 3,8 to 6 kg in weight;
 - 17 to 21 cm in diameter, and 7 to 13 cm in height for matured cheeses of between 1,8 and 3,3 kg in weight.’

The amendment is linked to the application of the provisions approved by Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/194 of 5 February 2015, which clarified the different sizes, but which has also exposed difficulties. In particular, the dimensions of the moulds as currently defined (as a reminder: moulds of between 25,5 and 26 cm in diameter, and between 9 and 12 cm in height for matured cheeses of between 4 and 5 kg in weight, or moulds of between 18 and 20 cm in diameter and between 7 and 10 cm in height for matured cheeses of between 2 and 3 kg in weight) pose problems for the production of matured cheeses of a minimum of 2 kg: the moulds must therefore be filled to capacity, which in turn causes problems for the pressing process. It therefore seemed preferable to define the dimensions and weights of the cheeses in order to avoid these problems.

Moreover, a survey of practices revealed discrepancies in the weight ranges defined for cheeses at the end of the maturation period. These ranges have therefore been slightly expanded, while still remaining within the framework of the existing sizes. The special large size of the mould used for farm-based production, which made it possible to produce a cheese weighing up to 7 kg, was no longer being used. This format is withdrawn.

- In order to better describe the product, the definition of the rind has been expanded upon: ‘The rind is natural, composed of live microbial flora. It sticks to the paste, is not eaten, does not crumble apart, and does not peel off. It is dry-to-slightly-moist to the touch, without being sticky. Its colour varies from orangey yellow to grey.’
- The provision relating to marketing in portion form has been added to: ‘Portioning is permitted in the form of portions or diced, in sticks, in long thin strips, shavings, slices, or grated. Apart from these presentation formats, and portions less than 50 g in weight, it is compulsory for there to be a part of the designation’s distinctive rind.’

The addition of new presentation formats (diced, in sticks, in long thin strips, shavings, sliced, or grated) will allow producers to diversify the marketing channels in order to adapt to the needs of consumers. Moreover, the introduction of marketing in portion-format during the previous amendment to the specification made it necessary to create a distinction in terms of portion weight (less or more than 50 g).

In addition, it did not appear necessary to preserve the concept of pre-packaging, as this had not been precisely defined.

2. *Definition of the geographical area*

The area covers some municipalities adjacent to the town of Pau in the north-west.

- Billère and Lons have been added to the list of municipalities fully included in the geographical area;
- Poey-de-Lescar, Sauvagnon, Serres-Castet, and Uzein have been added to the list of municipalities partly included in the geographical area;

These municipalities, which were part of the designation’s original geographical area, were deleted from the geographical area following the amendment to the specification in accordance with Commission Regulation (EC) No 828/2003 of 14 May 2003.

The progressive implementation by producers of the provision banning fermented fodder during milking periods, following the approval of the amendment to the product specification in accordance with Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/194 of 5 February 2015, has nevertheless highlighted the need to bring this sector back into the geographical area, in particular in order to ensure the availability of feed for the herds from the geographical area.

This sector is a geomorphological unit containing store-houses in Gave du Pau, comparable to other sectors of valleys currently included in the ‘Ossau-Iraty’ PDO geographical area. It has a mild and humid climate, similar to that of the north of the current area, and is affected by the same winds, providing for strong grass growth almost continuously throughout the year. It has long and strong connections to the Ossau valley, and is used for the production of fodder and grain for the livestock farmers of this valley. It is connected to the geographical area by the municipalities of Billère, Lons and Pau, around the route that was historically used for winter transhumance.

This amendment to the definition of the geographical area has no impact on the link between the geographical area and the product.

3. *Evidence that the product originates from the geographical area*

- In order to improve the identification of the product by allowing producers to tailor the method of identifying cheese to the appearance of their rind and the ripening methods used, while still maintaining a common visual identity, point 4.3 'Identification of the product' has been modified as follows:

Paragraph: 'Each cheese must be identifiable. This is ensured by adding an embossed label during cheese moulding. The label is scraped off cheeses that do not make the grade.' this has been replaced by: 'Each cheese must be identifiable. This is ensured by adding an embossed label or a casein stamp between the moulding of the cheese and the removal of the moulds. The artwork for these labels features the head of a ewe, and is different for dairy cheeses and farm cheeses, and is approved by the group. The label is removed from cheeses that do not make the grade.'

Cheese made in mountain pastures is subject to a specific identification that is approved by the group.'

A second type of label, by casein stamp, has thus been authorised. It is also specified that the labelling takes place between the moulding stage and the removal from the mould. A specific identification distinguishing the cheeses made in mountain pastures has also been added. The artwork used is that of a ewe's head (with different artwork for dairy cheeses and farm cheeses) and it is specified that this is approved by the group.

- In order to achieve consistency between the 'Method of production' section and the 'Declarative requirements' section, the latter has been expanded upon. A 'transhumance declaration' for producers who wish to milk and produce in mountain pastures has been added.

4. *Method of production*

The provisions on animal feed have been expanded upon and placed in an 'Animal feed' paragraph:

- The new paragraph 'Basic feed' has undergone formal amendments and an addendum on the mixture of feed carried out by the producer on the holding. It is specified that 'mixtures of a single feed material in different forms (for example long blades of grass and plugs) are not considered as mixtures of the basic feed components and components listed in point 5.3.2.'

The implementation of the provision on the feed mixture during the previous amendment to the specification made this clarification necessary. This addition is aimed at clarifying what is forbidden and what is permitted in terms of feed mixture.

- In order to facilitate inspections, the positive list of authorised raw materials for supplementary animal feed has been simplified, and is based on the classification of feedstuffs established by Commission Regulation (EU) No 68/2013 of 16 January 2013 on the Catalogue of feed materials:

- 'Products derived' from cereal grains are authorised in addition to cereal grains. It is also specified that ears of maize may be used whole, without the husks.

- It is also specified that lupin seeds, field beans and vetches belong to the leguminous family.

- The term 'not treated with formaldehyde' for rapeseed cake, flax, soya and sunflower has been replaced with the statement 'which may be protected from ruminal degradation by a process that does not use any aldehyde'.

- Glycerine, produced from esterified vegetable oil, has been added to the list of feedstuffs. Glycerine or glycerol is used for its sweet taste, to retain moisture, and as a solvent, and emulsifier; It has similar properties to molasses, which is already authorised.

Moreover, the categories of authorised additives have been specified on the basis of Regulation (EC) No 1831/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 September 2003 on additives for use in animal nutrition. The 'additive technologies' category has been added too. In addition, amino acids, digestibility enhancers and gut-flora stabilisers have been added to the zootechnical additives category.

These additives are commonly used in compound feedingstuffs.

- In order to strengthen the traditional nature of the production system, in which supplementary feed was based on cereals, and in order to comply with the ban on fermented fodder during milking periods, following approval of the amendment to the product specification in accordance with Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/194 of 5 February 2015, feed that is supplementary to fodder is geared towards a composition of dried products. A dry-matter content of at least 84 % was therefore set for most of the raw materials and additives. This dry-matter content excludes certain fermented raw materials (for example: barley starch/liquid wheat starch, moist spent distillers' grains, distillers' solubles, maize gluten, gluten feed, maize-germ, syrup of cereal steep-water ...)
- The list of supplies authorised for lambs before weaning has been supplemented with a zootechnical additive (ammonium chloride) used to reduce the risk of urinary calculi.

In the 'production and maturing of the cheese' paragraph:

- In accordance with the amendment to the section 'Description of the product' the wording 'cylindrical in shape, with a flat bottom, with or without rounded edges' has been added instead of 'having the dimensions defined in Chapter 2'.
- With regard to the minimum maturation period, the minimum and maximum weights to which the periods apply have been amended in accordance with the amendment of the cheese weights in the 'Description of the product' section. The 120-day minimum maturation period applies to cheeses weighing between 3,8 and 6 kg. The 80-day minimum maturation period applies to cheeses weighing between 1,8 and 3,3 kg.
- An addition has been made to the paragraph on maturing practices as follows: 'vegetable oil (rape, olive or sunflower) or white vinegar may be used to care for the rind'. A survey of practices revealed that those practices considered to have fallen into disuse are still used and the group expressly wished to authorise them. The oil and vinegar are added to combat certain mites which eat the rind of the cheeses, particularly in the event of prolonged maturation (3-4 months of maturing). Coating the rind of cheese with oil cuts off the supply of oxygen, while the vinegar hinders the growth of mites as well as some bacteria, yeasts or moulds that are sensitive to acids.

Having seen a revival in the practice of mountain pasture, the group considered it necessary to distinguish the cheeses made in this way with the term 'Estive' ('mountain pasture'). The procedures that shepherds must follow in terms of feed, but also in terms of cheese production, have been specified:

'Mountain pastures are areas:

- of pasture for the summer grazing of herds, located in mountain areas, privately or collectively owned and used, and laid out in paths separated by natural boundaries,
- maintained by livestock rearing, brush-cutting and/or stubble-burning,
- with a usage period in the summer season defined by the mountain-pasture managers.

In mountain pasture, the ewes are mostly fed by grazing on the pasture. Only cereal grains permitted under point 5.3.2 and minerals can be added.

The production of milk, the milking and the cheese production all occur in the same place, in the shepherd's hut (known in the local language as a "cayolar", "etxola", or a "cuyala"). This must be a different place to where the herd winters, and the production may only occur after the date indicated in point 4.4 of the transhumance statement.

The cheese is produced daily from raw milk, and the renneting is carried out no later than 24 hours after the most recent milking.'

5. *Specific labelling details*

A paragraph has been added on the option of adding the term 'estive' ('mountain pasture'): 'The term "estive", which may be supplemented by the name of the mountain pasture, may only be used on cheeses for which the milking, milk-processing, production and identification took place in mountain pastures under the conditions described under points 4.3 and 5.4 of the present specification.'

The use of the term 'estive' must make the best of these very distinctive cheeses by making its use conditional upon the special conditions set out in the specification.

6. **Other (contact details of the group, inspection)**

The contact details of the group have been updated.

The contact details of the inspection bodies have been updated.

The checklist has been updated to take into account the changes made to the relevant sections:

- to the description of the product and the method of production: removal of the dimensions of the moulds, clarification of the weight and dimensions of the cheese;
- to the section on evidence that the product originates from the geographical area: identification by marking.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

'OSSAU-IRATY'

EU No: FR-PDO-0517-01391 – 21.10.2015

PDO (X) PGI ()

1. **Name(s)**

'Ossau-Iraty'

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 product to which the name in (1) applies*

'Ossau-Iraty' is a cheese produced only from non-standardised, renneted ewe's milk. The cheese is salted and matured, cylindrical in shape, uncooked and slightly pressed, with a straight or slightly convex heel. The total dry extract of the cheese must comprise at least 50 % milk fat and the dry matter must be at least 58 grams per 100 grams of cheese.

Farm 'Ossau-Iraty' is produced exclusively from raw milk.

Dimensions and weights of the cheeses:

- 22,5 to 27 cm in diameter, and 8 to 14 cm in height for matured cheeses of between 3,8 and 6 kg in weight;
- 17 to 21 cm in diameter, and 7 to 13 cm in height for matured cheeses of between 1,8 and 3,3 kg in weight.

The body of the cheese has a colour varying from ivory-white to amber-cream, according to the maturing process. It is smooth, firm and velvety. It may contain a few small eyes.

The rind is natural, composed of live microbial flora. It sticks to the paste, is not eaten, does not crumble apart, and does not peel off. It is dry-to-slightly-moist to the touch, without being sticky. Its colour varies from orangey yellow to grey.

The maturing process lasts at least 80 days for cheeses weighing between 1,8 and 3,3 kg, and 120 days for cheeses weighing between 3,8 and 6 kg.

Each cheese must be identifiable. This is ensured by adding an embossed label or a casein stamp between the moulding of the cheese and the removal of the moulds. The artwork for these labels features the head of a ewe, and is different for dairy cheeses and farm cheeses, and is approved by the group. The label is removed from cheeses that do not make the grade. Cheese made in mountain pastures is subject to a specific identification.

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

Animal feed must be sourced primarily from the identified geographical area. Certain feedingstuffs are allowed to not come from the geographical area due to the relief and altitude of certain parts of the geographical area. The total feed (except grass) sourced from areas other than the identified geographical area is limited to an average of 280 kg of dry matter per ewe per milk production year. For an estimated annual consumption of 840 kg of dry matter per dairy ewe, the share of feed originating in the geographical area is estimated at at least 67 %.

The basic feed ration comprises grass; fresh, dry and dehydrated fodder; straw; and fermented fodder. Herds must be fed on the basis of a positive list of authorised raw materials, covering both their basic ration and feed supplements. Herds are fed on non-transgenic products.

The ewes must be allowed to graze for at least 240 days per milk production year. During milking periods, on days when ewes do not graze, they must receive a daily ration of at least 600 grams of dry matter sourced from the identified geographical area.

As regards herd feeding during milking periods:

- until 31 January 2018, the portion of fermented fodder per ewe per day is limited to an average of 1,5 kg gross weight of maize silage and 1 kg gross weight of baled grass or grass silage;
- as of 1 February 2018, the use of silage is prohibited and baled grass feed is permitted up to an average gross weight of 1 kg per ewe per day.

Those two provisions will apply on the condition that the baled grass comprises at least 70 % dry matter.

The portion of feed concentrates in a daily ration may not exceed an average of 800 grams of dry matter per ewe. Over the course of one milking year, the average portion of feed concentrates may not exceed 150 kg of dry matter per ewe.

The raw materials and additives authorised as supplements to the basic ration are listed on a positive list. A dry matter content of at least 84 % has been set for most of these raw materials and additives, and they must not be rehydrated before feeding.

Transgenic crops are prohibited in all areas of farms producing milk intended for processing into the PDO product. This prohibition applies to all types of plant likely to be given as feed to animals on the farm and to all crops liable to contaminate such plants.

‘Ossau-Iraty’ is produced only from milk from ewes of the following breeds: Basque-béarnaise, Manech black head and Manech red head.

Over one milk production year (1 November to 31 October of the following year), average milk production per herd may not exceed 300 litres per ewe. Milk production is seasonal: a herd may not be milked more than 265 days a year and milking is prohibited in September and October.

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

The ewe’s milk must be produced and the cheese produced and matured within the geographical area.

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

Cutting is authorised: into portions, diced, in sticks, in long thin strips, shavings, sliced, or grated. Apart from these presentation formats, and portions less than 50 g in weight, it is compulsory for there to be a part of the designation’s distinctive rind.

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

Irrespective of the regulatory information requirements applicable to all cheeses, each cheese label must include the name of the PDO in characters measuring at least two thirds of the size of the largest lettering on the label.

The term ‘estive’, which may be supplemented by the name of the mountain pasture, may only be used on cheeses for which the milking, milk-processing, production and identification took place in mountain pastures under the following conditions:

- the ewes are mostly fed by grazing on the pasture, only the cereal grains authorised in the positive list and minerals may be added;
- The production of the milk, the milking and the cheese production all occur in the same place, in the shepherd’s hut (known in the local language as a ‘cayolar’, ‘etxola’, or a ‘cuyala’). This must be a different place to where the herd winters, and the production may only occur after the date indicated in the transhumance statement;
- The cheese is produced daily from raw milk, and the rennetting is carried out no later than 24 hours after the most recent milking.

4. Concise definition of the geographical area

The geographical area is made up of municipalities or parts of municipalities

— in the department of Pyrénées-Atlantiques:

- all the municipalities of the following cantons: Baïgora et Mondarrain; Biarritz; Hendaye — Côte Basque-Sud; Montagne Basque; Oloron-Sainte-Marie 1 and 2; Ouzom, Gave et Rives du Nééz; Pays de Bidache, Amikuze et Ostibarre; Saint-Jean-de-Luz; and Ustaritz — Vallées de Nive et Nivelle.
- all of the following municipalities: Abitain, Andrein, Angaïs, Anglet, Angous, Arau-juzon, Araux, Athos-Aspis, Aubertin, Audaux, Auterrive, Autevielle-Saint-Martin-Bideren, Bardos, Barraute-Camu, Bastanès, Baudreix, Bellocq, Bénéjacq, Bérenx, Beuste, Billère, Boeil-Bezing, Bordères, Bordes, Briscous, Bugnein, Burgaronne, Cardesse, Carresse-Cassaber, Castagnède, Castetnau-Camblong, Castetbon, Castetner, Charre, Coarraze, Cuqueron, Dognen, Escos, Espiute, Gelos, Gestas, Guiche, Guinarthe-Parenties, Gurs, Hours, Igon, Jasses, Jurançon, Laà-Mondrans, Laàs, La-bastide-Villefranche, Labatmale, Lacommande, Lagos, Lahonce, Lahourcade, Lanne-plaà, Lay-Lamidou, Léré, Lestelle-Bétharram, L'Hôpital-d'Orion, Lons, Loubieng, Lucgarier, Lucq-de-Béarn, Mazères-Lezons, Méritein, Mirepeix, Monein, Montaut, Montfort, Mouguerre, Mourenx, Nabas, Narp, Navarrenx, Noguères, Ogenne-Camptort, Oraàs, Orion, Orriule, Ossenx, Ozenx-Montestrucq, Parbayse, Préchacq-Navarrenx, Rivehaute, Saint-Dos, Saint-Faust, Saint-Gladie-Arrive-Munein, Saint-Pé-de-Léré, Saint-Pierre-d'Irube, Saint-Vincent, Salies-de-Béarn, Salles-Mongiscard, Sames, Sarpourenx, Sauvelade, Sauveterre-de-Béarn, Sus, Sus-miou, Tabaille-Usquain, Viellenave-de-Navarrenx, Vielleségure, and Villefranque.
- parts of the following municipalities: Abos, Abidos, Arbus, Argagnon, Artigueloutan, Artiguelouve, Barzun, Bayonne, Bézingrand, Biron, Bizanos, Castétis, Denguin, Es-poe, Gomer, Idron, Lacq, Labastide-Cézeracq, Lagor, Lahontan, Laro, Lée, Lescar, Livron, Maslacq, Mont, Nousty, Orthez, Os-Marsillon, Ousse, Pardies, Pau, Poey-de-Lescar, Pontacq, Sauvagnon, Serres-Castet, Siros, Soumoulou, Tarsacq, Urcuit, Urt, and Uzein.

For the aforementioned municipalities, maps are available in the respective municipal offices.

— in the department of Hautes-Pyrénées, bordering the department of the Pyrénées-Atlantiques: Arbéost, Arrens-Marsous, and Ferrières.

5. Link with the geographical area

Specificity of the geographical area

The PDO area includes the mountains and foothills of the Basque and Béarn regions.

The natural conditions of the geographical area, its oceanic climate with a regular and significant level of rainfall (at least 1 200 mm/yr and up to 1 800 mm/yr), and the area's relatively narrow temperature range promote the growth of pasture and therefore the breeding of dairy sheep. Likewise, the relief of the land, the hills, the low and mid-range mountains, as well as the altitude, have encouraged the development of extensive livestock farming.

Traditional breeds of ewe are used for milk production. The breeds used are the local Manech black head, Manech red head, and Basque-béarnaise breeds, which are particularly well adapted to the conditions of the geographical area: grass and hay-based feed, and a very rainy climate, which they tolerate on account of their 'waterproof' woolly fleece. These ewes graze throughout the year, even in winter, except on snowy days or in extreme conditions; they are adapted to transhumance seasonal migration and this practice is applied to three quarters of all herds. These local breeds only produce milk in winter, spring, and at the start of summer.

Milking procedures are adapted to this seasonal production: milking and production are prohibited in September and October.

The ewe's milk in the geographical area is especially rich; so the production procedure guarantees that the average useful dry matter (fat content and protein content) is more than 110 grams per litre of milk.

Practices and production methods are adapted to the richness of the milk. For this reason, when the cheese is put in the cellar, it may undergo changes such as lipolysis and proteolysis during the maturing process.

Maturing practices used by operators (turning, brushing, ban on the use of all anti-fungal substances) help to ensure that the surface flora are useful flora that guarantee the development of the right flavours.

Specificity of the product

'Ossau-Iraty' is a lightly-pressed ewe's milk cheese of the Tomme type, with a straight or slightly convex heel. Its rind is hard, a few millimetres thick, and its colour varies between yellowy-orange and grey. An 'Ossau-Iraty' cheese weighs at least 1,8 kilograms, which means that it takes a long time to mature, from 80 to 120 days according to size.

The body of the cheese varies in colour from ivory-white to amber-cream, according to the maturing process. The cheese has a smooth, firm, melt-in-the-mouth texture, which ranges from creamy to hard. It may contain a few small eyes (holes).

It has a subtle smell, which sometimes contains notes of flowers or fruit. It has an intense taste that is well-balanced in terms of acidity and fat content; the cheese is salty, but not excessively so, and its flavour is often nutty or fruity.

Causal link between the geographical area and the quality or characteristics of the product

The geographical area comprises the mountains and foothills of the Basque and Béarn regions, which are primarily covered by natural and temporary grasslands; such pastures may be in the mountains, where most herds are taken in the summer, or on holdings where farmers primarily produce grass fodder for grazing and hay production.

This vegetation enables the fodder to be produced in the geographical area (primarily hay and second-growth crops with grazing on mixed pastures).

These fodder resources are put to good use in the rearing of ewes of local breeds only (Manech black head, Manech red head, and Basque-béarnaise).

The use of such local breeds, feeding based on grass and hay, and livestock-rearing in a place where intensive farming is limited guarantee that the milk produced is well suited to cheese-making.

Ewe's cheese has been produced in the western area of the Pyrenees since at least the Middle Ages. Sharecropping contracts from the 14th century and notarial documents from the early 15th century confirm that ewe's cheese was produced in the region.

The difficult transport conditions between the high-altitude, mountain pastures and the valleys quickly led to shepherds processing milk on-the-spot so as to produce cheese that could be easily transported down into the valleys to be sold.

'Ossau-Iraty' belongs to a category of cheeses that are 'pressed and uncooked'; weighing several kilograms, and with its pressed form, its shape, and its extensive maturing process, 'Ossau-Iraty' develops a relatively hard rind, thus fulfilling the criteria of being easily transportable. Given that the cheese can be stored for long periods, this guaranteed shepherds and their families a protein-rich foodstuff for the whole year.

Even though transportation is easier nowadays, the tradition of an extensive maturing process has been retained. The characteristics of the cheeses, and its varied flavours, are obtained from the combination of adapted production techniques, in particular from the long cheese-maturing process.

Reference to publication of the specification

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

https://info.agriculture.gouv.fr/gedei/site/bo-agri/document_administratif-f4d1060d-6774-4b84-9770-8bf826b9e892/telechargement

