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II

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

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Non-opposition to a notified concentration**(Case M.9793 – Permira/Sneakers Maker)****(Text with EEA relevance)**

(2020/C 178/01)

On 18 May 2020, 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 English 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 32020M9793. EUR-Lex is the online access to 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⁾

27 May 2020

(2020/C 178/02)

1 euro =

Currency			Exchange rate		
Currency			Exchange rate		
USD	US dollar	1,0991	CAD	Canadian dollar	1,5126
JPY	Japanese yen	118,58	HKD	Hong Kong dollar	8,5204
DKK	Danish krone	7,4583	NZD	New Zealand dollar	1,7719
GBP	Pound sterling	0,89595	SGD	Singapore dollar	1,5588
SEK	Swedish krona	10,5608	KRW	South Korean won	1 359,04
CHF	Swiss franc	1,0675	ZAR	South African rand	19,1477
ISK	Iceland króna	151,20	CNY	Chinese yuan renminbi	7,8682
NOK	Norwegian krone	10,8283	HRK	Croatian kuna	7,5893
BGN	Bulgarian lev	1,9558	IDR	Indonesian rupiah	16 167,76
CZK	Czech koruna	27,051	MYR	Malaysian ringgit	4,7783
HUF	Hungarian forint	348,70	PHP	Philippine peso	55,668
PLN	Polish zloty	4,4372	RUB	Russian rouble	78,1096
RON	Romanian leu	4,8433	THB	Thai baht	35,056
TRY	Turkish lira	7,4542	BRL	Brazilian real	5,8679
AUD	Australian dollar	1,6565	MXN	Mexican peso	24,5396
			INR	Indian rupee	83,2450

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

NOTICES FROM MEMBER STATES

Update of reference amounts for the crossing of the external borders, as referred to in Article 6(4) of Regulation (EU) 2016/399 of the European Parliament and of the Council on a Union Code on the rules governing the movement of persons across borders (Schengen Borders Code) ⁽¹⁾

(2020/C 178/03)

The publication of reference amounts for the crossing of the external borders, as referred to in Article 6(4) of Regulation (EU) 2016/399 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 March 2016 on a Union Code on the rules governing the movement of persons across borders (Schengen Borders Code) ⁽²⁾, is based on the information communicated by the Member States to the Commission in conformity with Article 39 of the Schengen Borders Code.

In addition to the publication in the Official Journal, a regular update is available on the website of the Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs.

ESTONIA

Replacement of the information published in OJ C 153, 2.5.2018, p. 8.

Under Estonian law, aliens arriving into Estonia without a letter of invitation, shall upon request by a border guard official upon entry into the country provide proof of sufficient monetary means to cover the costs of his/her stay in and departure from Estonia. Sufficient monetary means for each allowed day is considered to be 0,2 times the monthly minimum salary implemented by the Government of the Republic, i.e. EUR 116,80.

Otherwise the person inviting shall assume responsibility for the costs of the alien's stay in and departure from Estonia.

SPAIN

Replacement of the information published in OJ C 140, 16.4.2019, p. 7.

The Order of the Ministry of the Presidency (PRE/1282/2007) of 10 May on the financial means aliens are required to have in order to enter Spain specifies the amount that aliens have to prove is available to them in order to be able to enter Spain.

- a) From 1 January 2019, for the costs of their stay in Spain, foreign nationals not subject to EU law must have a daily amount available to them equivalent to 10 % of the gross national minimum wage laid down in Royal Decree 1462/2018 of 21 December 2018 setting the 2019 national minimum wage at EUR 95 per person per day (or its legal equivalent in foreign currency). This amount should be multiplied by the number of days they intend to remain in Spain and by the number of dependent persons travelling with them. This amount must in all cases represent 90 % of the gross national minimum wage (EUR 855 or its legal equivalent in foreign currency) per person, regardless of the intended duration of the stay.
- b) For their return to their country of provenance or for transit to third countries, foreign nationals can be required to produce a personal, non-transferable and fixed-date ticket or tickets for the intended means of transport.

Aliens must prove that they have the above means of subsistence either by producing them if they are in cash, or by producing certified cheques, traveller's cheques, receipts or credit cards, which must be accompanied by a recent bank statement (bank letters or internet bank statements are not acceptable) or by other evidence clearly showing the amount of credit available on the card or bank account.

THE NETHERLANDS

The amount which border control officials take as the basis when checking means of subsistence is currently EUR 55 per person per day.

This criterion is applied flexibly, since the required amount of the means of subsistence is determined on the basis of the planned duration of the stay, the reason for the visit and the personal circumstances of the person concerned.

⁽¹⁾ See the list of previous publications at the end of this update.

⁽²⁾ OJ L 77, 23.3.2016, p. 1.

List of previous publications

- OJ C 316, 28.12.2007, p. 1.
OJ C 134, 31.5.2008, p. 16.
OJ C 177, 12.7.2008, p. 9.
OJ C 200, 6.8.2008, p. 10.
OJ C 331, 31.12.2008, p. 13.
OJ C 3, 8.1.2009, p. 10.
OJ C 37, 14.2.2009, p. 10.
OJ C 64, 19.3.2009, p. 20.
OJ C 99, 30.4.2009, p. 7.
OJ C 229, 23.9.2009, p. 28.
OJ C 263, 5.11.2009, p. 22.
OJ C 298, 8.12.2009, p. 17.
OJ C 74, 24.3.2010, p. 13.
OJ C 326, 3.12.2010, p. 17.
OJ C 355, 29.12.2010, p. 34.
OJ C 22, 22.1.2011, p. 22.
OJ C 37, 5.2.2011, p. 12.
OJ C 149, 20.5.2011, p. 8.
OJ C 190, 30.6.2011, p. 17.
OJ C 203, 9.7.2011, p. 14.
OJ C 210, 16.7.2011, p. 30.
OJ C 271, 14.9.2011, p. 18.
OJ C 356, 6.12.2011, p. 12.
OJ C 111, 18.4.2012, p. 3.
OJ C 183, 23.6.2012, p. 7.
OJ C 313, 17.10.2012, p. 11.
OJ C 394, 20.12.2012, p. 22.
OJ C 51, 22.2.2013, p. 9.
OJ C 167, 13.6.2013, p. 9.
OJ C 242, 23.8.2013, p. 2.
OJ C 275, 24.9.2013, p. 7.
OJ C 314, 29.10.2013, p. 5.
OJ C 324, 9.11.2013, p. 6.
OJ C 57, 28.2.2014, p. 4.
OJ C 167, 4.6.2014, p. 9.
OJ C 244, 26.7.2014, p. 22.
OJ C 332, 24.9.2014, p. 12.
OJ C 420, 22.11.2014, p. 9.
OJ C 72, 28.2.2015, p. 17.
OJ C 126, 18.4.2015, p. 10.
OJ C 229, 14.7.2015, p. 5.
OJ C 341, 16.10.2015, p. 19.
OJ C 84, 4.3.2016, p. 2.
OJ C 236, 30.6.2016, p. 6.
OJ C 278, 30.7.2016, p. 47.
OJ C 331, 9.9.2016, p. 2.
OJ C 401, 29.10.2016, p. 4.
OJ C 484, 24.12.2016, p. 30.
OJ C 32, 1.2.2017, p. 4.
OJ C 74, 10.3.2017, p. 9.
OJ C 120, 13.4.2017, p. 17.
OJ C 152, 16.5.2017, p. 5.
OJ C 411, 2.12.2017, p. 10.
OJ C 31, 27.1.2018, p. 12.
OJ C 261, 25.7.2018, p. 6.
OJ C 264, 26.7.2018, p. 8.
OJ C 368, 11.10.2018, p. 4.
OJ C 459, 20.12.2018, p. 40.
OJ C 43, 4.2.2019, p. 2.
OJ C 140, 16.4.2019, p. 7.
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V

(Announcements)

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

CALL FOR ACCREDITATION – EAC/A02/2020

Erasmus accreditation in the fields of adult education, vocational education and training, and school education

(2020/C 178/04)

Reserve clause

The 2021-2027 EU Programme for education, training, youth and sport proposed by the European Commission on 30 May 2018 (hereafter the Programme) has not yet been adopted by the European legislators. However, this call for accreditation is published to facilitate the application of potential beneficiaries of Union grants as soon as the legal basis is adopted by the European legislators.

This call for accreditation does not legally bind the European Commission. In case of a substantial modification of the legal basis by the European legislators, the present Call might be modified or cancelled and other calls for accreditation with different content and appropriate deadlines for reply may be launched.

More generally, any action flowing from this call for accreditation is subject to the following conditions, whose implementation is beyond the Commission's control:

- the adoption by the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union of the final text of the legal basis establishing the Programme,
- the adoption of the 2021 and subsequent annual work programmes and the general implementation guidelines, criteria and procedures of selection, after referral of the committee of the Programme, and
- the adoption of the 2021 and subsequent budgets of the European Union by the budgetary authority.

The proposed 2021-2027 EU Programme for education, training, youth and sport is based on Articles 165 and 166 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and on the subsidiarity principle.

1. Introduction and Objectives

Erasmus accreditations are a tool for education and training organisations that want to open up to cross-border exchange and cooperation.

Accredited Erasmus organisations will gain simplified access to funding opportunities under Key Action 1 of the future Programme (2021-2027). The conditions for accredited organisations' access to funding will be defined in yearly calls for proposals published by the European Commission.

Award of the Erasmus accreditation confirms that the applicant has set up a plan to implement high quality mobility activities and to use them to improve its education and training offer. This plan is called an Erasmus Plan and it is a key part of the application for Erasmus accreditation.

Specific objectives per field are provided in the Rules of application.

2. Eligibility

Only applicants possessing legal personality in the meaning of the Regulation (EU) No 1288/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 establishing 'Erasmus+': the Union programme for education, training, youth and sport repealing Decisions No 1719/2006/EC, No 1720/2006/EC and No 1298/2008/EC may apply.

Applicants established in one of the following countries are eligible to apply for an Erasmus accreditation:

- the Member States of the European Union,
- third countries associated to the Programme, under the conditions set out in the legal basis ⁽¹⁾.

In addition, to be eligible in each of the three fields covered by this Call, applicants must be recognised as a one of the eligible types of organisation by the national authorities of the country of the applicant, as described in the Rules of application.

Previous experience in Erasmus+ (2014-2020) is not required.

3. Deadline for the submission of applications and indicative date of publishing selection results

The deadline for submitting applications for the Erasmus accreditation is 29 October 2020. The indicative date of publishing selection results is 16 February 2021.

4. Selection procedure

Exceptionally, two separate application procedures will be put in place for this Call.

1. Standard procedure: open to all eligible applicants. Applicants for the standard procedure will be assessed against exclusion, selection, and award criteria.
2. Light procedure: open to organisations holding a valid Erasmus+ VET Mobility Charter. Applicants for the light procedure will be assessed against exclusion and selection criteria.

The National Agency in charge of the selection will appoint an evaluation committee to oversee the management of the whole selection process. On the basis of the assessment carried out by experts, the evaluation committee will establish a list of applications proposed for selection.

5. Full details

The Commission proposal for a Regulation establishing the 2021-2027 Union programme for education, training, youth and sport can be found at the following webpage:

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1585129325950&uri=CELEX:52018PC0367>

Detailed conditions, rules and procedures of this call for accreditations can be found in the Rules of application at the following internet address:

<https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/calls/2020-erasmus-accreditation>

The Rules of application constitute an integral part of this call for accreditations and the conditions for participation expressed therein apply in full to this call.

⁽¹⁾ Pending adoption of the legal basis. In the Erasmus+ 2014-2020 Programme, this list includes: Iceland, Norway, Liechtenstein, Turkey, North Macedonia and Serbia.

OTHER ACTS

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Notice of request concerning the applicability of Article 34 of Directive 2014/25/EU**Extension of period for the adoption of implementing acts**

(2020/C 178/05)

On 19 December 2019 the Commission received a request pursuant to Article 35 of Directive 2014/25/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽¹⁾.

This request, made by the Kingdom of Denmark concerns business to consumer parcel services in Denmark. The relevant notice was published on page number 55 of OJ C 64 of 27 February 2020. The initial deadline was 11 May 2020.

Pursuant to the fourth subparagraph of paragraph 1 to Annex IV of Directive 2014/25/EU, the deadline may be extended by the Commission with the agreement of those having made the request for exemption concerned. In the light of the current context and the effects of the COVID 19 pandemics, and with the agreement of the Kingdom of Denmark, the period available to the Commission for deciding on this request is hereby extended by 12 working days.

The final deadline therefore expires on 29 May 2020.

⁽¹⁾ Directive 2014/25/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 on procurement by entities operating in the water, energy, transport and postal services sectors and repealing Directive 2004/17/EC (OJ L 94, 28.3.2014, p. 243).

Publication of an application for approval of non-minor amendments to a product specification 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

(2020/C 178/06)

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

APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF NON-MINOR AMENDMENTS TO THE PRODUCT SPECIFICATION FOR A PROTECTED DESIGNATION OF ORIGIN OR PROTECTED GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION

Application for approval of an amendment in accordance with the first subparagraph of Article 53(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012

‘ASIAGO’

EU No: PDO-IT-0001-AM02 – 30.7.2019

PDO (X) PGI ()

1. Applicant group and legitimate interest

Consorzio Tutela Formaggio Asiago [Asiago Cheese Protection Association], having its registered office at
via Giuseppe Zampieri 15
36100 Vicenza
ITALIA
Tel. +39 0444321758
Fax +39 0444326212
info@formaggioasiago.it
tutelasiago@legalmail.it

The Consorzio Tutela Formaggio Asiago is made up of ‘Asiago’ cheese producers and is authorised to submit an amendment application under Article 13(1) of Decree No 12511 of the Ministry of Agricultural, Food and Forestry Policy of 14 October 2013.

2. Member State or third country

Italy

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

- ☐ Product name
- ☒ Product description
- ☒ Geographical area
- ☒ Proof of origin
- ☒ Production method

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 343, 14.12.2012, p. 1.

- ☒ Link
- ☒ Labelling
- ☒ Other: control body

4. Type of amendment(s)

- ☒ Amendments to the 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
- ☐ 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

5. Amendment(s)

It should be noted that the structure of the product specification has been adapted to the order laid down in Article 7 of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012.

The proposed structure is therefore as follows: Article 1 – Name, Article 2 – Description of the product, Article 3 – Identified geographical area, Article 4 – Origin of the product, Article 5 – Method of production of the product, Article 6 – Link between the product and the production area, Article 7 – Control body, Article 8 – Labelling.

Product description

- The amendment concerns Article 1 of the product specification, point 4.2 of the summary sheet published, now point 3.2 of the single document, and concerns the way in which the two different types of ‘Asiago’ are to be named.

The current wording:

‘The protected designation of origin “Asiago” is reserved for semi-cooked cheese, produced exclusively from cow’s milk, obtained in accordance with this product specification, divided into two different types of cheese, “Asiago pressato” [“Pressed Asiago”] and “Asiago d’allevato” [“Ripened Asiago”], whose characteristics are indicated below.’

is replaced by:

‘The protected designation of origin (PDO) “Asiago” is reserved for semi-cooked cheese, produced exclusively from cow’s milk, obtained in accordance with this product specification, divided into two different types of cheese, “Asiago Fresco” [“Fresh Asiago”] (also known as “Asiago pressato” [“Pressed Asiago”]) and “Asiago Stagionato” [“Aged Asiago”] (also known as “Asiago d’allevato” [“Ripened Asiago”]), whose characteristics are indicated below.’

The purpose of the amendment is to make it easier for consumers to perceive the differences in maturation between the two types of ‘Asiago’ cheese by adding the definitions ‘Asiago Fresco’ and ‘Asiago Stagionato’. However, the terms ‘pressato’ [pressed] and ‘d’allevato’ [ripened] continue to be permitted. In the product specification, moreover, the rendering in Italian of the acronym ‘D.O.P.’ or ‘Dop’ is replaced and standardised as ‘DOP’.

- The following amendments concern Article 8 of the current product specification, point 4.2 of the summary sheet published, now point 3.2 of the single document ‘Characteristics of the finished product’, which, in the proposed product specification, has been moved to Article 2, which is renamed ‘Description of the product’.

The current wording:

‘Specific technical characteristics for “Asiago pressato” cheese matured for 20 days.’

‘Specific technical characteristics for “Asiago d’allevato” cheese matured for sixty days.’

is replaced by:

‘Specific technical characteristics for “Asiago Fresco” cheese matured for the minimum period.’

‘Specific technical characteristics for “Asiago Stagionato” cheese matured for the minimum period.’

The amendment clarifies that the specific technical characteristics refer to the product after reaching the minimum maturation period. The purpose of this amendment is to make the control phase clearer.

The microbiological and hygiene specifications for ‘Asiago Fresco’ and ‘Asiago Stagionato’ have been deleted.

EU legislation already provides for compulsory microbiological and hygiene analyses at producer dairies. It is therefore not necessary to indicate the microbiological and hygiene parameters in the product specification, the levels of which are in any case governed by the legislation in force.

In the visual/organoleptic specifications for ‘Asiago Stagionato’:

The current wording:

‘mild flavour (mezzano [semi-mature])/fragrant flavour (vecchio [mature])’

is replaced by:

‘mild and slightly savoury flavour – fragrant flavour (“vecchio” [mature])’.

The purpose of the amendment is to better define the flavour of ‘Asiago Stagionato’ once the minimum maturation period has been reached and of ‘Asiago’ cheese that has been aged for more than 10 months (‘vecchio’). This amendment will allow more effective checking of the organoleptic characteristics.

After the description of the specific technical characteristics for both types of ‘Asiago’, the following sentence has been added:

‘For both “Asiago Fresco” and “Asiago Stagionato”, in order to limit processing waste and subject to compliance with the visual/organoleptic and chemical specifications and weight requirements mentioned above, the production of “Asiago” cheese in a shape other than cylindrical is permitted for products intended exclusively for pre-packaging (slicing, dicing, grating) or for processing into composite products, whether prepared or processed.’

The inclusion of this production method aims to limit the processing waste from ‘Asiago’ cheese in a wide range of processes (slices, composite products, etc.), which are considered to be uneconomical precisely due to this waste. This is a choice that, by facilitating the production of formats (slices, cubes, etc.) that are increasingly enjoyed by consumers, provides new opportunities, in line with consumer trends, to appreciate Asiago cheese, without altering the organoleptic characteristics of the product in any way.

The paragraph on surface treatments of the cheeses has been simplified.

The current wording:

‘After reaching the minimum maturation period of the product, “Asiago” cheeses may be treated on the surface with substances permitted by the provisions in force. The surface of the cheeses (rind) is not edible.’

is replaced by:

‘The cheeses may be treated on the surface with substances permitted by the legislation in force.’

The legislation governing the sector defines which substances are permitted for surface treatment. Compliance with the legislation in force on the treatment of rind is considered sufficient. Also with regard to the inedibility of the rind, producer dairies are still required to comply with the rules in force and therefore to declare the use of substances that may make the rind inedible.

The current wording:

‘The surface treatment of the cheeses must in any case not reduce the legibility of the casein nameplate identifying the cheese and the designation logo.’

is replaced by:

‘The surface treatment of the cheeses must in any case not reduce the legibility of the casein nameplate identifying the cheese, the designation logo and the “ASIAGO” origin label stamped on the heel.’

The amendment completes the list of identification marks that distinguish ‘Asiago’ cheese, including the origin label on the heel/edge of the cheeses.

Geographical area

— The following amendment concerns Article 2 of the current product specification, point 4.3 of the summary sheet published, point 4 of the single document.

The text of Article 2 ‘Production area’ of the current product specification has been moved to Article 3 in the proposed product specification which is renamed ‘Identified geographical area’.

The purpose of this amendment is to follow the structure of the product specification as set out in Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012.

The municipalities of Cittadella and Fontaniva are added.

The municipalities of Cittadella and Fontaniva, located to the north of the city of Padua, are included in the identified geographical area as areas where, historically, milk was produced for processing into the cheese that was later recognised as a PDO. There are currently farms in these areas that are members of dairies producing 'Asiago' PDO but whose milk cannot be used for the production of the PDO. The purpose of the amendment is to more accurately reflect the historical production area of the PDO.

Proof of origin

- The amendment concerns Article 4 'Origin of the product' of the product specification, to which the following sentence has been added:

'All natural and legal persons entered in the relevant lists are subject to checks by the control body in accordance with the provisions of the product specification and the associated control plan.'

The amendment supplements the text by clarifying that all operators included in the PDO control system are subject to checks by the control body.

Production method

The amendment concerns Article 3 'Animal feed', which has been moved to the first part of Article 5 in the proposed product specification which is renamed 'Method of production of the product', and point 3.3 of the single document.

- The amendment has added cotton to the list of prohibited feeds.

Cotton has been included among the banned animal feeds after careful research carried out in collaboration with the University of Padua, Department of Animal Nutrition. The purpose of the amendment is to improve 'Asiago' cheese by strengthening the causal link between the place of origin and the characteristics of the product, eliminating a non-native plant species such as cotton.

- Moreover, the following sentences are added after the list of prohibited feeds:

'At least 50 % of the dry feed ration must be produced within the geographical area.'

Fodder must make up at least 50 % of the dry feed ration.'

The requirement that at least 50 % of the dry feed ration must be produced within the geographical area can be met by using grass, hay and various meadow grasses from the defined area and these represent the portion of the feed ration made up of digestible fibre, broadly defined as 'forage' (grass, hay, pasture, etc.), which significantly influences the chemical, sensory and organoleptic characteristics of the milk and, therefore, of the finished product. The geographical area where 'Asiago' cheese is produced is mainly characterised by permanent grassland and grazing meadows, especially in the higher-lying or hilly areas, and is therefore not particularly suited to growing cereals (corn, wheat, barley) or oilseeds (soya).

The firms producing 'Asiago' cheese are highly specialised in producing milk from high-pedigree animals that need a nutritionally balanced diet, composed not only of fodder but also of feed and concentrates to sustain quality production and the welfare of the dairy cows.

This makes it necessary to use concentrates and feed from outside the demarcated area to supplement the food rations.

This feed allows quick nutrient intake, providing the energy and protein the dairy cows need for their normal rumen functions. Since they have only a physiological role in support of those functions, they have virtually no impact on the organoleptic characteristics of the milk.

A ration with at least 50 % of the dry matter derived from fodder provides benefits in terms of animal welfare and may foster the production of better quality milk for cheese-making. The use of fodder obtained from the 'Asiago' cheese production area, which is particularly rich in plants thanks to the area's biodiversity, gives the milk the characteristic flavours that are found in the finished product.

This amendment is necessary to adapt the specification and single document to the provisions of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012.

- The following amendments concern Article 5 of the current product specification.

The current wording:

“Asiago” cheese, whether of the “pressato” or “d’allevato” type, is produced with milk that complies with the health provisions in force. However, “Asiago d’allevato” may be produced in the mountain pastures during the migration period with milk that departs from the health provisions in force. The milk must be stored at a temperature of between 4 and 11 degrees Celsius and must be processed within a maximum of 60 hours of the first milking or the second milking if applicable. Where “Asiago” cheese is made from raw milk, this milk must be processed within 36-48 hours of entry into the establishment, in accordance with the provisions in force.’

is replaced by:

“Asiago” cheese, whether of the “Fresco” or “Stagionato” type, is produced with milk that complies with the health provisions in force. The milk must be stored in the dairy at a temperature of between 4 and 11 degrees Celsius. Milk intended for the production of “Asiago” “prodotto della montagna” [mountain product] cheese may be stored at temperatures determined by natural environmental conditions.

The milk must be collected within 36 hours of the first milking.

In order to produce “Asiago” cheese bearing the additional indication “prodotto della montagna”, the milk must be collected within 48 hours of the first milking.

The milk must be sent for processing within 48 hours of arriving at the dairy.’

In line with the development of the regulatory framework, using ‘milk that departs from the health provisions in force’ is no longer permitted. The amendment also states that the milk storage temperatures refer to the dairies, while the milk intended for the production of ‘Asiago’ ‘prodotto della montagna’ cheese may be stored at temperatures determined by natural environmental conditions, which are adequate for storage. The collection times for the milk are specified with reference to the first milking, allowing, in practice, milk to be collected from several milkings; the maximum number of hours within which the milk must be sent for processing after entering the dairy is also specified for all types of ‘Asiago’.

The current wording:

“Asiago pressato” cheese may be produced using milk from one or two milkings, raw or pasteurised at 72 degrees Celsius for 15 seconds, in accordance with the legislation in force.’

is replaced by:

“Asiago Fresco” cheese is produced using milk from one or more consecutive milkings, raw, thermised or pasteurised in accordance with the legislation in force.’

The amendment takes into account the trends in milking systems (milking robots, etc.), which ensure better animal welfare conditions without affecting the quality of the milk produced from several milkings.

In addition, the possibility of thermising the milk is introduced for ‘Asiago Fresco’ too. Thermised milk, having been subjected to lower temperatures than pasteurised milk, preserves more of the organoleptic characteristics linked to the production area.

The following amendment introduces the possibility of using milk from several consecutive milkings for ‘Asiago Stagionato’ too, as is the case for ‘Asiago Fresco’.

The current wording:

“Asiago d’allevato” cheese may be produced using milk obtained from two milkings partially skimmed by surface skimming, or from two milkings of which only one is partially skimmed by surface skimming, or from only one milking partially skimmed by surface skimming. The milk used may be raw or thermised at 57/68 degrees Celsius for 15 seconds with a positive phosphatase analysis parameter. No further treatment of the milk is permitted other than that expressly provided for in this product specification.’

is replaced by:

“Asiago Stagionato” cheese is produced using milk obtained from several consecutive milkings partially skimmed by surface skimming, or from several consecutive milkings of which only one is partially skimmed by surface skimming, or from only one milking partially skimmed by surface skimming. The milk used may be raw or thermised at 57/68 degrees Celsius with a positive phosphatase analysis parameter. No further treatment of the milk is permitted other than that expressly provided for in this product specification.’

The following paragraph has been deleted:

‘For the production of “Asiago” PDO cheese bearing the indication “prodotto della montagna” (mountain product), milk from two or four milkings may be used, but this milk must be processed within 18 hours of receipt in the case of milk from two milkings, and within 24 hours of receipt in the case of milk from four milkings.’

For the production of Asiago ‘prodotto della montagna’ cheese, milk may be collected from more than one milking, provided it is collected within 48 hours of the first milking; for this type of product too, the milk must be sent for processing within 48 hours of arriving at the dairy, as specified in the previous paragraphs.

The following amendment introduces the possibility of using vegetable rennet and eliminates the use of lysozyme.

The current wording:

‘The milk used for the production of “Asiago pressato” must be whole milk and the mixture in the boiler must consist of milk, lactic acid bacteria or starter, bovine rennet and possibly small amounts of sodium chloride. During processing, quantities of drinking water may also be added for technological reasons. In the case of the production of “Asiago d’alleva”, the milk used is partially skimmed by surface skimming, possibly with the addition of lysozyme (E 1105) within the limits of the law; the mixture therefore consists of partially skimmed milk, lactic acid bacteria or starter, bovine rennet and possibly small amounts of sodium chloride and lysozyme. The use of lysozyme (E1105) is in any case prohibited in the production of the “Asiago” PDO that bears the additional indication “prodotto della montagna”.’

is replaced by:

‘The milk used for the production of “Asiago Fresco” must be whole milk and the mixture in the boiler must consist of whole milk, lactic acid bacteria or starter, bovine rennet or vegetable coagulant and possibly small amounts of sodium chloride. During processing, quantities of drinking water may also be added for technological reasons. The milk used for the production of “Asiago Stagionato” must be partially skimmed by surface skimming and the mixture in the boiler must consist of partially skimmed milk, lactic acid bacteria or starter, bovine rennet or vegetable coagulant and possibly small amounts of sodium chloride.

The use of lysozyme (E1105) is in any case prohibited in the production of “Asiago” cheese.’

The amendment adds vegetable coagulant for the two types of ‘Asiago’, as an alternative to bovine rennet. The traditional production of Asiago cheese was originally based on the use of vegetable coagulant: indeed, there is evidence that thistle extract was used as a vegetable coagulant on the Asiago plateau. A recent study by the Veneto Regional Agriculture Agency shows that the organoleptic and sensory characteristics that are typical of both ‘Asiago Fresco’ and ‘Asiago Stagionato’ remain unchanged even when vegetable coagulant is used.

This introduction also makes it possible to respond to specific market demands.

The possibility of using lysozyme, an enzyme with anti-fermentative properties, has also been eliminated. It is a processing aid that is rarely employed in the production of ‘Asiago’ and is not traditional, use of which is becoming superfluous thanks to improvements in the quality of the fodder.

— The following amendments concern Article 7 of the current product specification.

The text of Article 7 of the current product specification ‘Methods of storage and maturation’ has been moved to the end of Article 5 of the proposed product specification and will constitute the subparagraph entitled ‘Methods of storage and maturation’.

The following paragraph relating to the stage preceding salting has been deleted:

‘Prior to the salting, the cheeses are stored for a minimum of 48 hours in premises at 10/15 °C at a relative humidity of 80-85 %.’

The paragraph described the stage preceding salting (known as ‘cooling’) which is now in fact integrated into the cheese maturation stage, given that the parameters indicated in the paragraph are the same as those proposed for maturation.

The sentence relating to the minimum maturation of ‘Asiago Stagionato’ has been rewritten.

The current wording:

‘The minimum maturation period for “Asiago d’alleva” is sixty days from the last day of the month of production.’

is replaced by:

‘The minimum maturation period for “Asiago Stagionato” is ninety days from the date of production.’

In order to obtain a better product from an organoleptic/quality perspective and a uniform maturation period for all production batches, it has been laid down that the minimum maturation period before marketing must be 90 actual days from the date of production.

A further amendment relates to the temperature and humidity parameters for maturation.

The current wording:

'The cheese must be matured within the production area itself in warehouses having temperatures of between 10/15 °C at a relative humidity of 80-85 %.'

is replaced by:

'The cheese must be matured within the production area itself in warehouses having temperatures of no less than 5 °C.'

The amendment replaces the two temperature and humidity ranges with a minimum temperature value, as this is considered more appropriate to express the optimal maturation conditions of Asiago. This minimum temperature parameter also reflects natural environmental conditions and can more effectively prevent abnormal fermentation in cheese with a long maturation period, even without lysozyme.

Link

A specific article on the link that is not included in the current product specification but only in the summary sheet published has been added. The text of Article 6 added to the proposed product specification and point 5 of the single document is as follows.

'Article 6

Link between the product and the production area

There are many historical and traditional elements that root "Asiago" cheese – which historically originates in the Asiago plateau located in the province of Vicenza on the border with the province of Trento – in time and place. Production of "Asiago" cheese dates back to the year 1000 and since then continued in the early 20th century also in an area adjacent to the Asiago plateau, within a radius of about 80 kilometres.

This is an area surrounding the historical one where the farmers of the Asiago plateau, who were forced to move following the events of World War I (1914-1918), found the agronomic, environmental and climatic conditions to be suitable to develop cattle farming and dairy tradition.

The production area of "Asiago" cheese includes an area consisting of the plateaus of Asiago, Lavarone, Vezzena and Folgaria, which represent the original area, the mountains of Trentino, an intermediate strip of foothills formed by the hills of Grappa, Breganze, Schio, Valdagno and Chiampo, as well as a strip of the irrigated plain of the provinces of Vicenza, Padua and Treviso.

In the production area, climatic and soil conditions are homogeneous in terms of both rainfall and temperature. In terms of soil, the land is essentially calcareous. Permanent fodder cultivation is widespread in all the altitude zones in the area, characterised by natural grasses and legumes and the cultivation of cereals (wheat, barley, maize). In the mountain altitude zone, all non-forested agricultural land is used for pasture and meadow grazing.

The most common breeds of cattle on farms in the area are the Italian Friesian, followed by the Alpine Brown, the Rendena and the Red Pied.

A particularly important element is the human factor. The characteristic mode of production, based on authentic and unvarying methods, has been kept intact over time through the transmission of the ancient art of local cheese-making and the techniques for transforming milk into cheese.'

Labelling

— The amendment concerns Article 6 of the product specification and point 3.6 of the single document.

The text of Article 6 'Identification and marking' has been moved to the first part of Article 8 'Labelling' of the proposed product specification and will constitute subparagraph 8.1 entitled 'Identification and marking'.

In the paragraph following the depiction of the designation logo, the words 'as an integral part' are changed to 'which constitute an integral part' and in the last sentence the Italian words 'Nella fascere' are replaced by the words 'Nelle fascere'.

The amendment consists of a formal correction and the elimination of a typo in the Italian.

The current wording:

‘repeated several times and 25 mm in height for “Asiago pressato” and 20 mm for “Asiago d’allevio”.’

has been amended as follows:

‘repeated several times and 25 mm in height for “Asiago Fresco” and 20 mm for “Asiago Stagionato”’.

This amendment replaces the words ‘pressato’ and ‘d’allevio’ with ‘Fresco’ and ‘Stagionato’ in line with the proposed amendment to Article 1 of the product specification.

The following sentence has also been added to the article relating to labelling:

‘All the identification marks of “Asiago” PDO (casein nameplate and origin marking) must always be visible on the whole cheese. Under no circumstances may the heel of the whole cheese be covered by film, tape or screen-prints.’

The amendment aims to strengthen product traceability and transparency vis-à-vis consumers, with the aim of highlighting the visibility of the PDO identification marks compared to imitation products or attempts at counterfeiting.

The following paragraph is added after the letters of the alphabet indicating the month of production:

‘Without prejudice to the traceability requirements laid down in the legislation in force, non-cylindrical products must bear the following identification marks: casein nameplate, the producer dairy’s alphanumeric code, designation logo, designation name “ASIAGO” repeated several times in sequence, on at least one side of the heel or one of the flat sides of the cheese. In this connection, the Protection Association provides branding equipment for use by producers who are entitled to do so.’

The amendment specifies the method of identification and traceability of the product in a form other than cylindrical, as provided for in Article 2 of the proposed product specification.

- The following amendment relates to the text of Article 9 ‘Packaging’, which has been moved to the end of Article 8 ‘Labelling’ in the proposed product specification and will constitute subparagraph 8.2 ‘Presentation and packaging’, point 3.5 of the single document.

The paragraph:

‘Whole “Asiago” PDO cheeses may be cut into portions and pre-packaged in wedges that allow the heel of the cheese to be seen. In any case, the centre of the cheese may be packed in portions, provided that its total weight does not exceed 10 % of the weight of the cheese itself. These portions must, however, contain the rind from the flat side of the cheese. If lysozyme (E 1105) is not used, this may be indicated on the label.

Where the cutting operations involve scraping and/or removing the rind, thus making the marking of origin invisible (cubes, slices, etc.), packaging must take place in the production area in order to guarantee the traceability of the product.’

has been amended as follows:

‘Whole “Asiago” cheeses may be portioned and pre-packaged in various formats (quarters, wedges, slices, etc.) with the rind. In any case, the centre of the cheese may be packed in portions, provided that its total weight does not exceed 10 % of the weight of the cheese itself. These portions must, however, contain the rind from the flat side of the cheese.

Where the cutting operations involve scraping and/or removing the rind, thus making the origin marking invisible, the various formats (cubes, grated cheese, slices, wedges, whole cheese, etc.) must be packaged in the production area in order to guarantee the traceability of the product.’

The amendment specifies the main pre-packaged formats. It is made clear that the marking of the heel is the sign that indicates the presence of an authentic product and the fact that it meets the requirements of the product specification and, if the rind is scraped off and/or removed, this must be done in a way that guarantees the traceability of the product.

- The following amendment aims to clarify which terms may be used in commercial information and/or on labels depending on the maturation.

The current wording:

“Asiago” cheese made from milk from cowsheds in mountain areas, which is processed in dairies located in mountain areas and matured in mountain areas, may be labelled with the additional words “prodotto della montagna”.

“Asiago pressato” cheese may also be labelled as “fresco” [fresh].

“Asiago d’allevio” cheese may also be labelled as “stagionato” [aged].

“Asiago d’allevio” cheese matured for four to six months may also be labelled “mezzano” [semi-mature].

“Asiago d’allevio” cheese matured for over 10 months may also be labelled “vecchio” [mature].

“Asiago d’allevio” cheese matured for over 12 months may also be labelled “stravecchio” [extra-mature].’

is replaced by:

“Asiago” cheese made from milk from cowsheds in mountain areas, which is processed in dairies located in mountain areas and matured in mountain areas, and which benefits from the additional indication “prodotto della montagna” may include the words “Asiago prodotto della montagna” in the commercial information and/or on the label.

The following indications may be included in the commercial information and/or on the label:

“Asiago Fresco” cheese may also be labelled as “Asiago pressato”.

“Asiago Fresco” cheese matured for more than 40 days may also be labelled as “Asiago Fresco riserva” [reserve].

“Asiago Stagionato” cheese may also be labelled as “Asiago d’allevio”.

“Asiago Stagionato” cheese matured for between 4 and 10 months may also be labelled “Asiago mezzano” or “Asiago Stagionato mezzano” [semi-mature].

“Asiago Stagionato” cheese matured for between 10 and 15 months may also be labelled “Asiago vecchio” or “Asiago Stagionato vecchio” [mature].

“Asiago Stagionato” cheese matured for longer than 15 months may also be labelled “Asiago stravecchio” or “Asiago Stagionato stravecchio” [extra-mature].’

The amendment clarifies all the alternative terms for ‘Asiago Fresco’ and ‘Asiago Stagionato’, depending on the different maturation periods of the product, which are updated in line with what is indicated in Article 1 of the product specification. The maturation periods are also better defined, in accordance with traditional production practices and for immediate and easy understanding by consumers.

— The following paragraph is added after the last paragraph:

‘Covering films or screen-prints with company information may be affixed to the flat side of the cheese, provided that they comply with the legislative provisions in force on the labelling and presentation of food products. Such films or screen-prints are not permitted to cover the casein nameplate and must always bear the designation “ASIAGO”, together with the European logo identifying Protected Designation of Origin products, in order to guarantee that the correct information is provided to consumers.’

The amendment aims to strengthen the instruments for product traceability and identification, which are considered to be essential aspects of a PDO product.

Control body

A new Article 7 ‘Control body’, which is not present in the current product specification, is added, providing information on the control body.

The text is as follows:

‘Article 7

Control body

In accordance with the provisions of Articles 36 and 37 of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012, verification of compliance with the product specification is carried out by the authorised control body before the product is placed on the market. The control body is CSQA Certificazioni Srl – Via S. Gaetano, 74 – 36016 Thiene (VI) tel. +39 0445313011, fax +39 0445313070 email csqa@csqa.it.’

SINGLE DOCUMENT

‘ASIAGO’

EU No: PDO-IT-0001-AM02 –30.7.2019

PDO (X) PGI ()

1. Name(s)

‘Asiago’

2. Member State or third country

Italy

3. Description of the agricultural product or foodstuff

3.1. Type of product

Class 1.3. Cheeses

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

The protected designation of origin (PDO) ‘Asiago’ is reserved for semi-cooked cheese, produced exclusively from cow’s milk, obtained in accordance with this product specification, divided into two different types of cheese, ‘Asiago Fresco’ [‘Fresh Asiago’] (also known as ‘Asiago pressato’ [‘Pressed Asiago’]) and ‘Asiago Stagionato’ [‘Aged Asiago’] (also known as ‘Asiago d’allevio’ [‘Ripened Asiago’]), whose characteristics are indicated below.

Specific technical characteristics for ‘Asiago Fresco’ matured for the minimum period.

Specification

Tolerances

(a) visual/organoleptic:

white or slightly straw-yellowish colour

marked, irregular eyes

pleasant and delicate flavour

thin rind with a springy texture

(b) chemical:

moisture	39,50 %	±4,50
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protein	24,00 %	±3,50
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fatty	30,00 %	±4,00
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sodium chloride	1,70 %	±1,00
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fat in dry matter	not less than 44 %	None
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(c) physical:

heel	straight or slightly convex
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top and bottom	flat or almost flat
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weight	11-15 kg
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height	11-15 cm
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diameter	30-40 cm
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Specific technical characteristics for 'Asiago Stagionato' matured for the minimum period.

Specification	Tolerances	
(a) visual/organoleptic:		
straw-yellowish or slightly straw-yellowish colour		
small to medium eyes		
mild and slightly savoury flavour – fragrant flavour ('vecchio' [mature])		
smooth and regular rind		
(b) chemical:		
moisture	34,50 %	±4,00
protein	28,00 %	±4,00
fatty	31,00 %	±4,50
sodium chloride	2,40 %	±1,00
fat in dry matter	not less than 34 %	None
(c) physical:		
heel	straight or almost straight	
top and bottom	flat or almost flat	
weight	8-12 kg	
height	9-12 cm	
diameter	30-36 cm	

For both 'Asiago Fresco' and 'Asiago Stagionato', in order to limit processing waste and subject to compliance with the visual/organoleptic and chemical specifications and weight requirements mentioned above, the production of 'Asiago' cheese in a shape other than cylindrical is permitted for products intended exclusively for pre-packaging (slicing, dicing, grating) or for processing into composite products, whether prepared or processed.

The cheeses may be treated on the surface with substances permitted by the legislation in force.

The surface treatment of the cheeses must in any case not reduce the legibility of the casein nameplate identifying the cheese, the designation logo and the 'ASIAGO' origin label stamped on the heel.

Surface treatment with colours and anti-moulds is not permitted for 'Asiago' cheeses that bear the additional indication 'prodotto della montagna' [mountain product].

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

Raw or thermised or pasteurised cow's milk is used.

Cattle whose milk is intended for processing into 'Asiago' cheese must not be fed with the following fodder and feeds:

FODDER:

rape, turnip rape, mustard or fenugreek forage;

fruit plant leaves, beet leaves and tops;

clover/grass silage, pea/grass silage, ensiled by-products;

fruits and their fresh and wet-conserved by-products of industrial processing;

vegetables and their fresh and wet-conserved by-products;

fresh and wet-conserved by-products of fermentation industries (brewer's grains, distillers' residues, marcs, etc.);

by-products of the sugar industry: fresh and ensiled sugar beet pulp;

by-products of the meat and livestock industry: various residues, either as such or combined with other fodder.

FEED:

meat, fish and feather meals;

meal from turnip rape cake, citrus fruit seeds or grape seeds;

dried vegetables and fruit;

dried by-products from industrial processing of vegetables and fruit (pea and bean pods, artichokes, chestnuts, citrus fruit pulp, olive residues, grape seeds, dregs, marcs);

by-products of the sugar industry: molasses protein concentrate, miscellaneous stillage, dried pulp stillage, etc.

dried by-products of the fermentation industry: stillage, fermentation residues, etc.;

urea, urea phosphate, biuret (for livestock use);

cotton.

At least 50 % of the dry feed ration must be produced within the geographical area.

Fodder must make up at least 50 % of the dry feed ration.

The requirement that at least 50 % of the dry feed ration must be produced within the geographical area can be met by using grass, hay and various meadow grasses from the defined area and these represent the portion of the feed ration made up of digestible fibre, broadly defined as 'forage' (grass, hay, pasture, etc.), which significantly influences the chemical, sensory and organoleptic characteristics of the milk and, therefore, of the finished product. The geographical area where 'Asiago' cheese is produced is mainly characterised by permanent grassland and grazing meadows, especially in the higher-lying or hilly areas, and is therefore not particularly suited to growing cereals (corn, wheat, barley) or oilseeds (soya).

The firms producing 'Asiago' cheese are highly specialised in producing milk from high-pedigree animals that need a nutritionally balanced diet, composed not only of fodder but also of feed and concentrates to sustain quality production and the welfare of the dairy cows.

This makes it necessary to use concentrates and feed from outside the demarcated area to supplement the food rations.

This feed allows quick nutrient intake, providing the energy and protein the dairy cows need for their normal rumen functions. Since they have only a physiological role in support of those functions, they have virtually no impact on the organoleptic characteristics of the milk.

Where the milk is intended for the production of 'Asiago' cheese bearing the indication 'prodotto della montagna', feeding with any type of silage is also prohibited.

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

The cows must be reared and 'Asiago' cheese made and aged within the geographical production area defined in point 4.

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

'Asiago' cheeses may be portioned and pre-packaged in various formats (quarters, wedges, slices, etc.) with the rind. In any case, the centre of the cheese may be packed in portions, provided that its total weight does not exceed 10 % of the weight of the cheese itself. These portions must, however, contain the rind from the flat side of the cheese.

Where the cutting operations involve scraping and/or removing the rind, thus making the origin marking invisible, the various formats (cubes, grated cheese, slices, wedges, whole cheese etc.) must be packaged in the production area in order to guarantee the traceability of the product.

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

All 'Asiago' cheeses are identified by means of numbered casein nameplates and marked with stencilled moulds, held by the Protection Association and assigned for use to all those entitled, containing the following designation logo.



This logo depicts a cheese that has been cut and is missing a wedge; the missing wedge, which has been transformed into a stylised 'A', is partially inserted into the cheese. The overall height of the logo affixed on the cheeses is 100 mm for 'Asiago Fresco' and 80 mm for 'Asiago Stagionato'. Also included in the stencilled moulds are the producer dairy's alphanumeric code and the designation name

ASIAGO

repeated several times and 25 mm in height for 'Asiago Fresco' and 20 mm for 'Asiago Stagionato'.

All the identification marks of 'Asiago' PDO (casein nameplate and origin marking) must always be visible on the whole cheese. Under no circumstances may the heel of the whole cheese be covered by film, tape or screen-prints.

'Asiago Stagionato' cheeses also have an alphabetical letter printed on the heel indicating the month of production.

Without prejudice to the traceability requirements laid down in the legislation in force, non-cylindrical products must bear the following identification marks: casein nameplate, the producer dairy's alphanumeric code, designation logo, designation name 'ASIAGO' repeated several times in sequence, on at least one side of the heel or one of the flat sides of the cheese. In this connection, the Protection Association provides suitable branding equipment for use by producers who are entitled to do so.

'Asiago' cheeses bearing the additional indication 'prodotto della montagna' are distinguished by the inclusion, in the stencilled moulds referred to in the first paragraph of this point, and once only, of the words 'prodotto della montagna'.

In addition, at the end of the minimum maturation period, the aforementioned cheeses are further identified by a hot brand on the heel, affixed using tools belonging to the Protection Association and provided for use by the entitled dairies, and bearing the following emblem:



The following indications may be included in the commercial information and/or on the label:

'Asiago Fresco' cheese may also be labelled as 'Asiago pressato'.

'Asiago Fresco' cheese matured for more than 40 days may also be labelled as 'Asiago Fresco riserva' [reserve].

'Asiago Stagionato' cheese may also be labelled as 'Asiago d'allevio'.

'Asiago Stagionato' cheese matured for between 4 and 10 months may also be labelled 'Asiago mezzano' or 'Asiago Stagionato mezzano' [semi-mature].

'Asiago Stagionato' cheese matured for between 10 and 15 months may also be labelled 'Asiago vecchio' or 'Asiago Stagionato vecchio' [mature].

'Asiago Stagionato' cheese matured for longer than 15 months may also be labelled 'Asiago stravecchio' or 'Asiago Stagionato stravecchio' [extra-mature].

Any labels, stamps, screen-prints, etc., bearing company information must comply with the legislative provisions in force on the labelling and presentation of food products and in any case must always allow the complete legibility of the identification marks of 'Asiago' PDO (marking by means of stencilled moulds) and of the casein nameplates identifying 'Asiago' cheeses.

Covering films or screen-prints with company information may be affixed to the flat side of the cheeses, provided that they comply with the legislative provisions in force on the labelling and presentation of food products. Such films or screen-prints are not permitted to cover the casein nameplate and must always bear the designation 'ASIAGO', together with the European logo identifying Protected Designation of Origin products, in order to guarantee that the correct information is provided to consumers.

4. Concise definition of the geographical area

'Asiago' cheese is produced from milk from cattle farms located within the identified area and in dairies located within the same area, as described below:

province of Vicenza: entire territory

province of Trento: entire territory

province of Padua: the territory of the municipalities of Carmignano di Brenta, S. Pietro in Gù, Grantorto, Gazzo, Piazzola sul Brenta, Villafranca Padovana, Campodoro, Mestrino, Veggiano, Cervarese S. Croce, Rovolon, Cittadella and Fontaniva;

province of Treviso: the territory thus defined: taking as a reference point the town of Rossano Veneto, in the province of Vicenza, the boundary follows the Rossano – Castelfranco Veneto road until the intersection with regional road No 53 'Postumia'. It skirts this road and crosses the ring road south of Treviso until its intersection with the Alemagna motorway. The boundary continues north along the line of this motorway to the river Piave. It then bends westwards along the right bank of the river to the border between the provinces of Treviso and Belluno. From this point, the boundary is identified by the border of the province of Treviso up to the point where it meets the border of the province of Vicenza.

Production areas listed above that are located at an altitude of not less than 600 metres are identified as mountain areas.

5. Link with the geographical area

There are many historical and traditional elements that root 'Asiago' cheese – which historically originates in the Asiago plateau located in the province of Vicenza on the border with the province of Trento – in time and place. Production of 'Asiago' cheese dates back to the year 1000 and since then continued in the early 20th century also in an area adjacent to the Asiago plateau, within a radius of about 80 kilometres.

This is an area surrounding the historical one where the farmers of the Asiago plateau, who were forced to move following the events of World War I (1914-1918), found the agronomic, environmental and climatic conditions to be suitable to develop cattle farming and dairy tradition.

The production area of 'Asiago' cheese includes an area consisting of the plateaus of Asiago, Lavarone, Vezzena and Folgaria, which represent the original area, the mountains of Trentino, an intermediate strip of foothills formed by the hills of Grappa, Breganze, Schio, Valdagno and Chiampo, as well as a strip of the irrigated plain of the provinces of Vicenza, Padua and Treviso.

In the production area, climatic and soil conditions are homogeneous in terms of both rainfall and temperature. In terms of soil, the land is essentially calcareous. Permanent fodder cultivation is widespread in all the altitude zones in the area, characterised by natural grasses and legumes and the cultivation of cereals (wheat, barley, maize). In the mountain altitude zone, all non-forested agricultural land is used for pasture and meadow grazing.

The most common breeds of cattle on farms in the area are the Italian Friesian, followed by the Alpine Brown, the Rendena and the Red Pied.

A particularly important element is the human factor. The characteristic mode of production, based on authentic and unvarying methods, has been kept intact over time through the transmission of the ancient art of local cheese-making and the techniques for transforming milk into cheese.

Reference to publication of the specification

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

The full text of the Product Specification is available on the following website: <http://www.politicheagricole.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeBLOB.php/L/IT/IDPagina/3335>

Or alternatively:

by going directly to the home page of the Ministry of Agricultural, Food and Forestry Policy (www.politicheagricole.it) and clicking on 'Prodotti DOP IGP' (at the top right 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'.

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