

# SINGLE DOCUMENT

Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin for agricultural products and foodstuffs

**'QUESO MANCHEGO'**

EC No: ES-PDO-0217-0087-06.12.2010

**PGI ( ) PDO ( X )**

**1. NAME**

'Queso Manchego'

**2. MEMBER STATE**

Spain

**3. DESCRIPTION OF THE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCT OR FOODSTUFF**

**3.1. Type of Product**

Class 1.3. Cheeses.

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

Pressed cheese made from milk of ewes of the 'Manchega' breed, aged for a minimum of 30 days for cheeses weighing up to 1.5 kg and from 60 days up to a maximum of two years for larger cheeses.

'Queso Manchego' can be made with either pasteurised or raw milk. In the latter case, the label may bear the word 'Artesano'.

'Queso Manchego' is a fat cheese with the following physical properties after ageing:

- shape: cylindrical with smooth sides,
- maximum height: 12 cm,
- maximum diameter: 22 cm,
- diameter/height ratio: between 1.5 and 2.2,
- minimum weight: 0.4 kg,
- maximum weight: 4.0 kg,

The physico-chemical properties of the cheese are:

- pH 4.8 to 5.8,
- dry matter: minimum 55%,
- fat content: minimum 50% of the dry matter,
- total protein in dry matter: minimum 30%,
- sodium chloride: maximum 2.3%.

Characteristics of the paste:

- consistency: firm and compact,
- colour: from white to ivory-yellow,
- aroma: lactic, intensely acidic and persistent, developing spicy notes and long overall persistence in cheeses that have been well aged,
- flavour: slightly acidic, strong and flavoursome, becoming spicy in cheeses that have been well aged. Pleasant and distinctive aftertaste produced by the milk of ewes of the 'Manchega' breed,
- appearance: small, unevenly distributed eyes, although these are sometimes not present,
- texture: low elasticity, buttery, slightly floury; can become granular in very well aged cheeses.

The microbiological limits are as follows:

- *Escherichia coli*: maximum of 1 000 colonies/gram,
- *Staphylococcus aureus*: maximum of 100 colonies/gram,
- *salmonella*: absence in 25 grams,
- *Listeria*: absence in 25 grams.

Slightly acidic, strong and flavoursome, with the flavour becoming spicy in cheeses that have been well aged. Pleasant and distinctive aftertaste produced by the milk of ewes of the 'Manchega' breed.

### **3.3. Raw materials (for processed products only)**

'Queso Manchego' cheese is made from milk of ewes of the 'Manchega' breed, natural rennet or other authorised coagulation enzymes and sodium chloride.

The milk must not contain any medicinal products that may have a negative impact on production, maturation and preservation of the cheese.

'Queso Manchego' can be made with either pasteurised or raw milk. In the latter case, the label may bear the word 'Artesano'.

The analytical characteristics of the cheese are as follows:

- fat content: 6.5% minimum,
- proteins: 4.5% minimum,
- useable dry matter: 11% minimum,
- pH 6.5-7,
- freezing point:  $\leq -0.550^{\circ}\text{C}$

### **3.4. Feed (for products of animal origin only)**

Manchega sheep graze throughout the year on the natural resources of the area. When in the fold, their diet is supplemented with concentrated feed, hay and by-products.

As regards sheepfarming, mention should be made of the pastures that occupy the clearings in the scrub. This annual pasture is composed of *Mediticago minima*, *Scorpirus subullosa*, *Astragalus stella*, *Astragalus sesamus*, etc.

The so-called 'madajales' are the most valuable pasture for sheep. These are composed of bulbous meadow grass and significant quantities of legumes, such as *Mediticago rigidula*,

*Medicago lupulina*, *Mendicago trunculata*, *Trigonella polyderata*, *Coronilla scorpioides*, etc.

Deep, cooler soils can produce 'fenelares', dense pasture with a predominance of perennial and biennial plants, the appearance of which is dominated by the grass *Brachypodium phoenicoides*.

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

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### **3.6. Specific rules concerning slicing, grating, packaging, etc.**

Cheeses protected by the 'Queso Manchego' Designation of Origin may be dispatched and placed into circulation by dairies and registered undertakings only in packaging of a type that does not affect their quality.

'Queso Manchego' is always marketed with the rind, which may have been washed.

'Queso Manchego' may also be coated in paraffin, covered with legally authorised inactive transparent substances or dipped in olive oil, provided that the rind maintains its natural colour and appearance and the casein label can be read.

Under no circumstances may substances be used that turn the rind black.

'Queso Manchego' may be marketed in portions, sliced or grated, provided that it is packaged and its origin can be identified. This operation may be carried out outside the area of origin by undertakings that have accepted and comply with the agreed protocol so as to guarantee the operations undergone by 'Queso Manchego' and ensure its traceability.

Packaging must comply with current legislation.

### **3.7. Specific rules concerning labelling**

Labels must bear the following wording: 'Denominación de Origen "Queso Manchego"' ('Queso Manchego' Designation of Origin). When the cheese is made with raw milk, this can be indicated on the label by means of the word 'Artesano'.

The marketed product bears a numbered secondary label issued by the Regulatory Board and affixed in registered undertakings in such a way that it cannot be reused and every piece of 'Queso Manchego' has on one of its faces a casein label with a serial number, affixed at the moulding and pressing stage.

## **4. CONCISE DEFINITION OF THE GEOGRAPHICAL AREA**

The following local authority areas are covered by the 'Queso Manchego' Designation of Origin: 45 in the Province of Albacete, 84 in the Province of Ciudad Real, 156 in the Province of Cuenca and 122 in the Province of Toledo.

The following areas have been incorporated: Alcoba de los Montes and El Robledo in the Province of Ciudad Real, Albadalejo del Cuende, Villarejo de la Peñuela, Villarejo-Sobrehuerta and Villar del Horno in the Province of Cuenca.

## **5. LINK WITH THE GEOGRAPHICAL AREA**

### **5.1. Specificity of the geographical area**

The geographical area of La Mancha is located in the southern part of the central plateau of the peninsular and is characterised by a low relief descending to the Atlantic.

La Mancha is a high plain with lime-clay soils and its pastureland has lime- and loam-rich substrates.

The area has an extreme climate and experiences wide variations characteristic of a continental climate, with very cold winters and hot summers. The temperature occasionally reaches 40°C, sometimes varying by 20°C over the course of a day and 50°C over the year. Precipitation is scant, making the region one of the more arid areas of Spain, its extremely dry environment having a relative humidity of around 65%.

The Manchega breed is the best adapted to the area's soil and weather conditions.

## **5.2. Specificity of the product**

A pressed cheese with a hard rind and a firm and compact paste, a colour that varies from white to ivory-yellow, an intense and persistent aroma, a slightly acidic, strong and flavoursome taste and a buttery, slightly floury texture with low elasticity.

## **5.3. Causal link between the geographical area and the quality or characteristics of the product (for PDO) or a specific quality, the reputation or other characteristic of the product (for PGI).**

The area's soil and climatic conditions have had a great influence on the processes of natural selection that have made the Manchega breed of sheep the breed best adapted to the area and producing a milk that gives 'Queso Manchego' its characteristic colour, aroma, flavour and texture.

Cheese has been made with milk from ewes of the Manchega breed since time immemorial and over the centuries manufacturing techniques have aimed to optimise the qualities of this traditional La Mancha cheese.

## **REFERENCE TO PUBLICATION OF THE SPECIFICATION**

(Article 5(7) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006)

[http://docm.jccm.es/portaldocm/descargarArchivo.do?ruta=2009/10/20/pdf/2010\\_17415.pdf&tipo=rutaDocm](http://docm.jccm.es/portaldocm/descargarArchivo.do?ruta=2009/10/20/pdf/2010_17415.pdf&tipo=rutaDocm)