

SINGLE DOCUMENT

Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 on protected geographical indications and designations of origin

“PROVOLONE VALPADANA”

EC No: IT-PDO-0217-0021-27.01.2010

PGI () PDO (X)

1. NAME

“Provolone Valpadana”

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 the product to which the name in (1) applies

"Semi-hard pasta filata cheese produced with raw whole cows' milk with natural acidity from fermentation, collected in the area of origin within 60 hours which can undergo:

for the mild variety – heat treatment until the cheese is pasteurised;

for the piquant variety, thermisation".

The maturation period can vary as follows:

up to 6 kg: minimum maturation period 10 (ten) days;

over 6 kg: minimum maturation period 30 (thirty) days;

over 15 kg and only for the piquant variety: minimum maturation period 90 (ninety) days;

over 30 kg with the product labelling P.V.S, piquant variety: maturation period over 8 months.

The cheese may also be smoked.

The weight may vary with regard to the shape.

The different shapes can be: Sausage shape, melon ball shape, truncated-cone shape, pear shape with a sphere on top known as a 'fiaschetta'; The external surface may show small indents from the supporting cords.

The rind is smooth, thin, of a light yellow, golden colour and sometimes yellow-brown. The mild variety to be divided into portions may have no rind.

The cheese is generally compact with occasional small holes; some flaking of the cheese is common for those with a shorter maturation while a more marked flaking is

typical of cheeses with a longer maturation period; it is generally of a pale yellow colour.

The cheese has a delicate taste at three months' maturation which becomes stronger in the piquant cheese with a longer maturation or when goat or lamb rennet are used either alone or together.

The maximum water content must not:

exceed 46% for all varieties of the mild cheese and for the piquant varieties weighing up to 6 kg;

exceed 43% for the piquant varieties weighing more than 6 kg.

The fat in dry matter should not be less than 44% or more than 54%.

3.3. Raw materials (for processed products only)

Milk, rennet, salt

3.4. Animal Feed (for products of animal origin only)

The basic feed for the dairy cattle, made up of fodder (fresh or dried), feed or feed-concentrates must come from no less than 50% of the zone of origin and must be applied to lactating cows, dry cows and heifers over 7 months old. At least 75% of the dry matter of the fodder in the daily ration should come from feed produced in the milk production area. The fodder allowed is: fresh fodder from permanent or temporary meadows, fodder crops, hay obtained from drying the crops in the field, straw from cereals, grass silage, chopped grass and hay silage. The feed allowed is: cereals and cereal products, corn mash, oilseeds and oilseed products, tubers and roots, dry fodder, products of the sugar industry such as molasses and/or derivatives alone such as processing aids and flavours up to a limit of 2.5% of dry matter in the daily ration. Also permitted are: legume seeds and dried locust beans and their derivatives, fats, mineral salts authorised by the legislation in force and additives such as vitamins, trace elements, amino acids, flavourings and antioxidants authorised by the legislation in force with the added requirement that any antioxidants and flavourings used must be natural or nature-identical. The use of inactive brewer's yeast as a carrier of 'premixtures' is permitted.

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

All the steps in the production phase must take place in the identified geographical area.

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

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3.7. Specific rules concerning labelling

All whole cheeses must bear the logo of the protected designation of origin Provolone Valpadana which must be reproduced on a suitable tamper-proof holder (metal, plastic).

The labelling must take place when the cheeses are hung for maturation in the storage areas.

Before whole cheeses are placed on the market, the Provolone Valpadana can be customised using card strips, stickers, packaging or similar material. For each of the previously mentioned modes of customisation, the logo and explicit mention of the

Protected Designation of Origin "Provolone Valpadana" must be shown on no less than a sixth of the surface area occupied by the commercial brand, with the exception of cheeses weighing less than 6 kg.

For labels using printed stamps, the name "Provolone Valpadana" must be shown within the limits described excluding the requirement to show the product logo.

Exclusively for the piquant variety, from the eighth month of maturation, holders of Provolone Valpadana can request a fire marking of the acronym 'P.V.S' which stands for Provolone Valpadana Stagionato. In order to display the abovementioned brand, the cheese must undergo a technical check by specialists that has been expressly requested by the holder and is at his own cost. The selective check concerns the external appearance of the cheese (which should not exhibit cracks and on tapping the cheese, the sound must be uniform), the cheese structure (with flaking, no holes and not elastic), the colour (white bordering on straw yellow), the flavour (the piquant variety should have a kick and not be salty) and the aroma (intense together with the odour).

The logo, including the name, must be reproduced on the packs intended for final consumers in proportion to the packaging used so as to take up no less than 10% of the surface space available. The name Provolone Valpadana should be shown in the same fashion. The indication "Denominazione d'Origine Protetta" may be replaced by the Community symbol.

The logo can also be used in a monochrome version.

4. CONCISE DEFINITION OF THE GEOGRAPHICAL AREA

The entire territory of the Provinces of Cremona, Brescia, Verona, Vicenza, Rovigo, Padova, Piacenza and adjoining municipalities of the Provinces of Bergamo, Mantova and Lodi and the Autonomous Province of Trento make up a single geographical area.

5. LINK WITH THE GEOGRAPHICAL AREA

5.1. Specificity of the geographical area

The geographical production area includes part of the Po Valley and is known for its high production of fodder, its large quantities of milk available and climatic conditions that are particularly suitable for feeding and breeding dairy cattle breeds. Thanks to these environmental factors, the ideal conditions for producing Provolone Valpadana cheese originated in the production area.

Provolone Valpadana is a pasta filata cheese and despite originating from the South of Italy, this type of cheese (thanks to the Padana cheese-making tradition, which was never lacking in technical expertise or abundance of raw materials to work with) has made a name for itself in Northern Italy. The use of natural whey inoculum derived from whey residues from earlier processing, the dairy know-how of dairy producers from the area in skilfully using different lamb, goat and calf rennets, and the hand-made expertise in the kneading and working of the cheese are of particular importance in the production of Provolone Valpadana.

5.2. Specificity of the product

Provolone Valpadana is known for its delicate flavour in cheeses which have matured for up to three months which becomes stronger in the piquant variety with the passing of time and according to the type of rennet used. Provolone Valpadana also comes in different shapes such as a sausage shape, melon ball shape, truncated-cone shape, pear shape and in sizes which can exceed 30 kg. The cheese is compact but not dry unlike pasta filata cheeses from Southern Italy which, because of their smaller size, can mature and become piquant just by drying and turning into grating cheeses.

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)

Provolone Valpadana has been produced in the specified geographical area since the second half of the 19th century and although the pasta filata cheese originates from Southern Italy, in the 20th century it made a name for itself in Northern Italy as witnessed by the works of Besana (1916) and Fascetti (1923).

The expansion in the production of Provolone Valpadana was aided by the Padana producers' technical cheese-making capabilities that developed over time thanks to the geographical area's particularly suitable conditions for breeding cows that produce a large quantity of milk for processing. Among the typical characteristics of the production method of Provolone Valpadana is the use of whey from earlier processing as a whey-starter for further processing. This process forms a very characteristic part of the production of Provolone Valpadana both in terms of the territory and the method used since it is rarely used in cheese production. Refining the production techniques has had an effect on the commercial characteristics of the cheese such as the shape and size of Provolone Valpadana without changing the essential characteristics. The different shapes and sizes of Provolone Valpadana are the result of the ability of the local cheese makers from the geographical area, through the kneading operation, to make the cheese malleable enough to be able to work it into different shapes and quite significant sizes. These commercial characteristics can be attributed to the geographical production area since this is where they have been developed and passed down. The coexistence of the two varieties of cheese, mild and piquant, is the result of the dairy producers' capabilities in using different rennets which allow the Provolone Valpadana to have the delicate or piquant flavours that are typical of the product even with a similar process to produce, respectively, smaller cheeses with a shorter maturation period or heavier cheeses with a longer maturation period, with a compact cheese that is never so dry as to require grating as with more typical pasta filata cheeses from the South of Italy.

REFERENCE TO PUBLICATION OF THE SPECIFICATION

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

This Ministry launched the national objection procedure referred to in Article 5(5) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 with the proposed amendments to PDO "Provolone Valpadana" in the Official Gazette of the Italian Republic No 291 of 15 December 2009.

"The full text of the product specification is available on the following web site:

<http://www.politicheagricole.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeBLOB.php/L/IT/IDPagina/3335>

Or

by going directly to the home page of the Ministry of Agricultural, Food and Forestry Policy (www.politicheagricole.it) and clicking on 'Qualità e sicurezza' (in the top right hand corner of the screen) and then on 'Disciplinari di Produzione all'esame dell'UE'.