

Publication of an application pursuant to Article 6(2) of Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin for agricultural products and foodstuffs

(2007/C 236/08)

This publication confers the right to object to the application pursuant to Article 7 of Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 ⁽¹⁾. Statements of objection must reach the Commission within six months of the date of this publication.

SUMMARY

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006

'GAMONEU' or 'GAMONEDO'

EC No: ES/PDO/005/0308/20.08.2003

PDO (X) PGI ()

This summary sets out the main elements of the product specification for information purposes.

1. *Responsible department in the Member State:*

Name: Subdirección General de Calidad Agroalimentaria y Agricultura Ecológica; Dirección General de Industria Agroalimentaria y Alimentación; Ministerio de Agricultura, Pesca y Alimentación de España
Address: Infanta Isabel, 1
E-28071 Madrid
Telephone (34) 91 347 53 94
Fax (34) 91 347 54 10
E-mail: sgcaproagro@mapya.es

2. *Applicant group:*

Name: Rosa Maria Intriago Cuesta y otros
Address: Barrio de Quilama, s/n
E-33820 Benia
Telephone (34) 985 84 41 57
Fax (34) 985 84 41 57
E-mail: genife_vete@hotmail.com
Composition: Producers/processors (X) Other ()

3. *Type of product:*

Class 1.3: Cheeses

4. *Specification:*

(Summary of the requirements in accordance with Article 4(2) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006)

4.1. Name: 'Gamoneu' or 'Gamonedo'

⁽¹⁾ OJL 93, 31.3.2006, p. 12.

- 4.2. Description: 'Gamoneu' or 'Gamonedo' cheese is a full-fat, ripened cheese with a natural rind, made from raw cow's milk, sheep's milk or goat's milk or a mixture of two or three of these types of milk. It is lightly smoked and has greenish-bluish streaks of *Penicillium* around the edges.

The milk used to make these protected-designation cheeses comes from the following species and breeds:

- Cattle: the Friesian, Asturiana de los Valles and Pardo Alpina breeds and crossbreeds thereof.
- Sheep: the Lacha, Carranzana and Milschalfe breeds and crossbreeds thereof.
- Goats: the Alpino-Pirenaica, Picos de Europa, Murciano-Granadina and Saanen breeds and crossbreeds thereof.

Physical characteristics of the cheese:

- Shape: cylindrical with smooth sides.
- Height: 6 to 15 cm.
- Diameter: 10 to 30 cm.
- Weight: 0,5 to 7 kg.

The rind is natural and thin and forms during smoking, and is dark sienna in colour, with hints of red, green and blue. It has a *Penicillium* mould directly beneath it.

Chemical characteristics of the cheese:

- Fat content: a minimum of 45 % in dry matter.
- Protein content: a minimum of 25 % in dry matter.
- Dry matter: a minimum of 55 %.
- pH: 4,5 to 6,5.

Organoleptic characteristics:

- aroma fresh and pungent, slightly smoked, which intensifies with ripening. The taste has slight smoky overtones; slightly piquant in the mouth, it develops a buttery flavour with a lingering hazelnut after-taste,
- the texture is hard to semi-hard, and firm and crumbly; it crumbles easily when cut. Small, unevenly distributed holes,
- the body of the cheese is white to yellowy-white, with light greenish-bluish streaks of *Penicillium* near the edges. The outer colour is a particular feature: on smoking, the cheese takes on a dark sienna colour and later on, when stored in the cave or cellar, the formation of mould gives it a reddish, greenish or bluish hue,
- Inside, the cheese has holes of mechanical origin.

The following traditional names are allowed:

- '*Gamoneu del Puerto*' or '*Gamonedo del Puerto*', made in the high mountain passes of the municipalities of Cangas de Onís and Onís (Picos de Europa) in small cheese-making installations on the plains or summer pastures referred to in the specification in the months of June to September. The cheese is made from milk from the dairy herds and flocks grazing on these plains, using a mixture of the milk of at least two of the three species referred to, i.e. cattle, sheep and goats. In any event, at least 10 % of sheep's milk or goat's milk is used.
- '*Gamoneu del Valle*' or '*Gamonedo del Valle*', made in the lower-lying areas of the region covered by the designation of origin belonging to the municipalities of Cangas de Onís and Onís. Production is not seasonal because the farming is semi-extensive, based on the pasture-farming system.

- 4.3. Geographical area: The geographical area is on the territory of the municipalities of Cangas de Onís and Onís in the Autonomous Community of Asturias. Production of the milk and the cheese and the ripening of the cheese take place in this specific geographical area.

- 4.4. **Proof of origin:** It is ensured that the milk used in the manufacturing process comes only from authorised farms entered in the register of the Regulatory Body. In the case of cheese made from milk produced on the farm of origin, this is done by checking the manufacturing records and herd/flock census. In the case of producers using milk not produced on their own farm, the manufacturing records and documents demonstrating the origin of the milk are checked. These documents are the delivery note showing the identity of the farm on which the milk originated, the time and date of collection, the quantity delivered, the time of delivery, identification details of the vehicle and driver used to transport the milk, and the associated invoice and proof of payment for the milk delivered. For each batch produced, the manufacturer of the cheese must keep records of the origin and quantity of the milk used, the number of cheeses made and the number of batch(es) in each production run. At each stage following manufacture, i.e. smoking, ripening and storage prior to dispatch, the records must enable the cheeses and batches present in each production installation to be identified at any time. Lastly, the manufacturer must draw up a list of batches produced, indicating the identification labels used and the final destination of the batches, proof of which must be provided by means of the relevant delivery notes and sales invoices.
- 4.5. **Method of production:** 'Gamoneu' or 'Gamonedo' cheese is made exclusively from raw cow's milk, sheep's milk or goat's milk or a mixture of two or three of these types of milk. The milk is produced by animals feeding on the natural resources of the region, i.e. the grasslands, and fresh grass or hay from the grasslands. Exceptionally, cereal and legume concentrate may be used in periods in which farm-produced feed is scarce, usually as a result of the weather.

The milk is taken to the cheese dairy where it undergoes a process of lactic acid coagulation. The amount of rennet and enzymes used is gauged such that coagulation takes at least an hour. At the point of coagulation and throughout the entire process, the temperature of the milk is between 24 and 30 °C.

When the milk has curdled, it is gradually and carefully cut into pieces 5 to 15 mm in size. This is followed by draining, which takes about one-and-a-half hours.

The curd is placed in cylindrical moulds suitable for food use. Slight pressure may be applied to ensure draining is complete.

Salting is done by covering the top and the base of the cheese with sodium chloride after 24 and 48 hours respectively.

After removal from the moulds, the cheeses undergo a smoking process whose duration and intensity vary depending on the ambient conditions prevailing at the time. This process is designed to ensure proper drying and the formation of a dark-coloured rind with a texture allowing *Penicillium* to penetrate the cheese during ripening. This operation produces a slightly smoked taste, which is characteristic of the product but which is not predominant. The material used for smoking is ash wood (*Fraxinus excelsior*), heather (*Erica* sp.), beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) or other native non-resinous wood.

Ripening takes place in limestone caves or cellars suitable for providing the cheese with its particular properties: an average temperature of 10 °C and an average humidity of 90 %. This process takes at least two months from the date on which the curd is made. During this period the cheese is turned and cleaned to endow it with its specific features. This process ensures the development of the characteristic mould and yeast, which must come from the ripening installations and under no circumstances may be added to the milk. The *Penicillium* must penetrate the inside of the cheese and develop around its edges, producing the greenish-bluish streaks beneath the rind characteristic of the cheese.

The cheeses are sold properly identified and labelled.

4.6. Link:

— Historical link

Gamonedo cheese continues the region's ancient traditions of integrated farming of herds and flocks. This cheese was already being made in the XVIIth century, when it served to feed the 'poor of the municipality', as referred to in a document about pasture farming addressed to King Philip IV in 1641.

Other historical documents (Madoz Geographical Dictionary, XVIIIth century) contain numerous references to this cheese as a staple in the diet of the local population, but also to the specialised stock farming in the region and the existence of mixed flocks and herds made up of cattle, sheep and goats. These flocks and herds were looked after by their owners on the pastureland where the animals grazed during the summer.

These conditions and the remoteness from consumer markets, due to the transport difficulties, have led to milk being processed into cheese by the shepherds themselves since time immemorial.

— Natural link

The traditional geographical area of production and manufacture is limited to the municipalities of Onís and Cangas de Onís, both of which cover large tracts of land in the Cornión, the western massif of the Picos de Europa. The most striking aspect of this mountain range is its rugged terrain, with a height above sea level ranging from 80 metres in the central stretch of the Sella river to 2 648 metres on the Torre Cerredo. This mountainous area is made up mainly of limestone, with steep slopes and a geomorphologic structure producing the predominant natural topography: valleys and passes.

The valleys are dominated by wide, slightly undulating plains where people have settled in small farms. These are the main clusters of population. Harvested meadows provide hay for the winter, during which the animals can also be kept on it and thus have no need for full stabling.

The passes, the highest parts, are characterised by steep sides and a karst terrain, with innumerable depressions, chasms, caves, channels and crevasses. This rugged terrain is home to the highly nutritious summer pastures on which the animals stay from spring to the first snow of autumn. The hill-sides, 'xerros' and crags are other characteristic topographical features used in this type of stock farming.

The region's climate is oceanic, with plentiful precipitation throughout the year, moderate sunshine and lots of cloud. Precipitation ranges between 2 000 mm in the highest areas, where it takes the form of snow at certain times, and 1 200 mm in the lower-lying areas. The higher-altitude areas also experience frequent fog in the summer period.

Throughout the year, temperatures are mild in the valley areas, with an average of 12 °C, but lower in the Alpine area, with an average of 3 °C.

The region's agrology is shaped by the presence of limestone crags and quartzite rocks which, in the valleys, have been shaped by erosion, the weather and the vegetation.

The climate, orography and geology give this region its own special characteristics which have a direct influence on the type and quality of pastureland. It is particularly suited to grazing by cattle, sheep and goats, which produce the milk made for processing into 'Gamoneu' and 'Gamonedo' cheese. The most representative plant on this pastureland is *Festuca burnatii*, a perennial grass native to Cantabria which grows in cold and dry conditions. The depressions and counterslopes in the landscape, where the snow remains until the end of spring, are home to pastureland made up of 'cervuno' (*Nardus stricta*), a hardy graminaceous plant that can thrive in various environments. The pastureland also has the graminaceous plants *Phleum alpinum*, *Festuca iberica*, *Festuca picoeuropeana* and the leguminous plant *Trifolium thalli* Vill.

The special features of this cheese are also the result of smoking and ripening, which involve only the mould and yeast present in the atmosphere in the ripening installations. The most important of these moulds is *Penicillium* which, as a result of its presence on the surface of the cheese, leads to the formation of the streaks that give the cheese its characteristic colour and taste.

— Human link

The ecosystem has unique environmental characteristics, as demonstrated by the fact that the *Montaña de Covadonga* park was the first in Spain to be declared a national park, in 1918. This national park is a pioneer of environmental protection in Spain. It is universally recognised that the shepherds in these mountains are among the principle managers and protectors of the environment in this area, and that their traditional farming methods have led to the creation of 'Gamonedo' or 'Gamoneu' cheese as the only viable option for exploiting the stock farming resources in this area.

The methods and conditions described in the section on production are the fruit of ancient traditions adapting to the modern world without making concessions that could lead to the loss of the identity of the product and the way of life that has grown up around it.

4.7. Inspection body:

Name: Consejo Regulador de la D.O.P. 'Gamoneu' or 'Gamonedo'
Address: La Plaza, s/n
E-33560 Benia-Onís (Asturias)
Telephone (34) 985 84 40 05
Fax (34) 985 84 42 30
E-mail: info@quesogamonedo.com

4.8. Labelling: Cheeses covered by the protected designation of origin 'Gamoneu' or 'Gamonedo' intended for consumption are identified by a numbered front or back label issued, approved and controlled by the Regulatory Body in accordance with the rules set out in the specification. Front and back labels on protected-designation cheeses must be marked 'Denominación de Origen Protegida — "Gamoneu" or "Gamonedo"' and bear the traditional references 'del Puerto' or 'del Valle', in addition to the data and information required under the applicable legislation.

All traders must use on the label the unique logotype approved by the Regulatory Body, as reproduced below.

