C/2026/192

12.1.2026

Publication of the communication of an approved standard amendment to a product specification of a geographical indication in accordance with Article 5(4) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2025/27 [1]

(C/2026/192)

COMMUNICATION OF APPROVAL OF A STANDARD AMENDMENT

(Article 24 of Regulation (EU) 2024/1143)

'Κασέρι / Kasseri'

Ref. No EU: PDO-GR-0440-AM01 – 13.10.2025

1. **Name of product**

'Κασέρι / Kasseri'

2. **Geographical indication type**

☑ PDO

☐ PGI

☐ GI

3. **Sector**

☑ Agricultural products

☐ Wines

☐ Spirit drinks

4. **Country to which the geographical area belongs**

Greece

5. **Member State authority communicating the standard amendment**

Name

Ministry of Rural Development and Food, Directorate for Quality Schemes and Organic Farming

6. **Qualification as standard amendment**

All the amendments introduced in the communication constitute a standard amendment to the specification of 'Κασέρι / Kasseri', given that they cannot be considered a Union amendment, as they do not fall under any of the conditions included in Article 24(3) of Regulation (EU) 2024/1143. That is, they do not entail: modification of the name or use of the name or risk voiding the link to the geographical area or further restrictions on the marketing of the product.

[1] Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2025/27 of 30 October 2024 supplementing Regulation (EU) 2024/1143 of the European Parliament and of the Council with rules concerning the registration and the protection of geographical indications, traditional specialities guaranteed and optional quality terms and repealing Delegated Regulation (EU) No 664/2014 (OJ L, 2025/27, 15.1.2025, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_del/2025/27/oj).

7. **Description of the approved standard amendment(s)**

Title

Description of product

Description

Section 2, 'Description of product', of the product specification has been amended, specifically in the paragraph about the basic characteristics of 'Κασέρι / Kasseri' cheese, the phrase 'Shape: (a) Cylindrical / Dimensions: diameter 25 to 30 cm; height 7 to 10 cm' has been replaced by the phrase 'Shape: (a) Cylindrical / Dimensions: diameter up to 30 cm, height of 7-10 cm'.

The reason for this amendment is that the process of shaping 'Κασέρι / Kasseri' cheese into a cylindrical shape in different sizes (individual cheeses with a diameter of less than 30 cm) facilitates the provision of the product as well as enabling its sale to more consumers, who are interested in being supplied with the 'Κασέρι / Kasseri' cheese in smaller quantities. This increases the saleability of the product.

☑ The amendment affects the single document.

Title

Proof of origin

Description

Section 4 of the product specification sets out the required procedures regarding proof of origin. With this amendment there is no material change to the product specification, but the latter has been updated in accordance with the legislation in force.

It has been added in the product specification that, in order to ensure traceability, the enterprises are in a position to stipulate: (a) the supplier, the quantity and the origin of all batches of raw material and/or the products supplied; (b) the recipient, quantity and destination of products supplied; (c) the correlation between each batch of inputs referred to in point (a) and each batch of outputs referred to in point (b) the present paragraph.

☐ The amendment affects the single document.

Title

OTHER AMENDMENTS TO WORDING

Description

Administrative changes in the geographical area:

The purpose of this update is to describe the demarcated area in the product specification using the administrative divisions currently in force (Kallikratis Plan). This is because there have been administrative reforms in Greece since the product name was originally registered. However, there is no change to the demarcated area.

☑ The amendment affects the single document.

Title

OTHER AMENDMENTS TO WORDING

Description

Inspection bodies

The particular point of product specification has been updated, in accordance with the current institutional framework. The competent inspection authority, now ELGO-DIMITRA, and the competent local departments have also been added.

☐ The amendment affects the single document.

Title

OTHER AMENDMENTS TO WORDING

Description

Statistical information

In the product specification, in the 'Link' section, in the part about 'Livestock' updated information from 2016 has been added about distribution of the population of milk-producing sheep and goats, by type of rearing, in the demarcated production area of the product, replacing the data in the original product specification relating to the year 1991. In addition, updated statistics from the year 2021 have been included on the distribution of sheep and goat milk production in the demarcated zone where the product is produced, replacing the data of the original specification from 1991. The reason for this requested amendment is to present up-to-date statistical data in the specification.

☐ The amendment affects the single document.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

Designations of origin and geographical indications of agricultural products

'Κασέρι / Kasseri'

Ref. No EU: PDO-GR-0440-AM01 – 13.10.2025

1. **Name(s)**

'Κασέρι / Kasseri'

2. **Geographical indication type**

☑ PDO

☐ PGI

☐ GI

3. **Country to which the defined geographical area belongs**

Greece

4. **Description of the agricultural product**

4.1. *Classification of the agricultural product in accordance with the Combined Nomenclature heading and code, as referred to in Article 6(1) of Regulation (EU) 2024/1143*

0406 – Cheese and curd

4.2. *Description of the agricultural product to which the registered name applies*

'Κασέρι / Kasseri' is a semi-hard, mainly table cheese with a pleasant taste and aroma. Traditionally, it is produced from sheep's milk or a mix of sheep and goat milk in a ratio where the latter is not more than 20 % over all.

The basic characteristics of 'Κασέρι / Kasseri' cheese are:

Chemical composition

— Maximum humidity: 45 %.

— Minimum fat content on dry matter: 40 %.

The use of colourings and antibiotics is not allowed.

Type of cheese:

Consistency: semi-hard to hard with a compact mass.

Shape:

(a) Cylindrical
Dimensions: Diameter up to 30 cm, height of 7-10 cm.

(b) Parallelepiped

Weight: varies.

Rind:

— Consistency: semi-hard, cohesive, usually covered either with paraffin wax or with other materials permitted for food.

— Appearance: slim.

Colour: yellowish white.

Cheese mass:

— Texture: semi-hard, cohesive.

— Colour: yellowish white.

— Eyes: few or none (usually without eyes).

Distribution: throughout the mass.

Other principal characteristics: it is mainly a table cheese with a pleasant taste and a rich aroma. It takes at least three months to ripen.

4.3. *Derogations on sourcing of feed (for products of animal origin designated by a Protected Designation of Origin only) and restrictions on sourcing of raw materials (for processed products designated by a Protected Geographical Indication only)*

The milk that is used for the production of the 'Κασέρι / Kasseri' cheese must originate exclusively from the demarcated area.

1. The milk that is used for the production of the 'Κασέρι / Kasseri' cheese must meet the following conditions:

   (a) 'Κασέρι / Kasseri' is produced, as a rule, from sheep's milk. In the event where it is mixed with goat's milk, the latter cannot exceed the 20 % by weight.

   (b) The fat content of the milk should be at least 6 % by weight.

   (c) The coagulation of the milk must take place within 48 hours of the milking process. Until coagulation, the milk is kept in controlled temperature conditions, in accordance with the applicable legislation.

   (d) The milk must originate from goat and sheep breeds that are traditionally bred and adapted to the production area of the 'Κασέρι / Kasseri' cheese. In addition, their diet must be based on the flora of this area.

   (e) The milk must originate from milkings that take place at least 10 days after birth.

   (f) The milk must be of good quality, raw or pasteurised.

2. The production of the 'Κασέρι / Kasseri' cheese with a different type of milk than the one established above is not allowed. The milk used for production of 'Κασέρι / Kasseri' cheese must not be concentrated or contain added powdered milk, milk proteins, caseinates, colouring, preservatives or antibiotics.

3. Traditional rennet or other enzymes having a similar effect may be added to the milk used for production of 'Κασέρι / Kasseri' cheese. When the milk is pasteurised, harmless acidic bacteria cultures and calcium chloride are added, in amounts up to 20 g/100 kg of milk.

The feeding of the animals is based mainly on pastures of generally low grazing capacity but particularly rich in flora, unique on account of the number of endemic vegetation species. Sheep and goats are primarily reared in mountainous and semi-mountainous areas. They are fed primarily by grazing. The herds are moved during the warm period to pastures in mountainous areas.

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

The production, ripening and initial packaging of the 'Κασέρι / Kasseri' cheese are all done in facilities that are located within the demarcated geographical area.

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

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4.6. *Specific rules concerning labelling of the agricultural product to which the registered name refers*

In order to ensure the traceability of the final product, the following identifying details must be printed on the packaging of 'Κασέρι / Kasseri':

1. The first letters of the designation of origin: KA;
2. The serial number of the packaging;
3. The date of production. Example (KA-1650-20.12.94).

If 'Κασέρι / Kasseri' cheese is repackaged, details from the original packaging appear on the new packaging. The repackager may replace the serial number with the serial number of the new packaging. In addition, the date of repackaging and the details of the company responsible appear on the new packaging.

The details that must appear on the packaging have to be checked by the competent inspection authority.

4.7. *Concise definition of the geographical area*

The geographical area in which 'Κασέρι / Kasseri' cheese is produced includes:

— in the region of Thessaly: the regional units of Karditsa, Larissa, Trikala and Magnesia;

— the entire region of Central Macedonia;

— the entire region of Western Macedonia;

— in the region of East Macedonia, Thrace: the regional units of Drama, Kavala and Xanthi and

— in the region of North Aegean, the regional unit of Lesvos.

5. **Link with the geographical area**

Summary of the link

The link of the product with the demarcated area is based primarily on the quality of the raw materials used for its production: pure sheep's milk or a mixture of sheep and goat milk. There is also a link with the manufacturing technology applied.

Approximately two thirds of the country's surface is mountainous (elevation above 200 m) and only one third is flat or semi-mountainous (hills up to 200 m in height). Pasture makes up more than half of the country's surface area. In general, Greece has a Mediterranean-type climate. This displays the characteristics of a temperate climate during winter, and the characteristics of the subtropical areas of high pressure during summer. In other words it has rainy winters and dry summers, low annual rainfall, mild winters, hot summers and long periods of sunshine throughout the year, especially during the warm period of the year. In terms of rainfall, the part of the country in which 'Κασέρι / Kasseri' is produced has both a dry and a wet period. The duration of these varies depending on latitude and elevation. The dry period begins at the end of spring and lasts until autumn. This is sometimes disrupted by rain in the form of storms. The wet period runs from autumn and until the end of spring. In Greece, overcast days, and days without sunshine particularly, are few. The annual average number of overcast days ranges between 30 and 90. The amount of sunshine in Greece is generally high. Therefore, the annual average ranges between 2 300 and 3 100 hours.

The natural flora of Greece is made up of approximately 6 000 species of which 15 %, or even 20 %, is endemic. Taking into consideration the country's size, this number is exceptionally large. In Europe, Greece occupies the first place among all states, and the second place after the Iberian peninsula. The figure of 6 000 species in Greece is remarkable with compared to the 20 000 species throughout the entire Mediterranean area: from southern Europe to northern Africa with part of western Asia. The endemism of the flora in the country mainly thrived in isolated habitats such as the Athos peninsula, Olympos and areas of the Aegean.

For sheep and goats, legumes and grasses are the ideal species for grazing.

The sheep that are reared in Greece, for the most part share a common genetic background. However, their characteristics differ depending on the particular conditions of the area in which they are reared. They are small-sized animals, adapted to the difficult geophysical and climate conditions of the country, producing low levels of milk, 80-120 kilos annually, but fine quality milk. This is due primarily to the way the animals are reared and to the diversity of the flora of the region. Most of the sheep in the areas in which 'Κασέρι / Kasseri' cheese is produced belong to the Zackel breed (*Ovis Aries* L.). In addition to native sheep breeds, foreign breeds and crosses of these breeds with the native sheep are also reared. However, their milk is less rich in composition and is primarily used for domestic consumption or yoghurt production.

As regards goats, most of the population (approximately 80 %) is made up of local breeds. Approximately 14 % are the result of cross-breeding with various foreign breeds, while the remaining approximately 6 % are of the Saanen breed. Indigenous goats present a variation as regards their colouring and characteristics of native breeds, such as a small size, limited prolificacy, low milk production and a strong constitution. The annual milk production ranges between 50-100 kg of milk for the animals from mountainous areas, and 120-150 for the animals from lowland areas. In the mountainous and semi-mountainous areas, the local goats are raised exclusively on free grazing. In lowland areas, where the cross-bred or foreign breeds are reared, domestic or semi-domestic rearing prevails. The rearing of the sheep and goats is mainly based on the vegetation of pastures with rather low grazing capacity but with particularly rich flora, and on the movement of herds to mountain pastures during the warm period.

The key features of sheep and goat farming in this area are: the large number of livestock holdings and the small number of animals per holding; the native breeds of sheep and goats, well adapted to difficult prevailing geophysical and climate conditions, but with small milk yields; and the prevalence of the system of extensive rearing of sheep and goats mainly in mountainous and semi-mountainous areas.

In terms of the quality of the raw materials, sheep's milk and goat's milk differ significantly from cow's milk, both in chemical composition and in cheese-making properties. This differentiation is even more evident in the case of local, native and low yielding breeds that are prevalent in Greece. Due to the special climate conditions present and the geophysical nature of the flora, these breeds are characterised by a milk production with especially high solid contents and a very rich aroma.

In general, sheep's milk and goat's milk are characterised by a high protein, fat and dry matter content in comparison with cow's milk. This influences the yield and the properties of the cheese. But apart from the quantitative differences, there are also qualitative differences between the types of milk that affect the yield in cheese, and also the mechanical properties, and physical and chemical, and organoleptic properties of 'Κασέρι / Kasseri' cheese. The most notable differences are the following:

(a) Carotenes are not present in sheep and goat milk. As a result, the curd produced from these milks has a natural white colour, unlike the curd produced from cow's milk which has a yellowish colour.

(b) There are also quantitative and qualitative differences in the casein fractions, with the result that the hydrolysis products differ. These products, together with free fatty acids, are largely responsible for the taste characteristics of the cheese.

(c) The electrophoretic mobility of alpha$_{s1}$-casein in the three types of milk is of particular interest. It is a property which makes it possible to detect any adulteration with the other types of milk.

These differences in the chemical composition of milk have an effect on the physical and chemical, and organoleptic characteristics of 'Κασέρι / Kasseri' cheese.

Today, as in the past, sheep's milk, or a mix of sheep's milk with a little goat's milk, was used to produce good quality 'Κασέρι / Kasseri' cheese. This milk came from animals generally reared in the Pindos and Olympos mountains. In these mountain ranges, the road network was basic or even non-existent. As a consequence, collecting and transporting the milk was difficult. The situation was facilitated by coagulating the milk on site, and transporting the coagulated product in casks, at regular intervals. This meant that the volume of the product transported was reduced, while the curd created was used to produce a good quality product. In these conditions, a 'pasta filata' type cheese was developed. The manufacturing technology for this developed slowly but surely into its current form. However, there has always been respect for the aspects of traditional technology that guarantee the agreeable organoleptic characteristics of the cheese.

'Κασέρι / Kasseri' is a semi-hard, mainly table cheese with a pleasant taste and aroma. The quality characteristics are mainly due to the quality of the raw material used to make it, and to the technology used. The quality of the milk, combined with the experience of the cheese-makers, results in a series of fine cheeses, in which 'Κασέρι / Kasseri' occupies a distinguished place.

The most important factors in the production of traditional 'Κασέρι / Kasseri' cheese are: the use of raw sheep's milk or mixtures of sheep's milk with a small quantity of goat's milk, not exceeding 20 % by weight; and the biological acidification of the curd to the desired degree.

From earliest times, sheep and goat farming provided Greece with the principal, if not exclusive, form of milk producing livestock. The development of sheep and goat rearing in Greece in general is attributed to geophysical and climatic conditions which would be difficult for cattle rearing. The large area occupied by mountains and the warm and dry climate conditions are favourable to natural vegetation only during certain, relatively short, periods of year. These were the principal and decisive factors. The result was the development of sheep and goat breeds with a strong constitution and adaptability to these difficult conditions. These breeds are adapted to the natural conditions, benefiting from pastures with a great variety of flora unique on account of the number of endemic vegetation species. The sheep and goats are characterised for their low milk production but also by milk of particularly rich chemical composition and excellent organoleptic properties.

An important characteristic of the mountain and semi-mountain flora on Greece is the absence of pesticides, herbicides, weedkillers, insecticides etc. Meanwhile, the concentration of lead and other pollutants is particularly low due to a lack of major roads in these areas. Such substances are absent from the environment and the flora, on which sheep and goats of the mountainous and semi-mountainous areas of the country feed exclusively. Consequently the milk and cheese produced there has little to no contamination, in contrast to what happens with the milk of animals fed with cultivated animal feed.

The quality of raw materials, the conditions of production to convert them into cheese, and the skill and long-standing experience of the cheese makers ensure the conditions for producing a unique product. Of high quality, it was, and still is to this day, particularly appreciated by consumers in Greece. The product has also started to be known abroad.

'Κασέρι / Kasseri' cheese is one of the country's most popular cheeses. Its history and traditions span many decades in Greece. The product is widely consumed, and consumption per capita is high. It has been made in various parts of the country for more than 100 years, with technology that is constantly evolving to adapt to the prevailing conditions. However, there has always been respect for the basic aspects of traditional technology.

There are many references attesting to the importance of sheep and goat farming since ancient times. For the Ancient Greeks, milk was considered a sacred food because Zeus was fed on the milk of the goat of Amalthea. Hermes, one of the twelve gods of the Greek pantheon, is considered a pastoral god. He was called 'Krioforos', 'Milosos' (protector of the sheep) and 'Tyreftir' (giver of cheese, cheese maker). According to Greek mythology, the art of cheese-making was provided as a precious gift to mortals from the gods of Olympus. In the Odyssey (IX, 218-250), Homer refers to the production of cheese from sheep and goat milk by the Cyclops Poliphemus.

Electronic (URL) reference to the publication of the product specification

https://www.minagric.gr/images/stories/docs/agrotis/POP-PGE/2021/prodiagrafes_kaseri190225.pdf