C/2025/3836

10.7.2025

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/2025/3836)

COMMUNICATION OF APPROVAL OF A STANDARD AMENDMENT

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

'Porc de la Sarthe'

EU No: PGI-FR-0184-AM01 – 24.4.2025

1. **Name of product**

'Porc de la Sarthe'

2. **Geographical indication type**

☐ Protected designation of origin (PDO)

☒ Protected geographical indication (PGI)

☐ Geographical indication (GI)

3. **Sector**

☒ Agricultural products

☐ Wines

☐ Spirit drinks

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

France

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

Ministry of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty

6. **Qualification as standard amendment**

The application for amendment to the 'Porc de la Sarthe' PGI does not involve any of the three situations constituting a Union amendment, specifically:

(a) it does not include a change in the name of the protected geographical indication;

(b) it does not risk voiding the link to the geographical area;

(c) it does not entail further restrictions on the marketing of the product.

The French authorities therefore consider that the application is for a standard amendment.

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

1. *Responsible department in the Member State*

In the 'Competent authority in the Member State' section, the contact details have been added for the National Institute of Origin and Quality (*Institut national de la qualité et de l'origine* – INAO) in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 2024/1143.

[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).

The amendment does not affect the single document.

2. *Applicant group*

The telephone number and email address of the AVFL, which brings together the operators of this PGI, have been updated. In addition, the description of its composition is reworded.

The amendment does not affect the single document.

3. *Type of product*

The section relating to the type of product, formerly defined by its class, has been deleted from the specification.

The amendment affects the single document.

4. *Product description*

The following product presentations have been added: primary and secondary cuts.

Offal has also been added to the cuts which can benefit from the PGI.

Deep-freezing is allowed for the presentation of cuts, and freezing is allowed for the meat and fats which are to be processed into meat-based products.

The amendment affects the single document.

5. *Description of the geographical area*

Slaughter has been removed from the steps that must take place within the identified geographical area.

The list of municipalities in the geographical area has been updated to bring it in line with the Official Geographic Code for 2024, in accordance with national requirements.

The amendment affects the single document.

6. *Evidence that the product originates in the geographical area*

A table containing the traceability evidence for each stage of production has been added.

The amendment does not affect the single document.

7. *Method of production*

Transport of piglets from place of farrowing/post-weaning stage:

In order to limit the stress of the young animals, a maximum distance or duration between the site of farrowing/post-weaning stage and the site of rearing is added.

Feed:

A breakdown of the feed is provided, for more clarity: the 70 % of grain is split into 20 % barley and 50 % other grains.

The list of banned raw materials is added.

Rearing method:

A free-range area for piglets aged between 13 and 17 weeks is added.

The concept of a constant access to light is added.

A provision ensuring that straw-bedded shelters must have a dry and comfortable lying area in the cold period is added.

It is specified that, from 17 weeks of age, pigs must have access to either a small exterior courtyard (at least 2,6 m^2 per animal) or to a run (50 m^2 per animal).

Removal and transport to the slaughterhouse:

In order to limit the stress of the animals, and accounting for animal welfare:

— a maximum distance of 200 km, or a maximum duration of six hours, between the place of farrowing/post-weaning and the rearing site is added.

— a pre-slaughter fasting period is added.

Grading of carcasses:

The characteristics of meats chosen at the slaughterhouse and the stage at which these characteristics are checked are added.

Details on rejected defects in appearance are added, specifically: defects in hair removal and rind, bruising, scratches, bloodspots, fractures. A maximum tolerance of 5 % in minor defects on the carcass may be accepted.

Deep-freezing and freezing conditions:

Deep-freezing conditions, depending on whether the cut is whole or in portions, and freezing conditions for meats and fats intended for processing into meat-based products are added.

These operations take place within the framework of a drop in temperature of the meats and fats.

The amendment does not affect the single document.

8. *Evidence of the link with the geographical area*

This evidence is updated, notably to:

— reduce the size of this section

— only retain parts which are needed for demonstration purposes.

The basis of the geographical area has not been modified.

The amendment affects the single document.

9. *Inspection body*

The inspection bodies and their contact details have been updated. The control plan is removed.

The amendment does not affect the single document.

10. *Details relating to labelling*

The 'Labelling' section has been amended in accordance with national guidelines aimed at harmonising how specifications are drafted: the existing paragraph has been deleted and replaced by a sentence setting out the mandatory regulatory elements.

The reference to labelling via an approved collective certification mark is removed.

The amendment affects the single document.

11. *National requirements*

The 'National requirements' section has been amended in line with changes to national legislation and rules. A table has been added showing the main items to be checked and the evaluation methods to be used.

The amendment does not affect the single document.

12. *Table of contents and annexes to the product specification*

The table of contents and all of the annexes to the product specification in force are removed, as they are non-essential to understanding the product specification.

The amendment does not affect the single document.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

'Porc de la Sarthe'

EU No: PGI-FR-0184-AM01 – 24.4.2025

1. **Name(s) (of the PDO or PGI)**

'Porc de la Sarthe'

2. **Member State or third country**

France

3. **Description of the agricultural product or foodstuff**

3.1. *Combined Nomenclature code*

02 – MEAT AND EDIBLE MEAT OFFAL

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

'Porc de la Sarthe' meat is fresh, deep-frozen or frozen if it is used for making processed meat products, and is characterised by:

— carcasses with no defects in appearance: defects in hair removal and rind, bruising, scratches, bloodspots, fractures;

— white and firm back fat;

— firm, consistently pink-coloured meat.

Carcasses are marketed:

— whole;

— as half-carcasses;

— as primary cuts: cuts (loin, shoulder, belly, neck, etc.);

— as secondary cuts: meat with or without bones (joints, chops, etc.);

— as offal.

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

As soon as they reach the 'Porc de la Sarthe' farm, piglets are given a specific feeding programme according to the following criteria:

— at least 20 % of the ration is barley,

— the sum of cereal grains, including barley, grain, oleaginous fruit, legume seeds, and products derived from these make up at least 70 % of the feed ration.

The following raw materials are banned (based on the nomenclature of the EU catalogue of feed materials):

— 9.7.1 Blood meal, 9.8.1. Blood products and 9.11.1 Feather meal,

— 10. Fish, other aquatic animals and products derived thereof

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

From the age of 13 weeks, the 'Porc de la Sarthe' is reared in the geographical area, up until it leaves for slaughter.

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

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

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4. **Concise definition of the geographical area**

The geographical area covers the Sarthe department and the surrounding cantons.

Sarthe Department (72): in its entirety.

Eure-et-Loir Department (28): (Les) Autels-Villevillon, Authon-du-Perche, (La) Bazoche-Gouet, Beaumont-les-Autels, Béthonvilliers, Chapelle-Guillaume, Chapelle-Royale, Charbonnières, Coudray-au-Perche, (Les) Étilleux, Luigny, Miermaigne, Moulhard, Saint-Bomer.

Indre et Loire Department (37): Ambillou, Braye-sur-Maulne, Brèches, Bueil-en-Touraine, Channay-sur-Lathan, Château-la-Vallière, Chemillé-sur-Dême, Couesmes, Courcelles-de-Touraine, Épeigné-sur-Dême, Hommes, Lublé, Marcilly-sur-Maulne, Marray, Neuvy-le-Roi, Rillé, Saint-Aubin-le-Dépeint, Saint-Christophe-sur-le-Nais, Saint-Laurent-de-Lin, Saint-Paterne-Racan, Savigné-sur-Lathan, Souvigné, Villebourg, Villiers-au-Bouin.

Municipalities included in part: Beaumont-Louestault (specifically the area corresponding to the former municipality of Louestault).

Loir-et-Cher Department (41): Artins, Baillou, Beauchêne, Bonneveau, Cellé, Choue, Cormenon, Couëtronau-Perche, Épuisay, (Les) Essarts, Fontaine-les-Coteaux, Fortan, (Les) Hayes, Houssay, Lavardin, Lunay, Mondoubleau, Montoire-sur-le-Loir, Montrouveau, (Le) Plessis-Dorin, (Les) Roches-l'Évêque, Saint-Arnoult, Saint-Jacques-des-Guérets, Saint-Marc-du-Cor, Saint-Martin-des-Bois, Saint-Rimay, Sargé-sur-Braye, Savigny-sur-Braye, Sougé, (Le) Temple, Ternay, Troo, Vallée-de-Ronsard, Villavard, Villedieu-le-Château.

Maine-et-Loire Department (49): Baracé, Baugé-en-Anjou, Durtal, Étriché, Montigné-lès-Rairies, Noyant-Villages, (La) Pellerine, (Les) Rairies.

Municipalities included in part: Huillé-Lézigné (specifically the area corresponding to the former municipality of Huillé), Morannes sur Sarthe-Daumeray (specifically the area corresponding to the former municipality of Daumeray).

Mayenne Department (53): Arquenay, Assé-le-Bérenger, Averton, Bais, Bannes, (La) Bazouge-de-Chemeré, Bazougers, Beaumont-Pied-de-Boeuf, Bierné-les-Villages, (Le) Bignon-du-Maine, Blandouet-Saint Jean, Bouère, Bouessay, Boulay-les-Ifs, (Le) Buret, Champfrémont, Champgenéteux, Châtelain, Chémeré-le-Roi, Cossé-en-Champagne, Coudray, Courcité, Crennes-sur-Fraubée, (La) Cropte, Daon, Évron, Gennes-Longuefuye, Gesvres, Grez-en-Bouère, Hambers, Izé, Jublains, Livet, Loupfougères, Maisoncelles-du-Maine, Meslay-du-Maine, Mézangersz, Neau, Pré-en-Pail-Saint-Samson, Préaux, Ravigny, Ruillé-Froid-Fonds, Saint-Aubin-du-Désert, Saint-Brice, Saint-Charles-la-Forêt, Saint-Cyr-en-Pail, Saint-Denis-d'Anjou, Saint-Denis-du-Maine, Saint-Georges-le-Fléchard, Saint-Georges-sur-Erve, Saint-Germain-de-Coulamer, Saint-Léger, Saint-Loup-du-Dorat, Saint-Mars-du-Désert, Saint-Pierre-des-Nids, Saint-Pierre-sur-Erve, Saint-Thomas-de-Courceriers, Sainte-Gemmes-le-Robert, Sainte-Suzanne-et-Chammes, Saulges, Thorigné-en-Charnie, Torcé-Viviers-en-Charnie, Trans, Vaiges, Val-du-Maine, Villaines-la-Juhel, Villepail, Villiers-Charlemagne, Vimartin-sur-Orthe, Voutré.

5. **Link with the geographical area**

The link is based on the reputation of the 'Porc de la Sarthe', stemming from a historic tradition of pork and grain production which give the meat its specific characteristics. The characteristics of 'Porc de la Sarthe' meat make it suitable for processing into renowned meat products such as rillettes.

Sarthe is a department in the west of France, in the Pays de la Loire region, of which the administrative centre is Le Mans. It forms part of the old province of Maine, flanked by the Armorican Massif and the Parisian Basin. In the 19th century, its geographic proximity to Paris was also a factor which promoted the development of pork trade with the capital.

Sarthe is a borderland at the crossroads of the Île-de-France, Normandy, Brittany and Centre regions, and mostly consists of a lowland area enclosed by a natural amphitheatre ranging from 20 to 300 metres in altitude, with an opening to the south-west. Its mild and temperate climate (average annual temperature of 12 °C and a small number of cold days) comes under maritime influence (600 to 800 mm of precipitation per year) and fosters hedgerow landscapes and forests which remain widespread.

As well as its climate and regular rainfall (57 mm monthly average, with little variance in rainfall between winter and summer), Sarthe has a very dense hydrographic network with nearly 4 000 km of watercourses, based around three main rivers: the Sarthe, the Loir and the Huisne. Together, these conditions allow for a great diversity in crops, notably in terms of grain. The Sarthe is seen as a microcosm of France due to its variety of agricultural landscapes, having historically alternated between periods of grain and grass production which favour the development of animal production.

Pork production in Sarthe, which is historically present on virtually all farms, has long been characterised by its original rearing methods. In the 18th century, most farms and 'bordages' (small farms) had a small number of pigs which made up the majority of meat consumption. 'Pigs were the dominant livestock; the farmers reared and fattened a phenomenal number.' They were sold at the fairs and markets of Mayet, Le Lude, Château du Loir, and Le Mans. It was the main resource of the sharefarmer; in many cases, the sale of these animals paid for the farm (historical research on the Mayet canton, Le Mans 1859, P. Legeay, page 39, Sarthe departmental archives – F95, Médiathèque du Mans – Maine 2241). They were reared in traditional *soues*, which are low constructions where a small number of pigs are fattened. These *soues* included a small open-air enclosed courtyard, where the pigs could stroll around. In the 19th century, pork rearing took off, notably in regions with sandy soil where potato-growing enabled the animals to be fattened. Barley, originally intended for English breweries, was produced in large quantities in the department and ensured the finishing of the animals.

The local markets were renowned across the region (historical research on the Mayet canton, Le Mans 1859, page 39, Sarthe departmental archives – F95, Médiathèque du Mans – Maine 2241), and pork was responsible for a large part of farmers' earnings. Such was the extent of the development that Sarthe farmers had to purchase piglets from neighbouring regions, notably the Lower Maine in the Mayenne department (Le Bas Maine, R. Musset, 1978, p. 369).

From 1985, Sarthe farmers formalised free-range pork rearing methods, starting with sows in 1986 (GDA [Agricultural Development Association] for Pork, newsletter No 34, Sarthe Chamber of Agriculture, 1986, p. 4), and then fattening pigs in 1988-89. In 1988, 14 % of sows in Sarthe were already being reared in fields, with the department emerging as a pioneer in this domain.

'Porc de la Sarthe' farmers preserve outdoor rearing techniques, and have more recently added access to runs to their practices. Small courtyards, runs or open fields allow the 'Porc de la Sarthe' to have access to open air.

The Sarthe production area is characterised by a strong presence of grain, which has allowed for the development and maintaining of livestock farming in the area. To this day, the fattening of the 'Porc de la Sarthe' still relies on the use of grain, with a notable proportion of barley (20 % minimum) in the feed, which is specific to this region.

The 'Porc de la Sarthe' is characterised by a specific meat quality linked to its rearing method. The meat is firm and mature, the lean meat is consistently pink, and the fat is white and firm.

Its characteristics are based particularly on traditional rearing conditions:

— A rearing period of at least 6 months.

— A feed which is rich in grain, with a high proportion of barley.

— Outdoor access for pigs during the finishing stage.

Physical exercise by pigs that have outdoor access and the age at slaughter contribute to making the meat firm and mature, with a consistently pink colour and a higher muscular development (Review: Pork quality attributes from farm to fork. Part I. Carcass and fresh meat, Lebret and Candek-Potokar, Anima, volume 16 supplement 1, February 2022).

The proportion of barley in the ration, as well as the selection of carcasses, determines the quality of the fats. Barley specifically has a lower proportion of unsaturated fatty acids, notably linoleic acid, than other grain (Morand-Fehr et Tran, 2001, and Ampuero Kragten et al., 2014). This results in pork fats that are white and firm, meaning that they have a high melting point. These technical characteristics contribute to the flavour, the cooking firmness, and the suitability of the meat for processed products.

The 'Porc de la Sarthe' is the result of a long tradition of pork production in the region, along with a geographical proximity and historic trade links to the large consumption area of Paris. The natural and human factors of the Sarthe area have allowed for a pork production with specific characteristics, which explain the widespread use of the pork in meat processing.

For example, the mild climate of the production area favours rearing methods with outdoor access. Moreover, the climate is temperate with maritime tendencies and water is sufficiently available across the year, from rainfall or from rivers. These factors have historically allowed for a regular grain production which feeds the livestock. The use of barley in the finishing stage, unlike further to the south of France where maize is used, results in a specific fat profile.

The specific characteristics of 'Porc de la Sarthe' meat, which come from its rearing methods, are sought by artisanal producers of rillettes, the primary processed meat product in the region according to a study carried out in 2022 (CO FRESH study).

'Porc de la Sarthe' meat, which is chiefly processed into meat products, has been the subject of various publications and reviews from artisans and butchers since the 1990s, such as that of Laurent Berthier, the multiple gold medallist for his homemade 'Porc de la Sarthe' rillettes (Face à face: Rillettes ou pâté? Le Monde, 16 July 2019). Numerous salting industries have chosen it for their products. A company entirely dedicated to its processing was specifically created in 1993 in Solesmes, Les Charcuteries du Terroir Sarthois, of which rillettes are the flagship product (La Tribune de la Sarthe, magazine of the General Council – No 30, November 1993). These days, the 'Porc de la Sarthe' continues to be a major source of supply for meat-processing companies in the region (COFRESH study and https://www.papillesetpupilles.fr/2021/10/comment-faire-des-rillettes-du-mans-la-recette-authentique.html/).

Reference to publication of the product specification

https://info.agriculture.gouv.fr/boagri/document_administratif-52bd4bf5-e6dc-44d2-a56c-99be231baab6