C/2025/3227

11.6.2025

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/2025/3227)

COMMUNICATION OF APPROVAL OF A STANDARD AMENDMENT

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

'Piacentinu Ennese'

EU No: PDO-IT-0646-AM01 – 31.3.2025

1. **Name of product**

'Piacentinu Ennese'

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**

Italy

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

MASAF [Ministry of Agriculture, Food Sovereignty and Forestry]

6. **Qualification as standard amendment**

The amendments fall under the definition of a standard amendment as they do not include a change in the name or in the use of the name, do not risk voiding the link to the geographical area referred to in the single document and do not entail further restrictions on the marketing of the product.

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

1. *This amendment concerns Article 2 of the product specification and point 3.2 of the single document on the description of the product*

More specifically, the amendment concerns the heel height and the diameter of the flat face of the wheel.

New version:

'Heel height: minimum 11 cm and maximum 15 cm, with a minimum diameter of [...] 20 cm for the flat faces, obtained by using a reed basket.'

[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 size of the cheese has been reduced to satisfy two main requirements:

to give artisanal cheesemakers greater flexibility to adapt cheese production to the quantities of milk produced, and to respond more effectively to a market demand for smaller cheeses.

The amendment affects the single document.

2. *This amendment concerns Article 5 of the product specification and point 3.3 of the single document relating to food*

New version:

'This may be supplemented with cereal grain, legumes and simple or complex concentrates'

The ban on GMOs has been removed.

In recent years, this restriction has proven to be very difficult to comply with and very burdensome for producers.

The amendment affects the single document.

3. *This amendment concerns Article 3 of the product specification and point 4 of the single document on the defined geographical area*

The amendment concerns the extension of the geographical area to cover the whole province of Enna.

New version:

'The milk production, cheesemaking and maturation area for "Piacentinu Ennese" comprises the administrative province of Enna in its entirety where sheep of indigenous breeds fed on natural or cultivated pasture with local ecotypes have traditionally been reared and where saffron has grown for centuries.'

In recent years, there have been applications from many young entrepreneurs located in municipalities which, despite having a tradition for this production, had not been included at the time of registration as nobody had shown an interest in being part of the defined geographical area.

The amendment affects the single document.

4. *This amendment concerns Article 8 of the product specification and point 3.5 of the single document*

New version:

'The product may be sold whole or in portions.

Portions of "Piacentinu Ennese" are produced solely by cutting cheeses that have already been certified. The packaging of portioned "Piacentinu Ennese" must take place in compliance with the relevant regulations, and in any case in a manner that does not detract from the cheese's shelf-life or organoleptic characteristics.'

This requirement has been added in order to clarify the conditions under which portioning takes place and to avoid objections during checks.

The amendment affects the single document.

5. *This amendment concerns Article 8 of the product specification and point 3.6 of the single document on the labelling of the product*

The image of the logo included only in the product specification has been added to the single document in order to align the two documents and the following sentence has been added:

'The packaging bears a label with a code identifying the whole cheese or portions thereof if the cheese is portioned.'

This addition will allow consumers to identify the product quickly and will make checks more effective.

The amendment affects the single document.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

'Piacentinu Ennese'

EU No: PDO-IT-0646-AM01 – 31.3.2025

PDO (X) PGI ( )

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

'Piacentinu Ennese'

2. **Member State or Third Country**

Italy

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

3.1. *Combined Nomenclature code*

— 04 – DAIRY PRODUCE; BIRDS' EGGS; NATURAL HONEY; EDIBLE PRODUCTS OF ANIMAL ORIGIN, NOT ELSEWHERE SPECIFIED OR INCLUDED

0406 – Cheese and curd

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

The 'Piacentinu Ennese' protected designation of origin cheese is a compact pressed cheese made from the raw, whole milk, with natural acidity from fermentation, of sheep of the native Sicilian Comisana, Pinzirita and Valle del Belice breeds and their crosses. On release for consumption, it has the following physical characteristics: Shape: cylindrical, with slightly concave or almost straight heel; flat or slight concave faces. Dimensions: minimum 11 cm and maximum 15 cm, with a diameter of 18 to 20 cm for the faces, obtained by using a reed basket.' Weight: between 3,5 and 4,5 kg. External appearance: a more or less intense yellow rind from the presence of saffron; marks from the basket and a filmy cover of oil or oil sediment; the rind must not be more than 5 mm in thickness. Internal appearance: the paste uniformly yellow of a more or less intense tone. Eyes: very small eyes may be present. Appearance of the paste: smooth and not grainy. Sweating: ranging from none to hardly any. Organoleptic characteristics: delicate odour with a slight aroma of saffron; hardly noticeable saltiness; mildly pungent in the first months of ageing with a tendency to becoming more so. Chemical properties: fat: minimum 40 % of the dry matter; protein content: minimum 35 % of the dry matter; Salt (NaCl): maximum 5 % of the dry matter; pH: between 4,80 and 5,70. 'Piacentinu Ennese' must mature for at least 60 days after the date of production. Maturing must take place in a cool place with small openings in order to provide moderate ventilation; or in stores maintaining a temperature of 8 to 10 °C and a relative humidity of between 70 and 80 %.

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

The sheep are fed on natural and/or cultivated pasture land, with fresh fodder, hay and straw from the designated production area, wheat stubble and by-products of vegetable cultivation: prickly pear cladodes, offcuts from olive trees from winter pruning, all from the production area. The sheep are usually put out to pasture for most of the year. Restrictions on pasture feeding are permissible where atmospheric, climatic or health conditions are likely to have an adverse effect on the quality of the fresh fodder and/or the milk.

Use of supplements may be permitted in the form of cereal grain, legumes and simple or complex concentrates. Such supplements may be given to the sheep only on those winter days in which they cannot go out to pasture.

Milk: raw, whole milk, with natural acidity from fermentation of pH 6,5 to 6,8, of sheep of the native Sicilian Comisana, Pinzirita and Valle del Belice breeds and their crosses bred within the production area.

Rennet: lamb or kid rennet paste: from lambs or kids bred in the production area.

Saffron (*Crocus sativus*): produced in the production area. Saffron is especially well suited to being grown in Sicily. The typical environmental conditions in the Enna area favour the production of 'quality saffron', as attested to by its high content of crocin and picrocrocin. This has made it possible to place Enna saffron in quality category I and II and its specific aromatic qualities make the final product's bouquet more intense and characteristic.

Black pepper (*Piper nigrum*): whole black pepper is added to 'Piacentinu Ennese' cheese. The whole black pepper must be washed in hot water (above 80 °C) for a few seconds before being added to the cheese.

Salt (NaCl): coarse grain. The salt used in the production of 'Piacentinu Ennese' must be perfectly white.

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

Farming of the animals, cheese production and maturing of the cheese are the steps in production which must take place within the production area.

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

The product may be sold whole or in portions.

Portions of 'Piacentinu Ennese' are produced solely by cutting cheeses that have already been certified. The packaging of portioned 'Piacentinu Ennese' must take place in compliance with the relevant regulations, and in any case in a manner that does not detract from the cheese's shelf-life or organoleptic characteristics.

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

The cheese is identified by the affixing of a casein nameplate and a label.

The casein nameplate bearing the words 'Piacentinu Ennese' and the cheese mould identification code number are affixed during the moulding and pressing stages.

In addition to the EU graphic symbol and indications and the information required by law, the labelling on 'Piacentinu Ennese' wheels must carry the following indications in clear and legible print:

'Piacentinu Ennese' and the letters 'DOP' (PDO) of a size greater than that of any other wording;

the name, business name and address of the producer and/or packager;

the logo.

The logo consists of an elliptical shape in outline, below which the words 'Piacentinu Ennese' appear on a single line, written left to right. Inside the shape there is an image of a 'Piacentinu Ennese' cheese with peppercorns with a slice cut from it in the shape of Sicily.



The packaging bears a label with a code identifying the whole cheese or portions thereof if the cheese is portioned.

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

The milk production, cheesemaking and maturation area for 'Piacentinu Ennese' comprises the administrative province of Enna in its entirety where sheep of indigenous breeds fed on natural or cultivated pasture with local ecotypes have traditionally been reared and where saffron has grown for centuries.

5. **Link with the geographical area**

Specificity of the geographical area:

The mountainous terrain of the 'Piacientinu Ennese' production area and its distance from the sea, which gives it its characteristically subcontinental climate, contribute to the production of fodder with special quantitative and qualitative characteristics and to its availability throughout the year. Production takes place in an area characterised by brown soils on gently sloping ground with distinctive pasture areas that are particularly suited to fodder production. The land is at 400 to 800 m above sea level. The flora of the natural pastures provides fodder consisting essentially of grasses and legumes with local ecotypes predominating.

The fodder grown after the grain harvest generally consists of local vetch ecotypes grown with oat and sulla clover.

Moreover, the typical environmental conditions of the Enna area are particularly suited to the production of high-quality saffron.

Specificity of the product:

The particular characteristic of 'Piacentinu Ennese' consists in adding saffron to the milk during the cheesemaking process, giving it its characteristic even yellow colour. This characteristic is in addition to its special aroma resulting from the fodder crops of the area whose aromas, which come from naturally occurring substances or 'terpenes', pass unchanged into the milk and then into the cheese produced from it.

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 characteristic of the 'Piacentinu Ennese' cheese is its even yellow colour which it gets from the saffron grown in the area and added to the milk during cheesemaking. The high content of crocin and picrocrocin attests to the quality of the saffron used. This has made it possible to place Enna saffron in quality category I and II and its specific aromatic qualities make the final product's bouquet more intense and characteristic. The province of Enna is, thanks to the lack of industry, a green pollution-free oasis which enhances the ecological value connected to the agricultural and pastoral activity. Sheep farming, including sheep milk production, is one of the sectors with the lowest environmental impact. The production area's orography and its sub-continental climate result in pastureland of special quantitative and qualitative characteristics; sited at between 400 and 800 m above sea level, the brown soil lands, which are mostly clay, sandy and semi-compact, favour the growth of pasture with a particular aromatic profile resulting from naturally occurring substances of vegetable origin, such as 'terpenes', which pass unchanged from the fodder crops into the milk and then into the cheese produced from it. The presence of a particular terpene, 'α-terpineol', has been found in 'Piacentinu Ennese'; it comes exclusively from the pasture essences present in Enna which give the product its unique and particular aroma. The ancient origins of cheesemaking in the province of Enna together with the traditional production of sheep's milk and the presence of both wild and cultivated saffron gives credence to the explanation given by old cheesemakers for the expression 'piacentinu'. According to such direct sources, the term refers to the pleasing nature of the product: indeed, the pleasing quality of its flavour, which is not too strong, is also due to the presence of saffron. The origin of the word is from the local idiom: 'piacentinu' from Sicilian 'piacenti' or 'pleasing', refers to its 'pleasing nature' and the name 'piacentinu' is recorded in old texts such as *Le Venti Giornate dell'Agricoltura e dei Piaceri della Villa* (Twenty Days of Agriculture and Pleasures of the Town), dating

from the 16th Century, which makes reference to the salting method and the addition of saffron in order to give the cheese more colour; or in *La Sicilia Passeggiata* (Walks through Sicily) by Maja in the 17th Century, and even from an old legend involving Ruggero il Normanno (Roger I of Sicily) who, worried about the mental health of his consort afflicted by depression but with a craving for cheese, asked his cheesemakers to make a cheese with magical properties. This gave rise to the idea of adding to the curds a dash of *Crocus sativus*, known for its stimulating and energy-giving properties. Production of this cheese continued over the centuries down to the present day, becoming an undisputed and exclusive part of the historical, cultural and production heritage unique to the province of Enna.

Reference to publication of the product specification

https://www.politicheagricole.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeAttachment.php/L/IT/D/1%252Fa%252F6%252FD.4ad9f8ed81dec60fa3c0/P/BLOB%3AID%3D3340/E/pdf?mode=download