C/2024/7552

30.12.2024

Publication of an application for registration of a name pursuant to Article 50(2), point (a), of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs

(C/2024/7552)

Following this publication, the authorities of a Member State or of a third country, or a natural or legal person having a legitimate interest and established or resident in a third country, may lodge, in accordance with Article 17 of Regulation (EU) 2024/1143 of the European Parliament and of the Council [1] an opposition with the Commission within 3 months from the date of this publication.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

'Queso de Burgos'

EU No: PGI-ES-02920 — 18.4.2023

PDO ( ) PGI (X)

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

'Queso de Burgos'

2. **Member State or Third Country**

Spain

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*

'Queso de Burgos' is a fresh cheese made by enzymatic coagulation of whole, fresh and natural, pasteurised, cow's and sheep's milk that has not been pressed or matured. It is ready for consumption after the curd has been cut, drained and moulded.

The types 'Queso de Burgos', 'Queso de Burgos Selecto' and 'Queso de Burgos Supremo' are distinguished, depending on the percentage of sheep's milk used. 'Queso de Burgos' must contain between 5 % and 10 % sheep's milk, 'Queso de Burgos Selecto' must contain between 11 % and 30 % sheep's milk and 'Queso de Burgos Supremo' must contain more than 30 % sheep's milk.

At the end of the production process, the cheese will have the following characteristics:

— Morphological

Shape: cylindrical or cylindrical-conical. The ratio of the diameter of the base to the height is between 1,1 and 1,5, while the ratio of the diameter of the base to that of the top surface is between 1 and 1,5.

Weight: between 250 and 2 300 grams.

[1] Regulation (EU) 2024/1143 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 April 2024 on geographical indications for wine, spirit drinks and agricultural products, as well as traditional specialities guaranteed and optional quality terms for agricultural products, amending Regulations (EU) No 1308/2013, (EU) 2019/787 and (EU) 2019/1753 and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 (OJ L, 2024/1143, 23.4.2024, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1143/oj).

— Physical and chemical

Fat content: not less than 40 % of the dry matter.

Dry matter: more than 20 % and less than 36 %.

Protein: not less than 28 % of the dry matter.

— Organoleptic

External appearance: white or slightly yellowish in colour, rindless, with smooth surfaces which may bear impressions left by the mould or by fabric, moist appearance.

Appearance on cutting: soft, white, fresh, moist paste, loose in texture, without any 'eyes', with small holes where the curd has not completely set (such holes have nothing to do with gas formation).

Aroma: smells of fresh milk. The 'Queso de Burgos' type has a very faint smell of sheep's milk, while the 'Queso de Burgos Selecto' type smells slightly of sheep's milk and the 'Queso de Burgos Supremo' type smells strongly of sheep's milk.

Texture: the mouthfeel of these cheeses is soft, slightly grainy or buttery, with a degree of elasticity and stickiness. They have a slightly fatty texture.

Taste and aftertaste: mild milky and sweet taste derived from the milk from which the cheese is made, slightly salty or not at all salty, not acidic or bitter. The 'Queso de Burgos' type has a very slight aftertaste of sheep's milk, while the 'Queso de Burgos Selecto' type has a mild aftertaste of sheep's milk and the 'Queso de Burgos Supremo' type has a strong aftertaste of sheep's milk.

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

There are no requirements regarding feed.

All the sheep's milk used to make the cheese comes from flocks in the Autonomous Community of Castile and Leon.

At the start of the production procedure, the sheep's milk must have the following analytical characteristics:

— Fat content: min. 6 %

— Proteins: min. 5 %

— Total dry matter: min. 17 %

The cow's and sheep's milk is full-fat, clean and fresh, and it contains no colostrum, contaminants, preservatives, antibiotics or any product that could have a negative effect on the production or conservation of the cheese.

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

The production stage takes place within the defined geographical area, comprising all the municipalities making up the province of Burgos.

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*

The commercial labels of each registered company must bear the words: 'Indicación Geográfica Protegida Queso de Burgos' ('Protected Geographical Indication Queso de Burgos').

Products intended for consumption must bear numbered secondary labels identifying the name, including the type of cheese concerned ('Queso de Burgos', 'Queso de Burgos Selecto' or 'Queso de Burgos Supremo'), which must be affixed in such a way that they cannot be reused.

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

The defined geographical area for the production of cheeses covered by the PGI 'Queso de Burgos' comprises all the municipalities of the province of Burgos.

5. **Link with the geographical area**

The link between the geographical area and the product 'Queso de Burgos' is based on its reputation.

'Queso de Burgos' is a unique cheese, being the only fresh cheese in Spain with a geographical indication. It is unripened, with a low dry matter content, not very granular, buttery, and white or slightly yellowish on the outside. It tastes and smells slightly of fresh sheep's milk, and is traditionally cylindrical or cylindrical-conical in shape.

The use of sheep's milk gives this cheese a more delicate aroma and flavour than other fresh cheeses, a more buttery consistency, owing to the higher fat content of sheep's milk, and a white or slightly yellowish external appearance.

Sheep's milk is used in the traditional 'Queso de Burgos' formula because sheep which produce both meat and milk are reared locally on the abundant pasturage provided by the terrain typical of the Autonomous Community of Castile and Leon.

The region is characterised by a cold, dry and strongly continental climate. The winters are Atlantic and the summers are dry and Mediterranean. Mean rainfall of 500 mm and always less than 800 mm per year.

The soil is often calcareous and basic, forming flat farming land and high moors criss-crossed by numerous large and small valleys. This favours the growth of an abundance of aromatic plants such as thyme, sage and lavender. The terrain is essentially flat, slightly undulating or hilly, between 600 m and 1 000 m in altitude. Grain crops, forage legumes and sugar beet are cultivated, with vines, poplar plantations and other less abundant crops also present. Together, these generate plenty of stubble on which the sheep can graze.

Queso de Burgos has traditionally been associated with areas used for the production of sheep's milk and with a style of settled rural farming life typical of the Duero river basin. Cheese was a further resource to boost household incomes. Moreover, cheesemaking enabled milk to be used to the full, as the fact that it was curdled allowed it to be kept for a few days longer. Despite changes in rural society, cheese remains a significant resource thanks to breeds of sheep that are ideally suited to the environment of the *meseta* (high plateau), the inputs derived from farming, and a topography that features dry stone walls, boundaries, ridges and hills. Farmers who produce sheep's milk have production systems involving the use *in situ* of agricultural by-products and untilled land colonised by scrub and grass. These farms generate high-quality feed for the periods when the sheep are inside, based on white cereal straw, grains and hay made from leguminous plants.

There continues to be demand for a mild cheese tasting of fresh milk (over the years it has become standard practice to mix cow's and sheep's milk), and people continue to enjoy the texture and aroma characteristic of Queso de Burgos.

The traditional production techniques, which rule out widely used modern methods such as ultrafiltration, together with the fact that plant-based coagulants are not used and the curd is not pressed, give the cheese a fresher taste. They also produce a characteristic, distinctive feature: the little holes in the cheese where the curd has not set completely.

These distinctive features, enjoyed by consumers, have given the cheese its reputation and renown.

Queso de Burgos already appeared as a geographical name in the list published in the Official State Gazette (No 18 of 21 January 1992).

Its marketing in the 1950s is evidenced by the article 'Quesos frescos españoles' ['Fresh Spanish cheeses'] in the magazine *Alimentaria* (No 194, July-August 1988), which states that 'the bestselling fresh cheeses on the Madrid market 30 or 35 years ago, i.e. in and before the 1950s, were those from Burgos and Villalón and goat's cheeses from in and around the Sierra de Gredos'.

Of particular note is the scientific article 'Caracterización microestructural del queso de Burgos mediante diferentes técnicas microscópicas' ['Microstructural characterisation of Queso de Burgos using various microscopic techniques'], by Hernando, I., Pérez-Munuera, I. and Lluch, M. A. (*Food Science and Technology International*, 2000), which states that: 'Queso de Burgos is a fresh cheese known and appreciated in Spain since time immemorial. Although made originally from sheep's milk, it is now made mainly from cow's milk, or mixtures of cow's and sheep's milk are used. Despite this change of raw material, the method of production that has made it the most popular traditional fresh cheese in Spain has been maintained.'

Other academic studies have been carried out at various universities in Spain:

— Chavarri García, F. J., 'Preparación de fermentos lácticos concentrados y su aplicación potencial a la mejora de la calidad microbiológica del queso de Burgos' ['Preparation of concentrated lactic ferments and their potential application to improve the microbiological quality of Queso de Burgos'], Complutense University of Madrid (1987);

— Hernando Hernando, M. I., 'Estudio de los principales cambios químicos y microestructurales ocurridos en el queso de burgos durante su vida útil' ['Study of the main chemical and microstructural changes in Queso de Burgos during its shelf life'], Valencia Polytechnic University (1998).

The reputation of this product is also attested to in the press and online magazines:

In the article 'Las razones y platos que hacen de Burgos el "mejor destino gastronómico" de España' ['The reasons and dishes that make Burgos the "best gastronomic destination" in Spain'], published in the Spanish newspaper *La Razón* when Burgos was elected the 'best national gastronomic destination' by readers in the 2023 *National Geographic* Travel Awards, Queso de Burgos is mentioned as one of the dishes 'which enjoy a more-than-deserved reputation in culinary culture'.

Another quote has been taken from the article 'Seis delicias de Burgos que debes probar' ['Six delicacies from Burgos that you must try'] (2021) in the digital gastronomy magazine *Cocina y Vino*, where Queso de Burgos is said to be '[…] one of the most iconic products from all of Castile and Leon'.

It is also mentioned in the books *Los Quesos* ['Cheeses'] (Cenzano, 1992) and *El análisis sensorial de los quesos* ['The Sensory Analysis of Cheeses'] (Chamorro and Losada, 2002).

The reputation of the product is also attested to by its inclusion in various official food catalogues: the Ministry of Agriculture's *Catálogo de Quesos Españoles* ['Catalogue of Spanish Cheeses'] (1973), the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food's *Catálogo de Quesos de España* ['Catalogue of Cheeses from Spain'] (1990), the same ministry's *Inventario Español de Productos Tradicionales* ['Spanish Inventory of Traditional Products'] (1996) and the Castile and Leon government's *Inventario de Productos Agroalimentarios de Calidad de Castilla y León* ['Inventory of Quality Agri-food Products from Castile and Leon'] (2001).

The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food also has on its website a 'Catálogo Electrónico de Quesos' ['Electronic catalogue of cheeses'] and a 'Cartel Digital de Quesos' ['Digital poster of cheeses'] (2018), which shows a sample of the 69 most representative cheeses produced and marketed in Spain. Both publications mention Queso de Burgos.

In addition to the recent references to the reputation of Queso de Burgos, the product has been referred to many times throughout history:

The significance of cheese sold on the Burgos market in the 18th century is shown by the fact that the city had an 'alcabalero del queso' – an official responsible for levying sales tax on the people who came to market to sell their cheese. This is attested by various contemporary documents; one, dated 30 February 1776, mentions Juan de Juara, the man charged with levying sales tax on cheese and wool in the city of Burgos (Burgos Municipal Historical Archive, Historical Section, catalogue numbers 5032, C2-96/25 and C-83/22). In his *Diccionario Geográfico-estadístico-histórico de España y sus Posesiones de Ultramar* ['Geographical, statistical and historical dictionary of Spain and its overseas territories'] (1845-1850) Pascual Madoz tells us that two festivals are celebrated in Burgos: 'on the feast days of Saint Peter and Saint James, as well as three weekly markets, which are quite well attended by farmers offering for sale the products of their harvest: fruit, bread … and the so widely appreciated lamb and cheese from Burgos.'

During the reign of Isabel II (1830-1904), when the king consort visited the city in 1852, a grand banquet was given in his honour. The dishes presented to the king included *queso de nata* (cream cheese), which might well be what we today call 'Queso de Burgos', as mentioned by Felipe Fuente Macho in his book *Yantar a lo Burgense*, published in 1974.

Angel Muro's work *El Diccionario Gastronómico*, published in 1892, mentions the following cheeses as being well known: Villalón, Burgos, manchego, etc.

Similarly, the *Diccionario Enciclopédico de Agricultura, Ganadería e Industrias Rurales* ['Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Rural Industries'], published in 1889, states that Queso de Burgos 'is the most widely known cheese in central Spain (…)' and describes the traditional production process.

Reference to publication of the product specification

https://www.itacyl.es/calidad-diferenciada/dop-e-igp/listado-dop-agroalimentarias