C/2025/5172

23.9.2025

# 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/2025/5172)

COMMUNICATION OF APPROVAL OF A STANDARD AMENDMENT

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

**'Queijo Serpa'**

**EU reference number: PDO-PT-0260-AM01 – 4.7.2025**

1. **Name of product**

'Queijo Serpa'

2. **Geographical indication type**

☐ PGI

☑ PDO

☐ GI

3. **Sector**

☑ Agricultural products

☐ Wines

☐ Spirit drinks

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

Portugal

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

*Name*

DGADR – Direção-Geral de Agricultura e Desenvolvimento Rural [Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development]

6. **Qualification as standard amendment**

The amendment is considered a standard amendment because it does not include a change in the registered name or in the use of the name, does not risk voiding the link to the geographical area and does not entail further restrictions on the marketing of the product.

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

*Title*

Change in the title of the document

*Description*

The title of the document has been changed from 'rules of production' to 'product specification' so as to bring the document into line with the EU regulations.

☐ This amendment affects the single document.

[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).

*Title*

Authorisation of processing plants

*Description*

The authorisation of processing plants now depends on the competent health authorities and not on the producer group.

☐ This amendment affects the single document.

*Title*

Correction of the geographical area

*Description*

The parish of Ermidas do Sado in the municipality of Santiago do Cacém had been omitted by mistake. This has been corrected. It has always been part of the geographical area. The geographical area has not changed.

☑ This amendment affects the single document.

*Title*

Addition of an obligation to affix a casein label

*Description*

The use of a casein label has been made mandatory in order to improve product traceability, making it possible to provide better evidence that the product originates in the defined geographical area, in accordance with Article 49(1)(d) of Regulation (EU) 2024/1143.

☑ This amendment affects the single document.

*Title*

Deletion of certain provisions that should not form part of the product specification

*Description*

A number of obsolete, redundant provisions that do not correspond to the current control system have been deleted, including the requirement for certain records and notifications and the reference to checks that are already covered by the delegation of official control tasks.

☐ This amendment affects the single document.

*Title*

Deletion of the applicable penalties

*Description*

The provisions relating to the penalty framework have been deleted, as this is a matter that is regulated in the context of official controls.

☐ This amendment affects the single document.

*Title*

Inclusion of the concept of 'Queijo Serpa' *Velho* (mature)

*Description*

The concept of 'Queijo Serpa' *Velho* has been included. It applies to cheeses that comply with the specified parameters and characteristics, including maturing for more than 180 days, and is intended to help promote these cheeses among consumers.

☑ This amendment affects the single document.

*Title*

Adjustment of the parameters relating to size and weight

*Description*

Slight adjustments have been made to the ranges within which the weight, diameter and height of the cheese may vary, in order to acknowledge the natural variations that occur when making this cheese and to meet market needs without changing its sensory characteristics.

☑ This amendment affects the single document.

*Title*

Changes regarding the temperature ranges for storage

*Description*

The requirements relating to the storage temperature at retail outlets have been simplified, in line with the general legislation on storage and shelf life. Temperature ranges have been specified for storage of 'Queijo Serpa' *Velho*. A temperature range for long-term storage has been included, making it possible to regulate the supply of the product throughout the year without affecting its sensory characteristics.

☑ This amendment affects the single document.

*Title*

Animal feed

*Description*

The possibility has been introduced of suspending the ban on using milk from females fed on ensilaged fodder or other fermented products when there is a manifest shortage of other types of feed. Indeed, in recent years, there have been longer periods of drought, limiting the production of cereals, hay and straw and therefore increasing the need to resort to ensilaged fodder or other fermented products to provide the animals with feed and ensure their welfare.

☑ This amendment affects the single document.

*Title*

Hygiene and storage rules for the milk

*Description*

The hygiene and storage rules for the milk have been simplified in order to bring the product specification into line with the legislation in force.

☐ This amendment affects the single document.

*Title*

Production process

*Description*

A more detailed description of the production process has been provided.

☐ This amendment affects the single document.

*Title*

Simplification of the text on ripening and maturing

*Description*

The text on ripening and maturing has been simplified, including by deleting repeated information.

☐ This amendment affects the single document.

*Title*

Commercial presentation

*Description*

Provisions on the commercial presentation of pre-cut cheeses have been included, thereby meeting consumer needs without compromising the sensory characteristics of 'Queijo Serpa'.

☑ This amendment affects the single document.

*Title*

Raw materials

*Description*

The raw materials used have been set out in greater detail, specifying that cardoon flower must be used as the coagulating agent and that coating may be used to provide better protection against mould. The results of sensory testing show that the coating does not alter the characteristics of the rind, the shape and consistency of the cheese, the texture and colour of the paste or the flavour and smell of the product.

☑ This amendment affects the single document.

*Title*

Hygiene during processing

*Description*

Provisions have been added that place greater emphasis on the need to observe hygiene rules during processing, in line with the applicable legislation.

☐ This amendment affects the single document.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

**Designations of origin and geographical indications of agricultural products**

**'Queijo Serpa'**

**EU reference number: PDO-PT-0260-AM01 – 4.7.2025**

1. **Name(s)**

'Queijo Serpa'

2. **Geographical indication type**

☑ PDO

☐ PGI

☐ GI

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

Portugal

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*

Queijo Serpa is a ripened cheese obtained by slow draining of the curds, following coagulation of unadulterated raw ewe's milk through the action of an infusion of cardoon (*Cynara cardunculus* L.) flowers. Queijo Serpa has a minimum maturing period of 30 days. When matured for more than 180 days, it is designated Queijo Serpa *Velho* (mature).

It is a short (flat), uniform cylinder with bulging sides, a slightly convex top and no defined edges. It varies in size between 200 g and 2,5 kg, which corresponds to cheeses of between 10 cm in diameter and 3 cm in height and 30 cm in diameter and 8 cm in height.

Queijo Serpa has a full, well-developed, slightly rough, thin, malleable rind that is a pale straw-yellow colour. Its malleable consistency allows some fluctuation. The paste has a closed, buttery texture and deforms easily when cut. It may spread, has an unctuous appearance, with few or no eyes, and is yellowish white or straw-yellow in colour, darkening on contact with air. It has a mild, clean flavour and may be slightly pungent. It has a mild to slightly strong smell. The cheese has a fat in dry matter content of 45 % to 60 % and a moisture in non-fat solids of 61 % to 69 %.

When presented as Queijo Serpa *Velho*, its shape is still a short (flat), uniform cylinder with slightly bulging sides, but the top either has no bulging or is slightly concave, with no defined edges. Queijo Serpa *Velho* still has a full, well-developed, slightly rough, thin rind, but it is hard or extra hard and is straw-yellow to dark straw-yellow in colour. It may be coated in colourless paraffin. The paste has a closed, semi-hard to hard texture, is dry and slightly crumbly, has an unctuous appearance, with few or no eyes, and is pale straw-yellow to dark straw-yellow in colour, becoming darker from the outside towards the centre. The flavour is intense, clean and persistent, and may be slightly pungent. Queijo Serpa *Velho* has a fat in dry matter content of 45 % to 60 % and a moisture in non-fat solids of ≤ 56 %.

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)*

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

All steps in production of the cheese: coagulation of the milk, moulding and ripening/maturing.

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

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

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4.7. *Concise definition of the geographical area*

The geographical area for 'Queijo Serpa' covers:

(a) all parishes in the municipalities of Mértola, Beja, Castro Verde, Almodôvar, Cuba, Ourique, Moura, Serpa, Vidigueira, Aljustrel, Ferreira do Alentejo and Alvito;

(b) the parishes of Colos and Vale de Santiago in the municipality of Odemira;

(c) the parishes of São Domingos, Alvalade, Abela and Ermidas do Sado in the municipality of Santiago do Cacém;

(d) the parish of Azinheira dos Barros in the municipality of Grândola;

(e) the parish of Torrão in the municipality of Alcácer do Sal.

5. **Link with the geographical area**

*Summary of the link*

The geographical area for Queijo Serpa is characterised by extensive plains with excellent conditions for forestry and grazing.

It is a region with a Mediterranean climate, characterised by high annual average temperatures. Days with a maximum temperature above 25 °C account for more than a third of the year. Annual precipitation is poorly distributed, with an excess of water in autumn and winter and a marked shortage in summer.

The very specific climate of this southern Portuguese region and the livestock husbandry practices (up to 600 animals, with long milking periods and large distances between the milking areas and the cheese dairies) together contribute to the development of different microflora in the milk, which, in combination with the age-old techniques used to make this product, give 'Queijo Serpa' the characteristics described above, differentiating it from cheeses produced in other regions.

**Electronic (url) reference to the publication of the product specification**

https://tradicional.dgadr.gov.pt/pt/cat/queijos-e-produtos-lacteos/237-queijo-de-serpa-dop