C/2026/4828

17.9.2026

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/2026/4828)

COMMUNICATION OF APPROVAL OF A STANDARD AMENDMENT

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

'Ricotta Romana'

EU reference number: PDO-IT-0298-AM01 – 18.6.2026

1. **Name of product**

'Ricotta Romana'

2. **Geographical indication type**

☑ PDO

☐ PGI

3. **Sector**

☑ Agricultural products

☐ Wines

☐ Spirit drinks

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

Italy

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

Name

MASAF (Ministry of Agriculture, Food Sovereignty and Forestry)

6. **Qualification as standard amendment**

The amendments fall under the definition of a standard amendment since they do not concern the name or the use of the name, do not risk voiding the link and do not entail further restrictions on the marketing of the product.

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

Title

Amendment to Article 5 of the product specification and point 4.2 of the single document as regards the description 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).

Description

— The Lacaune, Merinizzata, Assaf and Valle del Belice breeds, and their crossbreeds, have been added to the breeds from whose whole milk whey the ricotta is obtained..

— A tolerance of 10 % on the maximum weight of 2 kg has been introduced.

☑ The amendment affects the single document.

Title

Amendment to Article 5 of the product specification and point 4.5 of the single document

Description

— It has been specified that mountain grazing / transhumance is also permitted in neighbouring regions during the summer when the animals are in their dry period.

☑ The amendment affects the single document.

Title

Amendment to Article 8 of the product specification and point 4.6 of the single document

Description

— A 10 % tolerance on pack capacity has been introduced.

— The possibility of using modified-atmosphere packaging has been introduced.

☑ The amendment affects the single document.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

Designations of origin and geographical indications of agricultural products

'Ricotta Romana'

EU reference number: PDO-IT-0298-AM01 – 18.6.2026

1. **Name(s)**

'Ricotta Romana'

2. **Geographical indication type**

☑ PDO

☐ PGI

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

Italy

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*

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

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

The 'Ricotta Romana' protected designation of origin (PDO) is reserved exclusively for the dairy product made from the whey of whole sheep's milk obtained from sheep of the Sarda breed and its crossbreeds, the Comisana breed and its crossbreeds, the Sopravvissana breed and its crossbreeds, the Massese breed and its crossbreeds, the Lacaune breed and its crossbreeds, the Merinizzata breed and its crossbreeds, the Assaf breed and its crossbreeds, and the Valle del Belice breed and its crossbreeds.

On release for consumption, it has the following characteristics:

— Product: fresh;

— Paste: white, with a lumpy texture;

— Flavour: sweetish, milky taste;

— Weight: up to 2 kg with a 10 % weight tolerance;

— Fat content: minimum 40 % of dry matter.

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 dairy sheep feed on the natural and sown pasture and meadow land typical of the production area indicated under point 5. Supplementary dried fodder and concentrates may be used, but synthetic substances and genetically modified organisms must not.

However, feed sourced from outside the defined geographical area must not exceed 30 % of the dry matter annually.

The need to provide for fresh or hay feed and feed coming from outside the production area is an absolute requirement given that, in recent years, soil and climate conditions have not been particularly favourable for the agricultural and livestock sector; one need only think of the sudden changes in the soil, climate and environment, which have led to excessive rainfall during the drying periods, resulting in the hay going bad, and excessive heat and drought, resulting in a reduction in the production of fodder to be used fresh or as hay.

Moreover, the gradual and continuous abandonment of agricultural and livestock activity (negative trends in stocks, both in terms of number of holdings and number of animals) should not be underestimated. This mainly concerns small and medium-sized farms – traditional family farms – which find it increasingly difficult to survive in the current economic context: low economic viability, production costs – from fuel and livestock feed to machinery – continuing to increase while prices of agricultural products do not follow the same trend, and a lack of generational renewal.

In the past, rural life was at the heart of society and agriculture ensured a stable income. Today, more and more farms are closing and rural areas are increasingly becoming depopulated, especially those with a strong tradition of animal breeding. Therefore, without systemic changes, farm closures will continue, with serious consequences not only for rural areas but also for food production and the preservation of traditions: the risk is that they will no longer be able to meet their current feed requirements, nor will they be able to meet future needs.

The dairy sheep must not be subjected to forced feeding, environmental stress and/or hormonal alterations designed to increase production.

The whole milk whey, a liquid product of the coagulation of the milk, is obtained by separating it from the curds intended for the production of sheep's cheeses from the milk of ewes in the Lazio Region.

The whey from the whole sheep's milk is pale yellow in colour and contains the following:

— non-fat dry matter: 5,37 % or more;

— protein: 1,09 % or more;

— fat: 0,35 % or more;

— lactose: 3,55 % or more;

— ash: 0,4 % or more.

To make 'Ricotta Romana' it is allowed, as the whey is being heated to 50-60 °C, to add whole milk from sheep of the above breeds that have been reared in the geographical area referred to in point 5, in quantities not exceeding 15 % of the total volume of the whey.

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

The farms rearing the sheep whose milk is to be processed into 'Ricotta Romana' are located within the defined geographical area.

The milk must be produced and processed within the defined geographical area.

During the summer, when the animals are in their physiological dry period, the traditional practice of mountain pasturing and transhumance is permitted in mountain areas, including in neighbouring regions.

A key factor in the quality of the product is the separation of the curd, which depends on the operating skills of the cheese makers, themselves the result of centuries of competence and experience throughout the area covered by the PDO.

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

When the whey is almost fully separated, the 'Ricotta Romana' is packaged directly and put up for sale a few hours after production.

This is a fresh product that does not mature or season and quickly becomes rancid or perishes.

As it should be consumed whilst very fresh, 'Ricotta Romana' therefore has to be packaged in the geographical area referred to in point 5, in order not to impair its freshness, safety and quality, as well as to ensure traceability and allow for checks.

The cheese is packed in truncated conical wicker, plastic or metal baskets with a maximum capacity of 2 kg (with a tolerance of 10 %), the upper part of which is covered in a plastic sheet. The following other kinds of packaging are also allowed:

— parchment wrapping;

— plastic and/or vacuum containers;

— modified-atmosphere packaging.

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

In addition to the Community logo, the relevant references and the information required by law, the packaging must display the following in clearly printed, legible letters:

— the name 'Ricotta Romana' must appear in clear and indelible type, significantly larger and quite separate from any other wording, and must be followed by the words *'Denominazione Origine Protetta (DOP)'*;

— the name, company name and address of the producing and packaging company;

— the product logo.



Any other description not expressly allowed, including the adjectives 'fine' [fine], 'scelto' [choice], 'selezionato' [selected], 'superiore' [superior] and 'genuino' [genuine], or otherwise praising the product is prohibited. Brand names may be used, however, provided these have no laudatory purport and are not such as to mislead the consumer, as may the name of the enterprise from the holdings of which the product comes, and other truthful and documentable indications that are permitted under Community, national or regional law and do not conflict with the purposes and content of the present specification.

The name 'Ricotta Romana' must appear in Italian.

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

The whey must be obtained from the whole milk of sheep from the Lazio Region. The whey must be processed into 'Ricotta Romana' and packaged only within the Lazio Region.

6. **Link with the geographical area**

Summary of the link

Specificity of the geographical area:

The soil and climate conditions in the Lazio Region are characterised by various types of relief (limestone and volcanic mountains, hills, alluvial plains), annual average temperatures varying from 13 °C to 16 °C, and annual minimum rainfalls of 650 mm along the coastal strip, 1 000-1 500 mm on the inland plains and up to 1 800-2 000 mm on Mount Terminillo and in the Simbruini range.

Given these soil and climate characteristics, the territory provides the best possible conditions for rearing sheep without them suffering any stress.

These natural factors make it possible to exploit the natural and sown pasture land as a food source for the sheep, so imbuing the milk used for cheesemaking with particular qualities and establishing an exceptionally favourable synergy in terms of the product's quality and the homogeneous nature of its characteristics.

It is worth noting that the Lazio Region has a sheep population of over 440 000, with the ewes producing around 600 000 hl of milk per year.

Specificity of the product:

'Ricotta Romana' has the following characteristics:

— very fine paste, with a lumpy texture;

— a more distinctive colour than the equivalent product made from the whey of cow's milk; and

— a sweetish, milky taste.

These quality characteristics are linked to:

— the lactose content of 3,55 % or more in the whey of whole sheep's milk, giving it the sweetness deriving from the ewes' feed, which comes from the natural and sown pasture and meadow land typical of the Lazio Region; and

— the fact that no acidity adjusters are added to the whey during processing.

The resulting product, 'Ricotta Romana', has a characteristic sweetish taste distinguishing it from any other type of ricotta.

Causal link between the geographical area and the quality or characteristics of the product (for a PDO) or a specific quality, the reputation or other characteristic of the product (for a PGI):

The sheep's diet, together with the favourable environmental conditions in which they are reared – including the traditional practice of mountain grazing, which allows them to escape from the summer heat and thus from the possible environmental and nutritional stresses they would be subject to in the lowlands – mean that the milk is of the highest quality and the resulting ricotta is very distinctive.

The historical presence of Ricotta Romana on markets throughout the Lazio Region is illustrated by data from the market reports of the CCIAAs (Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Crafts and Agriculture) in Rome (1922-1965), Viterbo (1949-1973), Frosinone (1955-1999) and Latina (1951-1977). Also, from the Rome CCIAA commodities market it is possible to see the variations in the price of the product between 1952 and 1998, showing its importance for the economy of the geographical area. There are many social and economic indications, such as the presence of producers engaged in this type of production for years. Also, according to information supplied by its director, in 1969 Castel di Guido farm produced about 3 500 litres of sheep's milk, some of which was sold fresh and some used to produce Ricotta Romana, as shown in the farm accounts for 1958, 1960 and 1965, initialled by the shepherd and the director. The accounts of the Gasparri farm indicate the price per kilo and the total number of kilograms of Ricotta Romana produced during the farming seasons between 1907 (70 *centesimi*/kg until 15 March and 45 *centesimi*/kg thereafter, total production being 850 kg) and 1924 (total production of 932,5 kg).

In addition, many historical references and traditional customs demonstrate the link between this product and the geographical area. Among the historical references is the description of the techniques for producing Ricotta Romana in Trinchieri's *Vita di pastori nella Campagna Romana* (1953). As for traditional customs, one example is the country festival for *attozzata* (sheep's ricotta) that has been celebrated for about 30 years in the municipality of Barbarano Romano (VT).

As well as being eaten as a dish in itself, Ricotta Romana is widely used as an ingredient in traditional dishes from Lazio.

Electronic (URL) reference to publication of the product specification

https://www.masaf.gov.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeBLOB.php/L/IT/IDPagina/3341