C/2026/131

12.1.2026

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/2026/131)

COMMUNICATION OF APPROVAL OF A STANDARD AMENDMENT

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

'Λαδοτύρι Μυτιλήνης / Ladotyri Mytilinis'

Ref. No EU: PDO-GR-0445-AM01 – 13.10.2025

1. **Name of product**

'Λαδοτύρι Μυτιλήνης / Ladotyri Mytilinis'

2. **Geographical indication type**

☑ PDO

☐ PGI

☐ GI

3. **Sector**

☑ Agricultural products

☐ Wines

☐ Spirit drinks

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

Greece

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

Name

Ministry of Rural Development and Food, Directorate for Quality Schemes and Organic Farming

6. **Qualification as standard amendment**

All the amendments in the communication constitute a standard amendment to the product specification of 'Λαδοτύρι Μυτιλήνης / Ladotyri Mytilinis', given that they cannot be considered a Union amendment, as they do not fall under any of the conditions included in Article 24(3) of Regulation (EU) 2024/1143. That is, they do not entail: modification of the name or use of the name or risk voiding the link to the geographical area or further restrictions on the marketing 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).

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

Title

PRODUCTION METHOD

Description

Section 5, 'Production method', of the product specification has been amended, specifically in the paragraph about the manufacturing technology of the product, the phrase: 'the cheeses are ripened in rooms with a high relative humidity, approximately 85 %, and a temperature of 12-16 °C for at least three months' has been replaced with the phrase 'the cheeses are ripened in rooms with a high relative humidity, approximately 85 %, and a temperature of up to 16 °C for at least three months'.

The reason why this amendment is requested is that modern technology, the conditions (pasteurising and stable conditions for production, quality improvement of raw milk etc.) and the lactic acid cultures being used have significantly improved since the time of the original application.

In particular, today's use of modern means, tools and especially the use of lactic acid cultures to reduce the pH of the cheese, successfully enables faster ripening of the cheese. This results in the cheeses being stabilised in a time frame that every producer knows, depending on the lactic acid cultures they use and the temperatures appropriate to the original active microbial strain(s) used. Thus, in their attempt to avoid excessive ripeness, that would give the cheese intense flavours after the completion of ripening, the producers want to interrupt intense ripening by using lower temperatures. The ripening process is not altered at temperatures lower than the strictly stated lowest limit of 12 °C. However it continues at a different rate. The ripening of the cheese continues in the fridge and the check on the completion of ripening is done through the measuring of physical and chemical characteristics (such as the active acidity, i.e. pH). It is not strictly linked only to the ripening temperature.

Another reason for the amendment being requested is that the ripening temperatures laid in down the original product specification facilitated the development of mould on the cheeses, leading to contamination. This problem has occurred in modern ripening chambers where closed air circuits are used. However, older facilities did not have systems of this type in place.

For these reasons, it is deemed necessary to amend the temperature range for cheese ripening with regard to the minimum value.

The proposed amendment does not affect the essential characteristics of the final product. They remain the same as those laid down in the original product specification. This is specifically demonstrated by an experiment carried out on 60 samples of cheeses with the name 'Λαδοτύρι Μυτιλήνης / Ladotyri Mytilinis'. Half were ripened at temperatures of between 12 and 16 °C, and the remaining samples were ripened at temperatures within the temperature range (below 16 °C) requested with the amendment. It was found that there no differences of statistical importance in the principal characteristics of the product, following the dry salting and stabilising of the cheese samples' pH.

☐ The amendment affects the single document.

Title

PRODUCTION METHOD

Description

Section 6(I), Manufacturing technology, of the product specification has been amended, specifically in the paragraph on the manufacturing technology of the product, the sentence: 'The moulds are cylindrical, with bases, and are woven from rushes or other wild plants of the island.' has been replaced by the phrase 'The moulds are cylindrical, with bases, and are woven from rushes or other wild plants of the island or other material suitable for contact with food'.

The amendment requested concerns the method of production of 'Λαδοτύρι Μυτιλήνης / Ladotyri Mytilinis' cheese, in particular the materials used to make the moulds. The possibility of using not only natural materials but also other materials suitable for contact with food, authorised by national and EU legislation, has been added.

The proposed amendment does not affect the essential characteristics of the final product. They remain the same as the ones laid down in the original product specification.

☐ The amendment affects the single document.

Title

Proof of origin

Description

Section 4 of the product specification sets out the requirements that must be met regarding proof of origin. With this amendment there is no material change to the product specification, but the latter has been updated in accordance with the legislation in force.

It has been added in the product specification that, in order to ensure traceability, the enterprises are in a position to stipulate: (a) the supplier, the quantity and the origin of all the raw material batches and/or the products supplied; (b) the recipient, quantity and destination of products supplied; (c) the correlation between each batch of inputs referred to in point (a) and each batch of outputs referred to in point (b) of the present paragraph.

☐ The amendment affects the single document.

Title

AMENDMENTS TO WORDING

Description

Administrative changes in the geographical area:

The demarcated geographical area has been updated in accordance with the current administrative divisions of the Greek territory, without any change to the demarcated area. The purpose of this amendment is to describe the demarcated area in the product specification using the administrative divisions currently in force (Kallikratis Plan). This is because there have been administrative reforms in Greece since the product name was originally registered.

☑ The amendment affects the single document.

Title

AMENDMENTS TO WORDING

Description

Inspection bodies:

The particular point has been updated, in accordance with the current institutional framework. The competent inspection authority, now ELGO-DIMITRA, has also been added.

☐ The amendment affects the single document.

Title

AMENDMENTS TO WORDING

Description

Statistical information:

The meteorological elements have been updated. Updated data are presented on the distribution of the population of milk-producing sheep and goats, by type of rearing, in the demarcated production area of the product, replacing the data in the original product specification relating to the year 1991. The reason for the requested amendment is to provide up-to-date statistics in the product specification.

☐ The amendment affects the single document.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

Designations of origin and geographical indications of agricultural products

'Λαδοτύρι Μυτιλήνης / Ladotyri Mytilinis'

Ref. No EU: PDO-GR-0445-AM01 – 13.10.2025

1. **Name(s)**

'Λαδοτύρι Μυτιλήνης / Ladotyri Mytilinis'

2. **Geographical indication type**

☑ PDO

☐ PGI

☐ GI

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

Greece

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*

'Λαδοτύρι Μυτιλήνης / Ladotyri Mytilinis' is a hard cheese with a salty flavour, pleasant aroma and a characteristic embossed cylindrical shape.

Traditionally, it is produced from sheep's milk or a mix of sheep and goat milk in a ratio where the latter is not more than 30 % over all.

The basic characteristics of the 'Λαδοτύρι Μυτιλήνης / Ladotyri Mytilinis' cheese are:

Chemical composition:

— Maximum humidity: 38 %

— Minimum fat content on dry matter: 40 %

Permitted additives and processing aids:

— Essential: sodium chloride

— Optional:

  (a) Calcium chloride up to 20 g per 100 kg of milk

  (b) Preservatives: the use of preservatives is not allowed

  (c) Colourings: the use of colourings is not allowed

Type of cheese: hard cheese

Shape: cylindrical

Dimensions: the diameter is normally 10 cm and the height is normally also 10 cm

Weight: up to 1,5 kg approximately

Rind:

— Consistency: hard, dry

— Appearance: with a characteristic embossed pattern

Cheese mass:

— Texture: hard with small eyes scattered throughout the mass

— Colour: white to yellowish white

— Eyes with irregular distribution and an irregular shape

The use of colourings, antibiotics and preservatives in the cheese is not allowed.

The product is made available either as a whole or in portions.

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 milk that is used for the production of the 'Λαδοτύρι Μυτιλήνης / Ladotyri Mytilinis' cheese must meet the following conditions.

The milk must originate from the island of Lesvos.

Type of milk: pure sheep's milk or a mixture of sheep and goat milk where the latter doesn't exceed 30 % of the total.

Requirements: the milk must originate from goat and sheep breeds that are traditionally bred and adapted to the production area of the 'Λαδοτύρι Μυτιλήνης / Ladotyri Mytilinis' cheese, with the Mytilini sheep being the dominant breed. In addition, their diet must be based on the flora of this area.

The milk must be of good quality, raw or pasteurised and made into cheese at the latest 48 hours after the milking process. Until coagulation, it must be kept in controlled temperature conditions in accordance with legal provisions. It must originate from milkings that take place at least 10 days after birth.

The production of the 'Λαδοτύρι Μυτιλήνης / Ladotyri Mytilinis' cheese with a different type of milk than that established above is not allowed. The milk used for production of 'Λαδοτύρι Μυτιλήνης / Ladotyri Mytilinis' cheese must not be concentrated or contain added powdered milk, milk proteins, caseinates, colouring, preservatives or antibiotics.

Traditional rennet or other enzymes having a similar effect may be added to the milk used for production of 'Λαδοτύρι Μυτιλήνης / Ladotyri Mytilinis' cheese. When the milk is pasteurised, harmless acidic bacteria cultures and calcium chloride are added, in amounts up to 20 g/100 kg of milk.

The feeding of the sheep and the goats relies almost exclusively on pastures of generally low grazing capacity but with a particularly rich flora. Sheep and goats are primarily raised in mountainous and semi-mountainous areas. They are fed primarily by grazing. The herds are moved during the warm period to pastures in mountainous areas.

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

The production, ripening and initial packaging of the 'Λαδοτύρι Μυτιλήνης / Ladotyri Mytilinis' cheese are all done in facilities that are located on Lesvos island.

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

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

In order to ensure the traceability of the final product, the following identifying details must be printed on the packaging of 'Λαδοτύρι Μυτιλήνης / Ladotyri Mytilinis':

1. The first letters of the designation of origin: ΛΑ-ΜΥ
2. The serial number of the packaging and
3. The date of production. Example: ΛΑ-ΜΥ-1650-20.12.94

If ‘Λαδοτύρι Μυτιλήνης / Ladotyri Mytilinis’ cheese is repackaged, details from the original packaging appear on the new packaging. The repackager may replace the serial number with the serial number of the new packaging. In addition, the date of repackaging and the details of the company responsible appear on the new packaging.

The details that must appear on the packaging have to be checked by the competent inspection authority.

4.7. *Concise definition of the geographical area*

The geographical area in which ‘Λαδοτύρι Μυτιλήνης / Ladotyri Mytilinis’ cheese is produced is defined by the geographical limits of the island of Lesvos (also known as Mytilini) in the regional unit of Lesvos, North Aegean administrative region.

Milk that originates from areas outside of the aforementioned area is not permitted for use in the production of ‘Λαδοτύρι Μυτιλήνης / Ladotyri Mytilinis’.

5. **Link with the geographical area**

Summary of the link

The link of the product with the demarcated area is based primarily on the quality of the raw materials being used for its production: pure sheep’s milk or a mixture of sheep and goat milk. There is also a link with the manufacturing technology applied, which is in line with the traditional cheese making methods.

Lesvos is a North Aegean island with a surface area of 1 630 km^2, making it the third largest island of Greece by surface area. The terrain is igneous. The structure of the terrain is of an island character, with a regular succession of steep or very steep slopes, forming lowlands in the coastal areas. The island is semi-mountainous with a highest point of 965 metres (Profitis Ilias peak). The pastures occupy a significant part of the island’s surface area.

In general, Greece has a Mediterranean-type climate. This displays the characteristics of a temperate climate during winter, and the characteristics of the subtropical areas of high pressure during summer. In other words, it has rainy winters and dry summers, low annual rainfall, mild winters, hot summers and long periods of sunshine throughout the year, especially during the warm period of the year. Winters in the demarcated area are mild and the summers are relatively cool. This is due to the northeastern winds (known as the ‘Meltemi’) that prevail during the summer period in the islands of the Aegean.

The natural flora of Greece is made up of approximately 6 000 species of which 15 %, or even 20 %, is endemic. The endemism of the flora in Greece mainly thrived in isolated habitats, such as the Aegean region. The Aegean islands, Lesvos included, provided a significant route for the gradual migration of endemic plant species to Greece from the east, owing to the proximity of plants originating in Asia Minor. On the Aegean islands, scrubland is widespread. Specific reference is made to the flora of the shorelines, which is somewhat homogeneous due to the homogeneous nature of the climate and the wide distribution of many species. The weak tides, the absence of large rivers and other factors have limited the diversity. For sheep and goats, legumes and grasses are the ideal species for grazing.

The sheep that are reared on Lesvos, and in Greece more generally, for the most part share a common genetic background. However their characteristics differ depending on the particular conditions of the area in which they are reared. They are small-sized animals, adapted to the difficult geophysical and climate conditions of the region, producing low levels of milk, 80-120 kg annually, but fine quality milk. This is due primarily to the way the animals are reared and to the diversity of the flora of the region.

The local Mytilini breed of sheep is the dominant breed on Lesvos. As regards goats, most of the population is made up of local breeds. Indigenous goats present a variation as regards the colouring and characteristics of native breeds, such as a small size, limited prolificacy, low milk production and a strong constitution. The annual milk production ranges between 50-100 kg of milk for the animals from mountainous areas, and 120-150 for the animals from lowland areas. In the mountainous and semi-mountainous areas, the local goats are raised exclusively on free grazing.

The key features of sheep and goat farming in this area are: the large number of livestock holdings and the small number of animals per holding; the native breeds of sheep and goats, well adapted to difficult prevailing geophysical and climate conditions, but with small milk yields; and the prevalence of the system of extensive rearing of sheep and goats mainly in mountainous and semi-mountainous areas. The rearing of the sheep and goats is mainly based on pastures with rather low grazing capacity but with particularly rich flora, and on the movement of herds to mountain pastures during the warm period.

In terms of the quality of the raw materials, sheep's milk and goat's milk differ significantly from cow's milk, both in chemical composition and in cheese-making properties. This differentiation is even more evident in the case of the local, native and low yielding breeds that are prevalent in Greece. Due to the special climate conditions present and the geophysical nature of the flora, these breeds are characterised by a milk production with especially high solid contents and a very rich aroma.

In general, sheep's milk and goat's milk are characterised by a high protein, fat and dry matter content in comparison with cow's milk. This influences the yield and the properties of the cheese.

But apart from the quantitative differences, there are also qualitative differences between the types of milk that affect the yield in cheese, and also the mechanical properties, and physical and chemical, and organoleptic properties of 'Λαδοτύρι Μυτιλήνης / Ladotyri Mytilinis' cheese. The most notable differences are the following:

(a) Carotenes are not present in sheep and goat milk. As a result, the curd produced from these milks has a natural white colour, unlike the curd produced from cow's milk which has a yellowish colour.

(b) The milk fat is a source of components that make a significant contribution to creating the aroma and taste of the ripe cheese. The presence of low-molecular weight fatty acids in the fat structure of the milk affects the final aroma of the cheese. Sheep's milk, and goat's milk in particular, contain significant amounts of caproate, caprylic and caproic acid, so that the typical aroma of the cheese produced from these types of milk is richer and the taste is more intense (piquant), which is not achieved if cow's milk is used.

(c) There are also quantitative and qualitative differences in the casein fractions in the three types of milk, with the result that the hydrolysis products differ. These products, together with free fatty acids, are largely responsible for the taste characteristics of the cheese.

(d) The electrophoretic mobility of alpha$_{s1}$-casein in the three types of milk is of particular interest. It is a property which makes it possible to detect any adulteration with the other types of milk.

Naturally, these differences in the chemical composition of milk have an effect on the physical and chemical, and organoleptic characteristics of 'Λαδοτύρι Μυτιλήνης / Ladotyri Mytilinis' cheese.

'Λαδοτύρι Μυτιλήνης / Ladotyri Mytilinis' is a hard cheese with a salty flavour, pleasant aroma and a characteristic embossed pattern. Traditionally, it is produced from sheep's milk or a mix of sheep and goat milk in a ratio where the latter is not more than 30 % over all. The quality characteristics of 'Λαδοτύρι Μυτιλήνης / Ladotyri Mytilinis' cheese are mainly due to the quality of the raw material used to make it and the cheese-making technology used.

The development of sheep and goat farming on Lesvos, as in the rest of Greece, and its emergence since ancient times as a predominant form of dairy farming, exclusive form even in some regions, was the result of the country's specific geophysical and climatic conditions, which are not conducive to the development of herd farming. The high proportion of mountainous areas and the dry and hot climate conditions, favouring natural vegetation only during certain relatively short periods of the year, were the main and determining factors. The result was the development of sheep and goat breeds with a strong constitution and adaptability to these difficult conditions.

These breeds of sheep and goats are adapted to the natural conditions, benefiting from pastures with a great variety of flora unique on account of the number of endemic vegetation species. The sheep and goats are characterised for their low milk production but also by milk of particularly rich chemical composition and excellent organoleptic properties. The quality of the sheep and goat milk, combined with the experience of the cheese-makers, results in a series of fine cheeses, including 'Λαδοτύρι Μυτιλήνης / Ladotyri Mytilinis'.

An important characteristic of the mountainous and semi-mountainous pastures on Lesvos is the absence of herbicides, pesticides, weedkillers, insecticides etc. Meanwhile, the concentration of lead and other pollutants is particularly low due to a lack of major roads in these areas. As a consequence of the absence of such substances in the environment and the flora on which sheep and goats of the mountainous and semi-mountainous areas feed exclusively, the milk and cheese produced there has little to no contamination in contrast to what happens with the milk of animals fed with cultivated animal feed.

‘Λαδοτύρι Μυτιλήνης / Ladotyri Mytilinis’ is a traditional cheese that was created and developed on Lesvos. It has been produced continuously for many decades, mainly from sheep’s milk or a mix of sheep and goat milk. The product is widely consumed in Greece and consumption per capita is considerable on the local market. This traditional cheese from Lesvos, with its distinct shape and its distinguished organoleptic properties, gained a very good reputation that, since the start of the previous century, has also spread to the rest of Greece.

‘Λαδοτύρι Μυτιλήνης / Ladotyri Mytilinis’ got its name (‘ladotyri’: cheese preserved in oil) from the method of storage and preservation. It used to be stored in olive oil, commonly known as ‘ladi’. The island of Lesvos is especially well known for the production and quality of its olive oil.

Electronic (URL) reference to the publication of the product specification

https://www.minagric.gr/images/stories/docs/agrotis/POP-PGE/2021/prodiagrafes_ladotyri_mytilinis190225.pdf