C/2026/2804

19.5.2026

Publication of an application for registration of a geographical indication pursuant to Article 15(4) of Regulation (EU) 2024/1143 of the European Parliament and of the Council

(C/2026/2804)

Within three months from the date of 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.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

Designations of origin and geographical indications of agricultural products

'Brânză frământată de Teaca'

EU No: PGI-RO-03380 – 18.12.2024

1. **Name(s)**

"Brânză frământată de Teaca'

2. **Geographical indication type**

PDO ☐ PGI X

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

Romania

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

0406 – Cheese and curd

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

"Brânză frământată de Teaca" is a dairy product made from raw, i.e. unpasteurised, cow's milk that is curdled, fermented, aged, salted and kneaded in the specific production process to make this cheese.

This cheese is an irregular oval or round in shape and weighs approximately 0,4-2 kg; each individual cheese's shape and weight depends on the size of the pig bladder in which the kneaded cheese is placed.

"Brânză frământată de Teaca" is sold in natural casings, either unwaxed or protected by a layer of food-grade wax for cheese. It can also be sold sliced.

[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).

Organoleptic characteristics

The appearance of "Brânză frământată de Teaca" is as follows:

— exterior: the cheese is an irregularly shaped oval or round. The surface is clean, non-sticky, and dry. It has a semi-glossy to matt finish for products packaged in unwaxed casings, while those protected with a layer of food-grade wax for cheese have a glossy appearance;

— cross-section: the cheese is homogeneous with a grainy aspect. It is compact and adheres to the casing, and sticks slightly to the knife when cut.

Texture - soft, creamy, smooth and dense;

Colour:

— exterior - from creamy to golden yellow;

— cross-section - uniform, varying from milk-white to yellowish white in colour;

Taste - predominantly of cow's milk that is slightly salty but also sweet and with a mild acidity;

Aroma - milky and buttery, with a sour, slightly pungent scent typical of salted products.

Physical and chemical characteristics

Fat content of the dry matter	minimum 40 % - maximum 60 %
Fat content	minimum 22 % - maximum 28 %
Proteins	minimum 18 % - maximum 25 %
Salt content	maximum 3,5 %

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 the steps in the production process of "Brânză frământată de Teaca" take place in the demarcated geographical area.

The production process comprises the following steps: the milk is filtered, prepared for renneting, then renneted; the curds are processed; the curds and whey heated a second time; the curds formed and prepared to produce "Brânză frământată de Teaca" cheese; the cheese is kneaded and used to fill the pig bladders, which are then sewn up.

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*

When placing the product "Brânză frământată de Teaca" on the market, the labelling must contain the following information:

— the product name; "Brânză frământată de Teaca", followed by the words "Indicație Geografică Protejată" (Protected Geographical Indication) or the abbreviation "IGP" (PGI) in Romanian;

— the PGI symbol is marked on the packaging in compliance with EU legislation;

— the manufacturer's name;

— the inspection and certification body logo.

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

The geographical area comprises the village of Teaca in the municipality of Teaca, in the county of Bistrița-Năsăud, within the relevant municipal and administrative boundaries.

6. **Link with the geographical area**

The link between the product and the geographical area is based on reputation and the expertise passed down from generation to generation in Teaca. This expertise defines the specific organoleptic characteristics of the product.

Each stage of production involves direct human intervention unique to the geographical area. The product's characteristics cannot be accurately replicated outside this cultural and geographical context, as they rely on the local producers' ability to interpret and control each stage of the process through sensory means. This expertise, inherited over generations, has become a core part of the community's identity, linking the product's name to the taste, texture, and quality expected by consumers. This link between "Brânză frământată de Teaca" and the geographical area was mentioned in the German monograph written by Ilse Schliesleder-Fronius, which reads: "[...] for Easter, each family was officially allotted two lambs, two hams and two cheeses [...]."

"Brânză frământată de Teaca" has been known for centuries, as evidenced by its presence at the renowned Teaca fair. The authorisation for the Teaca market is also documented in the same German monograph: "In 1734, the village of Teaca was granted permission to hold a weekly market, which took place on Mondays."

"[...] Every year, on 5 November, I would go down to the village on market day and sell my cheese. [...] In Teaca, we used cow's milk to make kneaded cheese. Kneaded cheese made from cow's milk is not as sharp as that made from sheep's milk. I also used to go to the Monday market with my bags of cheese as everyone would buy from me." Selling kneaded cheese at markets has long been, and continues to be, a tradition. This is exemplified by the handwritten account of a local woman whose grandmother used to make and sell kneaded cheese, a practice her mother continues to this day. She recounts: "we turned all the milk into curds and made kneaded cheese, which we sold to anyone who wanted to buy it."

Oral history confirms the existence of this kneaded cheese through statements made by the elders of the village and neighbouring villages. For instance, an 82 year-old local man from Teaca recounts: "[...] My mother told me how to make the curd, how she would leave it to drain, ferment, and how she would mince it with a mincer and then knead it with salt. [...] My mother would also take cheese and sour cream to sell at the market."

The long-standing tradition of producing "Brânză frământată de Teaca", with practices passed down unchanged from one generation to the next, has fostered a strong connection between the product, its name, and the demarcated geographical area. This connection reinforces, in the consumer's mind, the association between the name, on the one hand, and the taste, flavour, and creaminess, on the other. The article "Brânza frământată de Teaca, ready to be certified", published in *Revista Fermierului* (The Farmer's Magazine), No 15, 1-14 September 2024, mentions the following: "The tradition of making the kneaded cheese is linked to the fact that the Teaca area is known for cattle rearing, with herds being an integral part of village life." (https://www.revistafermierului.ro/din-revista/satul-romanesc/item/6581-branza-framantata-de-teaca-cauta-recunoasterea-europeana.html).

In *Ferma* magazine (The Farm Magazine), the story of the product "Brânza frământată de Teaca" is featured in the article "Ana lu" Pilu [Ana, Pilu's wife] makes cheese using a traditional recipe!. The recipe, passed down from generation to generation, is presented as follows: "When we curdle the milk, it needs to be warm. In the summer, we just strain it and curdle it straight away. In the winter, we need to heat it up a little. I know the right temperature by touch: the milk has to feel warm. Once the milk is ready, we put it into vats and leave it with rennet for 40 minutes. We break it up by hand after it has curdled, then let the curds rest for 10-15 minutes. We gently press it back together by hand and place it in a bucket, where we break it up again so more whey can drain out."

The product's uniqueness is due to the cheesemakers' craftsmanship and skill, passed down from generation to generation. The process of making the curd, fermenting, mincing and layering it, and the specific way the bladders are filled is documented in the article mentioned above: "We mince the fermented curd and alternate hand-wide

layers of cheese and fistfuls of salt" (https://revista-ferma.ro/branza-framantata-de-teaca-ana-lu-pilu-face-branza-dupa-o-reteta-straveche/). The production of "Brânză frământată de Teaca" is closely linked to the human factor, as the production methods rely on traditional knowledge passed down from generation to generation through direct practice and observation.

The cheesemakers' skill, their ability to use their senses to correctly gauge each stage in production and the intuitive adjustments they make during the production process are also mentioned in *Industria Cărnii* (The Meat Industry Magazine) from July-August 2024, where the local people recount: "[...] Let me tell you the story of 'Brânză frământată de Teaca', a traditional recipe handed down from our ancestors, which I learnt from my father and which my father learnt from my grandparents [...]. The cheese was made from cow's milk [...], curdled with lamb or milk-fed calf rennet. [...] It was left to curdle [...], then the whey was drained off [...]; after a day, it was put on a shelf where it was left to ferment and dry. When fermentation was complete, the curd would turn a yellow colour. The curd was then ground, salt was added to taste, and the ground curd was kneaded to a smooth paste. After kneading, it was placed in covered containers; in the past, these containers were buried in the ground or kept in a well for several months, until the cheese was going to be eaten. The kneaded cheese that was not stored was taken to the market in Teaca and sold by the kilogram".

The know-how and expertise of the cheesemakers who prepare this product play an important role in preserving its unique production traditions. This is due to the fact that "Brânză frământată de Teaca" is recognised and sold both in the production area and throughout Romania.

The tradition of making "Brânză frământată de Teaca" has been passed down from generation to generation, ensuring that this product can still be found on consumers' tables today.'

The local cheesemakers thus currently have at their disposal a complex set of skills that cannot be standardised. The curdling of the milk is done based on the consistency observed through touch and sight ('the ball test'), rather than by using fixed times or temperatures.

The optimal size of the curd is recognized visually and by touch. The maturation of the curd is specifically adapted to the defined geographical area. The curd is left to ferment in an environment controlled by the cheesemakers' senses: colour, consistency, smell and taste. This stage of production gives the product its yellowish colour and the subtle fermentation taste characteristic of 'Brânză frământată de Teaca'.

The kneading process involves finely mincing the ingredients. The cheesemakers intuitively know the proportions of layers, dosing the curd, salt, and matured curd to achieve the specific texture identified by the 'uninterrupted thread' [elastic texture]. Kneading when filling the pork bladders requires skill to remove air and ensure tight stitching. This helps preserve the cheese's creaminess and flavour and supports its maturation in a natural environment, preventing it from drying out. These procedures, passed down informally and practised instinctively, express complex local know-how learned through practice, observation, and oral tradition.

'Brânză frământată de Teaca' has reached Berlin, as mentioned by the *Răsunet* (The Echo Newspaper) dated 30 January 2024, where one of the producers discusses this 'authentic product, with a taste from our childhood, and the memory of happy times spent with our loved ones [...]'. The product's reputation stems from historical proof of the long-standing tradition of producing this cheese, supported by oral traditions that have been documented in magazines and books to be handed down to future generations, since the municipality of Teaca is a major centre for the production and distribution of dairy products. The Magazine *Ferma* (The Farm Magazine) noted that 'the kneaded cheese [...] produced here is recognised by consumers for its authentic taste.

Specificity of the product

'Brânză frământată de Teaca' owes its specificity to the craftsmanship and skill of the local producers.

Unlike other similar products, 'Brânză frământată de Teaca' possesses the following distinct characteristics:

— it is made from a combination of salted and unsalted matured curd. The cheese is homogeneous with a grainy aspect and adheres slightly to the knife when cut.

— it undergoes a process of fermentation and kneading, distinguishing it from cottage cheese. The texture is soft, creamy, smooth and dense, with a taste reminiscent of cow's milk that is slightly salty, sweet and mildly acidic.

— visually, it is not a compact block, but rather a granular mass mixed with salt – a result of the production process – which is compact and adheres to the casing, contained in a pig's bladder.

Reference to the publication of the product specification of the geographical indication

https://madr.ro/docs/ind-alimentara/2026/caiete-de-sarcini-2024/Caiet--de--sarcini--Branza--Framantata--de--Teaca--editia-1---versiunea-0---19.01.2026.pdf