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(Announcements)

OTHER ACTS

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Publication of an amendment application pursuant to Article 6(2) of Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin for agricultural products and foodstuffs*(2010/C 27/07)*

This publication confers the right to object to the amendment application pursuant to Article 7 of Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006. Statements of objection must reach the Commission within six months from the date of this publication.

AMENDMENT APPLICATION

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006**Amendment application pursuant to Article 9****‘FOURME D’AMBERT’ OR ‘FOURME DE MONTBRISON’****EC No: FR-PDO-0117-0119-30.03.2006****PGI () PDO (X)****1. Heading in the product specification affected by the amendment:**

- Product name
- Product description
- Geographical area
- Proof of origin
- Method of production
- Link
- Labelling
- National requirements
- Other [to be specified]

2. Type of amendment(s):

- Amendment to single document or summary sheet
- Amendment to specification of registered PDO or PGI for which neither the single document nor summary has been published
- Amendment to specification that requires no amendment to the published single document (Article 9(3) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006)

- Temporary amendment to specification resulting from imposition of obligatory sanitary or phytosanitary measures by public authorities (Article 9(4) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006)

3. Amendment(s):

3.1. Name:

Replace 'Fourme d'Ambert or Fourme de Montbrison' with 'Fourme d'Ambert'.

This amendment also applies to the rest of the specification.

The two names actually refer to two different products. This change allows the PDO 'Fourme d'Ambert' to be distinguished from the PDO 'Fourme de Montbrison'.

3.2. Description:

The first paragraph of the product description is amended to specify that the 'Fourme d'Ambert is a cheese (...) light grey to grey in colour, which may have white, yellow and red mould on the surface and a blue sheen. The inside of the cheese is white to cream in colour with cracks and an even distribution of blue to green veins'.

The second paragraph of the description is replaced by the following paragraph:

'The cheese with the registered designation of origin "Fourme d'Ambert" is an unpressed, uncooked, fermented, and salted cheese with blue veins, made with renneted cow's milk and produced in the form of a cylinder between 17 and 21 cm in height and 12,5 and 14 cm in diameter, weighing between 1,9 to 2,5 kg.

The cheese has a fat content of at least 50 % after total desiccation and the matured cheese must have a dry matter content of at least 50 %'.

Reasons:

This wording is intended to improve the description of the cheese: the size and weight and the appearance of the rind and the inside of the cheese have been specified.

3.3. Geographical area:

Point 3 of the specification is replaced by the following text:

'The geographical area for Fourme d'Ambert covers:

- the historic area of origin of the product, formed by the high stubble fields (Hautes Chaumes du Forez) at the top of the Forez mountains, within the departments of the Loire and Puy de Dôme. This area forms a clearly marked natural unit, both from a geomorphologic and botanical point of view. The high stubble — vast bare stretches on granite bedrock — is watered and subject to a continental and oceanic influence. Different vegetation formations have been recorded there, depending on the site conditions and past and present pastoral use: grass or prairies; land dominated by blueberries, heather and broom; land featuring lady's-mantle and bog bilberries; wetlands and peat bogs. The high stubble is also home to high mountain pasture buildings at higher altitude than permanent habitats, known as "jas" or "jasseries", which testify to the pastoral activity associated with the traditional production of this cheese,
- the peripheral area corresponds to the spread of production at the start of the 20th century. It is made up of sectors which, by virtue of their altitude or steep slopes, can be considered as mountain environments. These are essentially areas of crystalline and volcanic plateaus, interspersed with valleys, where the economy is based on cattle rearing.

The production of milk and the production and maturing of cheese up to 28 days following renneting are carried out in the geographical area which covers the communes listed in the summary'.

Reasons:

Efforts to define the specific characteristics of 'Fourme d'Ambert' led to redefinition of the geographical area of production, based on the above-mentioned criteria.

The result was that 495 of the initial 858 communes were excluded.

3.4. *Proof of origin:*

New paragraphs:

'Any operator wishing to become involved in all or part of the process of producing and collecting milk and producing and maturing Fourme d'Ambert must present a statement providing identification. This statement is received and recorded by the group.

All operators must ensure that the competent authorities have access to their registers and any documents required for checking the origin, quality and production conditions of the milk and cheese, in particular, a daily record of the incoming and outgoing milk and cheese or an equivalent accounting document.

The operators of the maturing cellar must keep special registers or equivalent accounting documents of the inward and outward movements, in particular noting the following details: date of pricking, number of cheeses and batch numbers, date of leaving the cellars or cheese ripening rooms after the maturing period.

As part of the checks carried out on the characteristics of the product to which the designation of origin refers, an analytical and organoleptic test is conducted to ensure that the products submitted for examination are of high quality and possess the requisite typical characteristics'.

Reasons:

The elements stipulated allow for better control and monitoring of product origins. They have been brought into line with national regulations on monitoring registered denominations of origin, which changed in 2007.

3.5. *Method of production:*

This part, which has been developed in more detail in relation to the previous specification, has been rewritten and organised into several sub-parts. The previous text is replaced by:

Milk production

(a) Basic feed

'Throughout the year, the dairy cows are fed exclusively on fodder from the geographical area covered by the designation'.

'Exceptions may be made to this for periods of drought, vagaries in the weather or other exceptional circumstances'.

'The authorised feedstuffs are all fodder, apart from brassicas'.

'The feed should be based on hay, grass, wilted grass or silage'.

'Outside the grazing period, hay represents at least 3 kg of dry matter per dairy cow per day, on average for the dairy herd as a whole'.

Reasons:

The purpose of these descriptions is to reinforce the link between the cheese and the *terroir* of the registered designation of origin via the dairy cows' feed.

(b) Herd management and grazing

'During the grazing period, the cows may not be kept in stalls all the time or without a grazing area'.

'When grass is available, grazing is mandatory as soon as the weather allows'.

Reasons:

The purpose of these descriptions is to reinforce the link between the cheese and the *terroir* of the registered designation of origin by defining the grazing conditions for the dairy cows.

(c) Complementary feedstuffs

The use of supplements and additives is limited to 1 800 kg of dry matter per dairy cow per year, on average for the dairy cows on the whole.

The authorised supplements and additives are:

- all cereals and their by-products,
- ears of corn,
- all cattle-cakes with no added urea,
- dehydrated lucerne, dehydrated beetroot pulp, whey, molasses, protein seeds and oil seeds,
- salt, minerals, trace elements, vitamins.

All additives intended to directly modify the composition of the milk are prohibited'.

Reasons:

Supplements (any food other than fodder: cereals, minerals, etc.) are indispensable to dairy production). These foodstuffs are only very rarely cultivated in the geographical area covered by the designation. They cannot be forbidden but it is necessary to draw up a positive list to avoid all the supplements that could have an undesired effect on the quality of the milk. Moreover, the quantity of these supplements and additives is limited to promote feed based on staples from the geographical area.

(d) Storage of milk on the farm

'After milking, the milk is stored in refrigerated tanks'.

'The milk may not be kept on the farm for more than 48 hours after the first milking'.

Reasons:

The purpose of these requirements is to guarantee the quality of the milk on the farm and before it is used to make cheese.

Milk used

'The first step, to transform the milk to cheese, takes place within 24 hours of the milk being delivered to the place where the cheese is made'.

'The milk must not be concentrated by partially removing the watery part before coagulation'.

'Standardisation of the fat content and homogenisation of the milk are allowed, but standardisation of the protein content is forbidden'.

'Primary maturation of the milk and heat treatment are allowed'.

Reasons:

All the production conditions concerning the milk used have been described precisely so as to create a better framework for regulating this step.

Processing

'The injection of *Penicillium roqueforti* gives the cheese its blue veins'.

'In addition to the raw dairy materials, the only ingredients or production aids or additives authorised in the milk or during production are rennet, innocuous bacterial cultures, yeasts, moulds, calcium chloride and salt'.

'The milk is curdled, using rennet alone, at a temperature between 30 and 35 °C'.

'The next steps — in which the "coagulum or curd" is cut, mixed, placed in moulds, drained and salted — are described in the following paragraphs:

- the curdled milk obtained, known as the "coagulum or curd", is cut into pieces of around 1 to 2 cm in thickness, which gives them the appearance of grains of maize after the stage in the vat.
- the curd-whey mixture is then mixed and rested several times until sufficiently drained grains of curd emerge,
- some of the whey may be squeezed out before the curds are placed in the mould,
- before the curds are placed in the mould, they are first drained on a rack or equivalent structure for farmhouse production,
- the draining is done at a room temperature of between 18 and 25 °C, without pressing, by regularly turning the cheese over for 24 to 48 hours,
- the cheese is salted in brine and/or with dry salt after it has been removed from the mould and drained'.

'Holes are made to air the cheese and promote the development of *Penicillium roqueforti* as of the fourth day after renneting at a room temperature of 6 to 15 °C'.

'The dairy raw materials, partly finished products, curd and fresh cheese may not be conserved at a temperature below 0 °C'.

Reasons:

All the conditions for making the cheese have been described in more detail.

The renneting temperature has been stipulated, along with the salting period, an important part of obtaining the characteristics of the cheese.

The pricking stage is essential for obtaining the characteristic blue veins of the Fourme d'Ambert. It is therefore important to clearly describe this stage.

Maturing and conservation

After the holes are made, the cheese is matured in a cellar or ripening room at a constant temperature of 6 to 12 °C and humidity level of between 90 to 98 % relative humidity for at least 17 days.

The cheese is then stored in a room at a temperature of between 0 and 6 °C until the 28th day following renneting.

The registered designation of origin 'Fourme d'Ambert' may not be used for the cheese until the 28 th day after renneting.

'Processing may not be deferred for either the curds or the white cheese'.

'Fresh cheese and cheese undergoing the maturing process must not be conserved under a modified atmosphere'.

Reasons:

The maturing conditions have been clarified so as to clearly define this important stage of production.

Farmhouse production

'In the particular case of farmhouse production, milk from at most two successive milkings is used; the milk from the first milking is refrigerated so that it will keep'.

'The cheese is made using unpasteurised whole milk, non-standardised in terms of fat and protein'.

'Renneting takes place no later than 16 hours after the first milking'.

'The placing in the mould comes after a first draining on a rack or equivalent structure'.

Reasons:

The different stages specific to farmhouse production have been regrouped into one section.

3.6. Link with the geographical area:

The second, third and fourth paragraphs of the description are replaced by the paragraphs:

'This high-altitude region, which takes the form of vast bare stretches on granite bedrock, is watered and subject to a continental and oceanic influence. Despite these natural difficulties, dairy farming became a dominant activity, focused on cheese production using the milk produced by small herds.

Until the Second World War, the cheese was produced exclusively on the farm in "jasseries", which were similar to Auvergne *burons* or alpine pasture huts. These *jasseries* extended along both sides of the Forez mountain massif. At the time, there was just one type of cheese known as "Fourme d'Ambert" or "Fourme de Montbrison", named after the two main markets situated on either side of the massif.

At the start of the 20th century, as farmhouse production declined on the high summer pastures, dairies were set up in the region, on the eastern side of the massif in particular. In 1950, around 15 of them were collecting milk within areas that were sometimes very small.

It was also at the beginning of the 20th century that producers of *fourme* appeared outside the traditional area. At first, this was to the west of Puy de Dôme (Laqueuille and Rochefort-Montagne) then in Cantal (Murat) and the Dore valley (Thiers, Puy de Dôme). In the 1950s, producers established themselves in Saint-Flour (Cantal) and (Balbigny) (on the plain of the Loire).

This peripheral area corresponding to the spread of production at the beginning of the 20th century is made up of sectors which, by virtue of their altitude or steep slopes, can be considered as mountain environments. These are essentially areas of crystalline and volcanic plateaus, interspersed with valleys, where the economy is based on cattle rearing.

The production techniques evolved in parallel to the decline of farmhouse production and the expansion of the production area. Thus, as production of the Fourme developed, there was a move away from crushing and salting the cheese in the mass in favour of less intensive draining and salting in brine. From one and the same product referred to as either "Fourme d'Ambert" or "Fourme de Montbrison", came the "Montbrison" type characterised by pre-draining, crushing and salting in the mass, and the "Ambert" type characterised by less draining and salting in brine and/or dry salting on the surface.

When the cheese was recognised as a designation of origin, although the names “Fourme d’Ambert” and “Fourme de Montbrison” were used synonymously in the texts, there were in fact marked differences between the two cheeses both in terms of where they were produced and the cheese-making technology used. Work was therefore undertaken to better define the two cheeses and redefine the geographical area of production of each corresponding to the area where it was traditionally produced’.

Reasons:

Amendments have been made under ‘Link’ to tie in with the amendments made under ‘Name’, ‘Geographical area’, ‘Product description’ and ‘Production method’.

3.7. Labelling:

New, updated provisions, following changes in the national regulations, and clarifications. Abolition of the requirement to feature the INAO logo.

3.8. National requirements:

New:

‘Decree on the protection of designated origin “Fourme d’Ambert” and the technical implementing rules’.

Reasons:

Inclusion in the PDO specification of the provisions of the technical implementing rules approved by order of 29 April 2002.

SUMMARY

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006

‘FOURME D’AMBERT’

EC No: FR-PDO-0117-0119-30.03.2006

PDO (X) PGI ()

This summary sets out the main elements of the product specification for information purposes.

1. Responsible department in the Member State:

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2. Group:

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Fax +33 473824400
E-mail: contact@fourme-ambert.com
Composition: Producers/processors () Other ()

3. Type of product:

Group 1.3: Cheese

4. **Specification:**

(summary of requirements under Article 4(2) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006)

4.1. *Name:*

'Fourme d'Ambert'

4.2. *Description:*

Cow's milk cheese produced in the form of a cylinder between 17 and 21 cm in height and 12,5 to 14 cm in diameter, weighing between 1,9 and 2,5 kg. The cheese is blue-veined, unpressed, uncooked, fermented and salted, with a fat content of at least 50 % of the dry weight and at least 50 % dry matter.

There is a bloom on the dry, grey to light-grey coloured rind, where white, yellow and red mould may also be present and which may have a blue sheen. The inside of the cheese is white to cream in colour with cracks and an even distribution of blue to green veins.

4.3. *Geographical area:*

The geographical area for Fourme d'Ambert covers:

- the historic area of origin of the product, formed by the high stubble fields (Hautes Chaumes du Forez) at the top of the Forez mountains, within the departments of the Loire and Puy de Dôme. This area forms a clearly marked natural unit, both from a geomorphologic and botanical point of view. The high stubble — vast bare stretches on granite bedrock — is watered and subject to a continental and oceanic influence. Different vegetation formations have been recorded there, depending on the site conditions and current and past agricultural use: grass or prairies; land dominated by blueberries, heather and broom; land featuring lady's-mantle and bog bilberries; wetlands and peat bogs. The high stubble is also home to high mountain pasture buildings at higher altitude than permanent habitats, known as "jas" or "jasseries", which testify to the pastoral activity associated with the traditional production of this cheese,
- the peripheral area corresponds to the spread of production at the start of the 20th century. It is made up of sectors which, by virtue of their altitude or steep slopes, can be considered as mountain environments. These are essentially areas of crystalline and volcanic plateaus, interspersed with valleys, where the economy is based on cattle rearing'.

The production of milk and the production and maturing of cheese up to 28 days following renneting are carried out in the geographical area which covers the following territory:

Department of Puy-de-Dôme

Cantons of Ambert, Ardes, Arlanc, Besse-et-Saint-Anastaise, Bourg-Lastic, Courpière, Cunlhat, Herment, Manzat, Montaigut, Olliegues, Pionsat, Pontaumur, Pontgibaud, Rochefort-Montagne, Saint-Amant-Roche-Savine, Saint-Anthème, Saint-Dier-d'Auvergne, Saint-Germain-l'Herm, Saint-Gervais-d'Auvergne, Saint-Rémy-sur-Durolle, Tauves, Thiers, La Tour-d'Auvergne, Viverols: all the communes.

Canton of Aubière: the commune of Romagnat.

Canton of Beaumont: commune of Saint-Genès-Champanelle.

Canton of Billom: the communes of Bongheat, Mauzun, Montmorin.

Canton of Champeix: the communes of Clémensat, Courgoul, Creste, Grandeyrolles, Ludesse, Montaigut-le-Blanc, Saint-Floret, Saint-Nectaire, Saint-Vincent, Saurier, Tourzel-Ronzières, Verrières.

Canton of Châteldon: the communes of Châteldon, Lachaux, Paslières, Puy-Guillaume, Ris.

Canton of Combronde: the commune of Combronde.

Canton of Gerzat: the commune of Sayat.

Canton of Issoire: the commune of Vodable.

Canton of Jumeaux: the communes of Champagnat-le-Jeune, La Chapelle-sur-Usson, Esteil, Peslières, Saint-Jean-Saint-Gervais, Saint-Martin-d'Ollières, Valz-sous-Châteauneuf.

Canton of Lezoux: the communes of Néronde-sur-Dore, Orléat, Peschadoires.

Canton of Menat: the communes of Blot-l'Église, Lisseuil, Menat, Neuf-Église, Pouzol, Saint-Gal-sur-Sioule, Saint-Pardoux, Saint-Rémy-de-Blot, Servant, Teilhet.

Canton of Riom-Est: the commune of Châtelguyon.

Canton of Riom-Ouest: the communes of Enval, Volvic.

Canton of Royat: the communes of Chanat-la-Mouteyre, Durtol, Orcines.

Canton of Saint-Amant-Tallende: the communes of Aydat, Chanonat, Cournols, Olloix, Saint-Sandoux, Saint-Saturnin, Saulzet-le-Froid, Le Vernet-Sainte-Marguerite.

Canton of Saint-Germain-Lembron: the commune of Saint-Gervazy.

Canton of Sauxillanges: the communes of Bansat, Chaméane, Egliseneuve-des-Liards, Saint-Étienne-sur-Usson, Saint-Genès-la-Tourette, Saint-Jean-en-Val, Saint-Quentin-sur-Sauxillanges, Sauxillanges, Sugères, Vernet-la-Varenne.

Canton de Vic-le-Comte: the communes d'Isserteaux, Manglieu, Pignols, Sallèdes.

Department of Cantal

Cantons of Allanche, Condat, Murat, Saint-Flour — Nord, Saint-Flour — Sud: all the communes.

Department of the Loire

Canton of Montbrison: the communes of Lérigneux, Roche.

Canton of Noirétable: the communes of La Chamba, La Chambonie.

Canton of Saint-Georges-en-Couzan: the communes of Chalmazel, Jeansagnière, Saint-Bonnet-le-Courreau, Sauvain.

4.4. Proof of origin:

Any operator wishing to become involved in all or part of the process of producing and collecting milk and producing and maturing Fourme d'Ambert must present a statement providing identification. This statement is received and recorded by the group.

All operators must ensure that the competent authorities have access to their registers and any documents required for checking the origin, quality and production conditions of the milk and cheese, in particular, a daily record of the incoming and outgoing milk and cheese or an equivalent accounting document.

The operators of the maturing cellar must keep special registers or equivalent accounting documents of the inward and outward movements, in particular noting the following details: date of pricking, number of cheeses and batch numbers, date of leaving the cellars or cheese ripening rooms after the maturing period.

As part of the checks carried out on the characteristics of the product to which the designation of origin refers, an analytical and organoleptic test is conducted to ensure that the products submitted for examination are of high quality and possess the requisite typical characteristics.

4.5. Method of production:

Throughout the year, the dairy cows are fed exclusively on fodder from the geographical area covered by the designation. Exceptions may be made to this for periods of drought, vagaries in the weather or other exceptional circumstances.

The feed should be based on hay, grass, wilted grass or silage. When grass is available, grazing is mandatory as soon as the weather allows. During the grazing period, the cows may not be kept in stalls all the time or without a grazing area. The use of supplements and additives is limited to 1 800 kg of dry matter per dairy cow per year, on average for all the dairy cows together.

The milk may not be kept on the farm for more than 48 hours after the first milking.

Farm-produced cheese is made using unpasteurised whole milk, non-standardised in terms of fat and protein.

The milk is curdled, using rennet alone, at a temperature between 30 and 35 °C.

The different stages that follow are the cutting of the 'coagulum or whey' into pieces around 1 to 2 centimetres thick, which gives them the appearance of 'grains of maize' after the stage in the vat, mixing, placing in the mould, draining, post-draining salting in brine and/or dry salting.

Holes are made in the cheese as of the fourth day after renneting at a room temperature of 6 to 15 °C.

After the holes are made, the cheese is matured in a cellar or ripening room at a constant temperature of 6 to 12 °C and humidity level of between 90 to 98 % relative humidity for at least 17 days.

The cheese is then stored in a room at a temperature of between 0 and 6 °C until the 28th day following renneting.

The registered designation of origin 'Fourme d'Ambert' may not be used for the cheese until the 28th day after renneting.

4.6. Link:

The production of this cheese certainly dates back to the early middle ages in the region of the Haut-Forez, which was predominantly agri-pastoral until just after the Second World War:

However, legend has it that at the time of the Gauls druids practising in the Forez mountains were familiar this cheese and, according to Mr Maze, director of the Pasteur Institute, Fourme d'Ambert or Fourme de Montbrison was produced in the Arvernes area before Caesar's conquest.

There is irrefutable proof of the existence of Fourme d'Ambert or Fourme de Montbrison from the 8th or 9th century: its very characteristic form is depicted on one of the seven stones over the entrance to an ancient feudal chapel in La Chaulme, near Saint-Anthème in the Forez mountains.

The term 'Fourme' comes from the word 'forme', used to denote the receptacle that contained the curd; to this day 'Fourme' is used to denote cheese produced in the mountains of central France.

Production first started in the Forez mountains which culminate at Pierre-Sur-Haute at 1 640 metres. This high-altitude region, which takes the form of vast bare stretches on granite bedrock, is watered and subject to a continental and oceanic influence. Despite these natural difficulties, it has known dairy farming became a dominant activity, focused on cheese production using the milk produced by small herds.

Until the Second World War, the cheese was produced exclusively on the farm in 'jasseries', which were similar to alpine pasture chalets or Auvergne *burons* (huts). These *jasseries* colonised both sides of the mountainous massif in the Forez mountains. At the time, there was just one type of cheese known as 'Fourme d'Ambert' or 'Fourme de Montbrison', named after the two main markets situation on each side of the massif.

At the start of the 20th century, as farmhouse production declined on the high summer pastures, dairies were set up in the area, on the eastern side of the massif in particular. In 1950, around 15 of them were collecting milk within areas that were sometimes very small.

It was also at the beginning of the 20th century that producers of *fourme* appeared outside the traditional area. At first, this was to the west of Puy de Dôme (Laqueuille and Rochefort-Montagne) then in Cantal (Murat) and the Dore valley (Thiers, Puy de Dôme). In the 1950s, producers established themselves in Saint-Flour (Cantal) and (Balbigny) (on the plain of the Loire).

This peripheral area corresponding to the spread of producers at the beginning of the 20th century is made up of sectors which, by virtue of their altitude or steep slopes, can be considered as mountain environments. These are essentially areas of crystalline and volcanic plateaus, interspersed with valleys, where the economy is based on cattle rearing.

The production techniques evolved in parallel to the decline of farmhouse production and the expansion of the production area. Thus, as production of the Fourme developed, there was a move away from crushing and salting the cheese in the mass in favour of less intensive draining and salting in brine. From one and the same product referred to as either 'Fourme d'Ambert' or 'Fourme de Montbrison', came the 'Montbrison' type characterised by a pre-draining, crushing and salting in the mass, and the 'Ambert' type characterised by reduced draining and salting in brine and/or dry salting on the surface.

When the cheese was recognised as a designation of origin, although the names 'Fourme d'Ambert' and 'Fourme de Montbrison' were used synonymously in the texts, there were in fact marked differences between the two cheeses both in terms of where they were produced and the cheese-making technology used. Work was therefore undertaken to better define the two cheeses and redefine the geographical area of production of each corresponding the area where it was traditionally produced.

4.7. *Inspection body:*

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Tel. +33 144871717
Fax +33 144973037

4.8. *Labelling:*

The cheese must bear the words 'Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée' on the label and the name of the designation of origin in characters at least two-thirds the size of the largest characters on the label.

It is forbidden to place any qualifier directly next to the registered designation of origin, with the exception of trademarks or brand names.
