

Publication of an amendment application pursuant to Article 50(2)(a) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs

(2016/C 334/09)

This publication confers the right to oppose the application pursuant to Article 51 of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽¹⁾.

APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF AN AMENDMENT TO THE PRODUCT SPECIFICATION OF A PROTECTED DESIGNATION OF ORIGIN/PROTECTED GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION WHICH IS NOT MINOR

Application for approval of an amendment in accordance with the first subparagraph of Article 53(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012

‘OSSAU-IRATY’

EU No: FR-PDO-0517-01391 – 21.10.2015

PDO (X) PGI ()

1. Applicant group and legitimate interest

Syndicat de défense du fromage d'appellation d'origine contrôlée OSSAU — IRATY (Ossau-Iraty registered designation of origin Cheese Defence Union)

Maison Apezetxea
64-120 Ostabat-Asme
FRANCE

Tel. +335 59378661
Fax +335 59378104
Email: contact@ossau-iraty.fr

Composition: The group is made up of milk producers, processors and ripeners. It therefore has a legitimate right to propose the amendment.

2. Member State or Third Country

France

3. Heading in the product specification affected by the amendment(s)

- Name of product
- Description of product
- Geographical area
- Proof of origin
- Production method
- Link
- Labelling
- Other contact details of the group, inspection

4. Type of amendment(s)

- Amendments to the product specification of a registered PDO or PGI not to be qualified as minor within the meaning of the third subparagraph of Article 53(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012
- Amendments to the product specification of a registered PDO or PGI for which a Single Document (or equivalent) has not been published and which cannot be qualified as minor within the meaning of the third subparagraph of Article 53(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 343, 14.12.2012, p. 1.

5. Amendment(s)

1. *Description of the product*

- The dimensions of the moulds have been deleted and replaced by the dimensions of the cheeses, with the corresponding paragraph now reading as follows: ‘Dimensions and weights of the cheeses:
 - 22,5 to 27 cm in diameter, and 8 to 14 cm in height for matured cheeses of between 3,8 to 6 kg in weight;
 - 17 to 21 cm in diameter, and 7 to 13 cm in height for matured cheeses of between 1,8 and 3,3 kg in weight.’

The amendment is linked to the application of the provisions approved by Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/194 of 5 February 2015, which clarified the different sizes, but which has also exposed difficulties. In particular, the dimensions of the moulds as currently defined (as a reminder: moulds of between 25,5 and 26 cm in diameter, and between 9 and 12 cm in height for matured cheeses of between 4 and 5 kg in weight, or moulds of between 18 and 20 cm in diameter and between 7 and 10 cm in height for matured cheeses of between 2 and 3 kg in weight) pose problems for the production of matured cheeses of a minimum of 2 kg: the moulds must therefore be filled to capacity, which in turn causes problems for the pressing process. It therefore seemed preferable to define the dimensions and weights of the cheeses in order to avoid these problems.

Moreover, a survey of practices revealed discrepancies in the weight ranges defined for cheeses at the end of the maturation period. These ranges have therefore been slightly expanded, while still remaining within the framework of the existing sizes. The special large size of the mould used for farm-based production, which made it possible to produce a cheese weighing up to 7 kg, was no longer being used. This format is withdrawn.

- In order to better describe the product, the definition of the rind has been expanded upon: ‘The rind is natural, composed of live microbial flora. It sticks to the paste, is not eaten, does not crumble apart, and does not peel off. It is dry-to-slightly-moist to the touch, without being sticky. Its colour varies from orangey yellow to grey.’
- The provision relating to marketing in portion form has been added to: ‘Portioning is permitted in the form of portions or diced, in sticks, in long thin strips, shavings, slices, or grated. Apart from these presentation formats, and portions less than 50 g in weight, it is compulsory for there to be a part of the designation’s distinctive rind.’

The addition of new presentation formats (diced, in sticks, in long thin strips, shavings, sliced, or grated) will allow producers to diversify the marketing channels in order to adapt to the needs of consumers. Moreover, the introduction of marketing in portion-format during the previous amendment to the specification made it necessary to create a distinction in terms of portion weight (less or more than 50 g).

In addition, it did not appear necessary to preserve the concept of pre-packaging, as this had not been precisely defined.

2. *Definition of the geographical area*

The area covers some municipalities adjacent to the town of Pau in the north-west.

- Billère and Lons have been added to the list of municipalities fully included in the geographical area;
- Poey-de-Lescar, Sauvagnon, Serres-Castet, and Uzein have been added to the list of municipalities partly included in the geographical area;

These municipalities, which were part of the designation’s original geographical area, were deleted from the geographical area following the amendment to the specification in accordance with Commission Regulation (EC) No 828/2003 of 14 May 2003.

The progressive implementation by producers of the provision banning fermented fodder during milking periods, following the approval of the amendment to the product specification in accordance with Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/194 of 5 February 2015, has nevertheless highlighted the need to bring this sector back into the geographical area, in particular in order to ensure the availability of feed for the herds from the geographical area.

This sector is a geomorphological unit containing store-houses in Gave du Pau, comparable to other sectors of valleys currently included in the ‘Ossau-Iraty’ PDO geographical area. It has a mild and humid climate, similar to that of the north of the current area, and is affected by the same winds, providing for strong grass growth almost continuously throughout the year. It has long and strong connections to the Ossau valley, and is used for the production of fodder and grain for the livestock farmers of this valley. It is connected to the geographical area by the municipalities of Billère, Lons and Pau, around the route that was historically used for winter transhumance.

This amendment to the definition of the geographical area has no impact on the link between the geographical area and the product.

3. *Evidence that the product originates from the geographical area*

- In order to improve the identification of the product by allowing producers to tailor the method of identifying cheese to the appearance of their rind and the ripening methods used, while still maintaining a common visual identity, point 4.3 'Identification of the product' has been modified as follows:

Paragraph: 'Each cheese must be identifiable. This is ensured by adding an embossed label during cheese moulding. The label is scraped off cheeses that do not make the grade.' this has been replaced by: 'Each cheese must be identifiable. This is ensured by adding an embossed label or a casein stamp between the moulding of the cheese and the removal of the moulds. The artwork for these labels features the head of a ewe, and is different for dairy cheeses and farm cheeses, and is approved by the group. The label is removed from cheeses that do not make the grade.'

Cheese made in mountain pastures is subject to a specific identification that is approved by the group.'

A second type of label, by casein stamp, has thus been authorised. It is also specified that the labelling takes place between the moulding stage and the removal from the mould. A specific identification distinguishing the cheeses made in mountain pastures has also been added. The artwork used is that of a ewe's head (with different artwork for dairy cheeses and farm cheeses) and it is specified that this is approved by the group.

- In order to achieve consistency between the 'Method of production' section and the 'Declarative requirements' section, the latter has been expanded upon. A 'transhumance declaration' for producers who wish to milk and produce in mountain pastures has been added.

4. *Method of production*

The provisions on animal feed have been expanded upon and placed in an 'Animal feed' paragraph:

- The new paragraph 'Basic feed' has undergone formal amendments and an addendum on the mixture of feed carried out by the producer on the holding. It is specified that 'mixtures of a single feed material in different forms (for example long blades of grass and plugs) are not considered as mixtures of the basic feed components and components listed in point 5.3.2.'

The implementation of the provision on the feed mixture during the previous amendment to the specification made this clarification necessary. This addition is aimed at clarifying what is forbidden and what is permitted in terms of feed mixture.

- In order to facilitate inspections, the positive list of authorised raw materials for supplementary animal feed has been simplified, and is based on the classification of feedstuffs established by Commission Regulation (EU) No 68/2013 of 16 January 2013 on the Catalogue of feed materials:

- 'Products derived' from cereal grains are authorised in addition to cereal grains. It is also specified that ears of maize may be used whole, without the husks.

- It is also specified that lupin seeds, field beans and vetches belong to the leguminous family.

- The term 'not treated with formaldehyde' for rapeseed cake, flax, soya and sunflower has been replaced with the statement 'which may be protected from ruminal degradation by a process that does not use any aldehyde'.

- Glycerine, produced from esterified vegetable oil, has been added to the list of feedstuffs. Glycerine or glycerol is used for its sweet taste, to retain moisture, and as a solvent, and emulsifier; It has similar properties to molasses, which is already authorised.

Moreover, the categories of authorised additives have been specified on the basis of Regulation (EC) No 1831/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 September 2003 on additives for use in animal nutrition. The 'additive technologies' category has been added too. In addition, amino acids, digestibility enhancers and gut-flora stabilisers have been added to the zootechnical additives category.

These additives are commonly used in compound feedingstuffs.

- In order to strengthen the traditional nature of the production system, in which supplementary feed was based on cereals, and in order to comply with the ban on fermented fodder during milking periods, following approval of the amendment to the product specification in accordance with Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/194 of 5 February 2015, feed that is supplementary to fodder is geared towards a composition of dried products. A dry-matter content of at least 84 % was therefore set for most of the raw materials and additives. This dry-matter content excludes certain fermented raw materials (for example: barley starch/liquid wheat starch, moist spent distillers' grains, distillers' solubles, maize gluten, gluten feed, maize-germ, syrup of cereal steep-water ...)
- The list of supplies authorised for lambs before weaning has been supplemented with a zootechnical additive (ammonium chloride) used to reduce the risk of urinary calculi.

In the 'production and maturing of the cheese' paragraph:

- In accordance with the amendment to the section 'Description of the product' the wording 'cylindrical in shape, with a flat bottom, with or without rounded edges' has been added instead of 'having the dimensions defined in Chapter 2'.
- With regard to the minimum maturation period, the minimum and maximum weights to which the periods apply have been amended in accordance with the amendment of the cheese weights in the 'Description of the product' section. The 120-day minimum maturation period applies to cheeses weighing between 3,8 and 6 kg. The 80-day minimum maturation period applies to cheeses weighing between 1,8 and 3,3 kg.
- An addition has been made to the paragraph on maturing practices as follows: 'vegetable oil (rape, olive or sunflower) or white vinegar may be used to care for the rind'. A survey of practices revealed that those practices considered to have fallen into disuse are still used and the group expressly wished to authorise them. The oil and vinegar are added to combat certain mites which eat the rind of the cheeses, particularly in the event of prolonged maturation (3-4 months of maturing). Coating the rind of cheese with oil cuts off the supply of oxygen, while the vinegar hinders the growth of mites as well as some bacteria, yeasts or moulds that are sensitive to acids.

Having seen a revival in the practice of mountain pasture, the group considered it necessary to distinguish the cheeses made in this way with the term 'Estive' ('mountain pasture'). The procedures that shepherds must follow in terms of feed, but also in terms of cheese production, have been specified:

'Mountain pastures are areas:

- of pasture for the summer grazing of herds, located in mountain areas, privately or collectively owned and used, and laid out in paths separated by natural boundaries,
- maintained by livestock rearing, brush-cutting and/or stubble-burning,
- with a usage period in the summer season defined by the mountain-pasture managers.

In mountain pasture, the ewes are mostly fed by grazing on the pasture. Only cereal grains permitted under point 5.3.2 and minerals can be added.

The production of milk, the milking and the cheese production all occur in the same place, in the shepherd's hut (known in the local language as a "cayolar", "etxola", or a "cuyala"). This must be a different place to where the herd winters, and the production may only occur after the date indicated in point 4.4 of the transhumance statement.

The cheese is produced daily from raw milk, and the renneting is carried out no later than 24 hours after the most recent milking.'

5. *Specific labelling details*

A paragraph has been added on the option of adding the term 'estive' ('mountain pasture'): 'The term "estive", which may be supplemented by the name of the mountain pasture, may only be used on cheeses for which the milking, milk-processing, production and identification took place in mountain pastures under the conditions described under points 4.3 and 5.4 of the present specification.'

The use of the term 'estive' must make the best of these very distinctive cheeses by making its use conditional upon the special conditions set out in the specification.

6. **Other (contact details of the group, inspection)**

The contact details of the group have been updated.

The contact details of the inspection bodies have been updated.

The checklist has been updated to take into account the changes made to the relevant sections:

- to the description of the product and the method of production: removal of the dimensions of the moulds, clarification of the weight and dimensions of the cheese;
- to the section on evidence that the product originates from the geographical area: identification by marking.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

'OSSAU-IRATY'

EU No: FR-PDO-0517-01391 – 21.10.2015

PDO (X) PGI ()

1. **Name(s)**

'Ossau-Iraty'

2. **Member State or Third Country**

France

3. **Description of the agricultural product or foodstuff**

3.1. *Type of product*

Class 1.3. Cheeses

3.2. *Description of product to which the name in (1) applies*

'Ossau-Iraty' is a cheese produced only from non-standardised, renneted ewe's milk. The cheese is salted and matured, cylindrical in shape, uncooked and slightly pressed, with a straight or slightly convex heel. The total dry extract of the cheese must comprise at least 50 % milk fat and the dry matter must be at least 58 grams per 100 grams of cheese.

Farm 'Ossau-Iraty' is produced exclusively from raw milk.

Dimensions and weights of the cheeses:

- 22,5 to 27 cm in diameter, and 8 to 14 cm in height for matured cheeses of between 3,8 and 6 kg in weight;
- 17 to 21 cm in diameter, and 7 to 13 cm in height for matured cheeses of between 1,8 and 3,3 kg in weight.

The body of the cheese has a colour varying from ivory-white to amber-cream, according to the maturing process. It is smooth, firm and velvety. It may contain a few small eyes.

The rind is natural, composed of live microbial flora. It sticks to the paste, is not eaten, does not crumble apart, and does not peel off. It is dry-to-slightly-moist to the touch, without being sticky. Its colour varies from orangey yellow to grey.

The maturing process lasts at least 80 days for cheeses weighing between 1,8 and 3,3 kg, and 120 days for cheeses weighing between 3,8 and 6 kg.

Each cheese must be identifiable. This is ensured by adding an embossed label or a casein stamp between the moulding of the cheese and the removal of the moulds. The artwork for these labels features the head of a ewe, and is different for dairy cheeses and farm cheeses, and is approved by the group. The label is removed from cheeses that do not make the grade. Cheese made in mountain pastures is subject to a specific identification.

3.3. *Feed (for products of animal origin only) and raw materials (for processed products only)*

Animal feed must be sourced primarily from the identified geographical area. Certain feedingstuffs are allowed to not come from the geographical area due to the relief and altitude of certain parts of the geographical area. The total feed (except grass) sourced from areas other than the identified geographical area is limited to an average of 280 kg of dry matter per ewe per milk production year. For an estimated annual consumption of 840 kg of dry matter per dairy ewe, the share of feed originating in the geographical area is estimated at at least 67 %.

The basic feed ration comprises grass; fresh, dry and dehydrated fodder; straw; and fermented fodder. Herds must be fed on the basis of a positive list of authorised raw materials, covering both their basic ration and feed supplements. Herds are fed on non-transgenic products.

The ewes must be allowed to graze for at least 240 days per milk production year. During milking periods, on days when ewes do not graze, they must receive a daily ration of at least 600 grams of dry matter sourced from the identified geographical area.

As regards herd feeding during milking periods:

- until 31 January 2018, the portion of fermented fodder per ewe per day is limited to an average of 1,5 kg gross weight of maize silage and 1 kg gross weight of baled grass or grass silage;
- as of 1 February 2018, the use of silage is prohibited and baled grass feed is permitted up to an average gross weight of 1 kg per ewe per day.

Those two provisions will apply on the condition that the baled grass comprises at least 70 % dry matter.

The portion of feed concentrates in a daily ration may not exceed an average of 800 grams of dry matter per ewe. Over the course of one milking year, the average portion of feed concentrates may not exceed 150 kg of dry matter per ewe.

The raw materials and additives authorised as supplements to the basic ration are listed on a positive list. A dry matter content of at least 84 % has been set for most of these raw materials and additives, and they must not be rehydrated before feeding.

Transgenic crops are prohibited in all areas of farms producing milk intended for processing into the PDO product. This prohibition applies to all types of plant likely to be given as feed to animals on the farm and to all crops liable to contaminate such plants.

'Ossau-Iraty' is produced only from milk from ewes of the following breeds: Basque-béarnaise, Manech black head and Manech red head.

Over one milk production year (1 November to 31 October of the following year), average milk production per herd may not exceed 300 litres per ewe. Milk production is seasonal: a herd may not be milked more than 265 days a year and milking is prohibited in September and October.

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

The ewe's milk must be produced and the cheese produced and matured within the geographical area.

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

Cutting is authorised: into portions, diced, in sticks, in long thin strips, shavings, sliced, or grated. Apart from these presentation formats, and portions less than 50 g in weight, it is compulsory for there to be a part of the designation's distinctive rind.

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

Irrespective of the regulatory information requirements applicable to all cheeses, each cheese label must include the name of the PDO in characters measuring at least two thirds of the size of the largest lettering on the label.

The term 'estive', which may be supplemented by the name of the mountain pasture, may only be used on cheeses for which the milking, milk-processing, production and identification took place in mountain pastures under the following conditions:

- the ewes are mostly fed by grazing on the pasture, only the cereal grains authorised in the positive list and minerals may be added;
- The production of the milk, the milking and the cheese production all occur in the same place, in the shepherd's hut (known in the local language as a 'cayolar', 'etxola', or a 'cuyala'). This must be a different place to where the herd winters, and the production may only occur after the date indicated in the transhumance statement;
- The cheese is produced daily from raw milk, and the renneting is carried out no later than 24 hours after the most recent milking.

4. Concise definition of the geographical area

The geographical area is made up of municipalities or parts of municipalities

— in the department of Pyrénées-Atlantiques:

- all the municipalities of the following cantons: Baigura et Mondarrain; Biarritz; Hendaye — Côte Basque-Sud; Montagne Basque; Oloron-Sainte-Marie 1 and 2; Ouzom, Gave et Rives du Nééz; Pays de Bidache, Amikuze et Ostibarre; Saint-Jean-de-Luz; and Ustaritz — Vallées de Nive et Nivelles.
- all of the following municipalities: Abitain, Andrein, Angaïs, Anglet, Angous, Arau-juzon, Araux, Athos-Aspis, Aubertin, Audaux, Auterrive, Autevielle-Saint-Martin-Bideren, Bardos, Barraute-Camu, Bastanès, Baudreix, Bellocq, Bénéjacq, Bérenx, Beuste, Billère, Boeil-Bezing, Bordères, Bordes, Briscous, Bugnein, Burgaronne, Cardesse, Carresse-Cassaber, Castagnède, Castetnau-Camblong, Castetbon, Castetner, Charre, Coarrazze, Cuqueron, Dognen, Escos, Espiute, Gelos, Gestas, Guiche, Guinarthe-Parenties, Gurs, Hours, Igon, Jasses, Jurançon, Laà-Mondrans, Laàs, La-bastide-Villefranche, Labatmale, Lacommande, Lagos, Lahonce, Lahourcade, Lanne-plaà, Lay-Lamidou, Léren, Lestelle-Bétharram, L'Hôpital-d'Orion, Lons, Loubieng, Lucgarier, Lucq-de-Béarn, Mazères-Lezons, Méritein, Mirepeix, Monein, Montaut, Montfort, Mouguerre, Mourenx, Nabas, Narp, Navarrenx, Noguères, Ogenne-Camptort, Oraàs, Orion, Orriule, Ossens, Ozenx-Montestrucq, Parbayse, Préchacq-Navarrenx, Rivehaute, Saint-Dos, Saint-Faust, Saint-Gladie-Arrive-Munein, Saint-Pé-de-Léren, Saint-Pierre-d'Irube, Saint-Vincent, Salies-de-Béarn, Salles-Mongiscard, Sames, Sarpourenx, Sauvelade, Sauveterre-de-Béarn, Sus, Sus-miou, Tabaille-Usquain, Viellenave-de-Navarrenx, Vielleségure, and Villefranche.
- parts of the following municipalities: Abos, Abidos, Arbus, Argagnon, Artigueloutan, Artiguelouve, Barzun, Bayonne, Bézingrand, Biron, Bizanos, Castétis, Denguin, Es-poeuy, Gomer, Idron, Lacq, Labastide-Cézeracq, Lagor, Lahontan, Laroïn, Lée, Lescar, Livron, Maslacq, Mont, Nousty, Orthez, Os-Marsillon, Ousse, Pardies, Pau, Poey-de-Leskar, Pontacq, Sauvagnon, Serres-Castet, Siros, Soumoulou, Tarsacq, Urçuit, Urt, and Uzein.

For the aforementioned municipalities, maps are available in the respective municipal offices.

— in the department of Hautes-Pyrénées, bordering the department of the Pyrénées-Atlantiques: Arbéost, Arrens-Marsous, and Ferrières.

5. Link with the geographical area

Specificity of the geographical area

The PDO area includes the mountains and foothills of the Basque and Béarn regions.

The natural conditions of the geographical area, its oceanic climate with a regular and significant level of rainfall (at least 1 200 mm/yr and up to 1 800 mm/yr), and the area's relatively narrow temperature range promote the growth of pasture and therefore the breeding of dairy sheep. Likewise, the relief of the land, the hills, the low and mid-range mountains, as well as the altitude, have encouraged the development of extensive livestock farming.

Traditional breeds of ewe are used for milk production. The breeds used are the local Manech black head, Manech red head, and Basque-béarnaise breeds, which are particularly well adapted to the conditions of the geographical area: grass and hay-based feed, and a very rainy climate, which they tolerate on account of their 'waterproof' woolly fleece. These ewes graze throughout the year, even in winter, except on snowy days or in extreme conditions; they are adapted to transhumance seasonal migration and this practice is applied to three quarters of all herds. These local breeds only produce milk in winter, spring, and at the start of summer.

Milking procedures are adapted to this seasonal production: milking and production are prohibited in September and October.

The ewe's milk in the geographical area is especially rich; so the production procedure guarantees that the average useful dry matter (fat content and protein content) is more than 110 grams per litre of milk.

Practices and production methods are adapted to the richness of the milk. For this reason, when the cheese is put in the cellar, it may undergo changes such as lipolysis and proteolysis during the maturing process.

Maturing practices used by operators (turning, brushing, ban on the use of all anti-fungal substances) help to ensure that the surface flora are useful flora that guarantee the development of the right flavours.

Specificity of the product

'Ossau-Iraty' is a lightly-pressed ewe's milk cheese of the Tomme type, with a straight or slightly convex heel. Its rind is hard, a few millimetres thick, and its colour varies between yellowy-orange and grey. An 'Ossau-Iraty' cheese weighs at least 1,8 kilograms, which means that it takes a long time to mature, from 80 to 120 days according to size.

The body of the cheese varies in colour from ivory-white to amber-cream, according to the maturing process. The cheese has a smooth, firm, melt-in-the-mouth texture, which ranges from creamy to hard. It may contain a few small eyes (holes).

It has a subtle smell, which sometimes contains notes of flowers or fruit. It has an intense taste that is well-balanced in terms of acidity and fat content; the cheese is salty, but not excessively so, and its flavour is often nutty or fruity.

Causal link between the geographical area and the quality or characteristics of the product

The geographical area comprises the mountains and foothills of the Basque and Béarn regions, which are primarily covered by natural and temporary grasslands; such pastures may be in the mountains, where most herds are taken in the summer, or on holdings where farmers primarily produce grass fodder for grazing and hay production.

This vegetation enables the fodder to be produced in the geographical area (primarily hay and second-growth crops with grazing on mixed pastures).

These fodder resources are put to good use in the rearing of ewes of local breeds only (Manech black head, Manech red head, and Basque-béarnaise).

The use of such local breeds, feeding based on grass and hay, and livestock-rearing in a place where intensive farming is limited guarantee that the milk produced is well suited to cheese-making.

Ewe's cheese has been produced in the western area of the Pyrenees since at least the Middle Ages. Sharecropping contracts from the 14th century and notarial documents from the early 15th century confirm that ewe's cheese was produced in the region.

The difficult transport conditions between the high-altitude, mountain pastures and the valleys quickly led to shepherds processing milk on-the-spot so as to produce cheese that could be easily transported down into the valleys to be sold.

'Ossau-Iraty' belongs to a category of cheeses that are 'pressed and uncooked'; weighing several kilograms, and with its pressed form, its shape, and its extensive maturing process, 'Ossau-Iraty' develops a relatively hard rind, thus fulfilling the criteria of being easily transportable. Given that the cheese can be stored for long periods, this guaranteed shepherds and their families a protein-rich foodstuff for the whole year.

Even though transportation is easier nowadays, the tradition of an extensive maturing process has been retained. The characteristics of the cheeses, and its varied flavours, are obtained from the combination of adapted production techniques, in particular from the long cheese-maturing process.

Reference to publication of the specification

(the second subparagraph of Article 6(1) of this Regulation)

https://info.agriculture.gouv.fr/gedei/site/bo-agri/document_administratif-f4d1060d-6774-4b84-9770-8bf826b9e892/telechargement
