



agriculture, forestry & fisheries

Department:
Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Directorate Food Safety and Quality Assurance, Private Bag X343, PRETORIA, 0001

TO:	A. ALL IMPORTERS AND RETAILERS OF GI PROTECTED CHEESES		
	B. DIRECTORATE INSPECTION SERVICES		
	C. NEJAHMOGUL TECHNOLOGIES AND AGRIC SERVICES (ASSIGNEE)		
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Subject

INDUSTRY DISPENSATION: COMPOSITIONAL STANDARDS FOR IMPORTED CHEESES PROTECTED IN TERMS OF THE EU SADC ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

1. Background

On 15 November 2016, the Directorate Food Safety and Quality Assurance issued a letter to create awareness about the impact that the signed EU SADC Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) will have on the use of certain cheese names in South Africa.

As a result of the above-mentioned agreement, the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) has an obligation to –

- (a) protect the geographical indications/ names forming part of the agreement once DAFF has promulgated the draft regulations on Geographical Indications (GIs); and
- (b) accept the compositional standards specified in the GI standard for the type of cheese concerned and published by the EU in their Official Journal.

Since the compositional standards for the GI cheeses exported to South Africa differ from those specified in Table 9 of regulation R.260 dated 27 March 2015, it has become necessary to accommodate these differences by means of a dispensation.

2. Dispensation

Permission is hereby granted by the Executive Officer: Agricultural Product Standards in terms of section 3(1)(c) of the Agricultural Product Standards Act, 1990 (Act No. 119 of 1990), to all importers and retailers of imported cheeses enjoying protection as Geographical Indications under the EU SADC Economic Partnership Agreement to sell such cheeses which comply with the compositional standards set out in the below **Table 9A** instead of those specified in Table 9 of regulation R.260 dated 27 March 2015 for the type of cheese concerned:

TABLE 9A

CLASSES OF AND STANDARDS FOR IMPORTED GI CHEESES PROTECTED UNDER THE EU SADC EPA

Type of Cheese	Country	Class/ Class Designation	Fat in Dry Matter Content (%)(m/m)	Protein in Dry Matter Content (%)(m/m)	Minimum dry matter content (%)(m/m)	Minimum Ripening period (weeks)	pH value	Maximum Moisture content on a fat free basis (%)(m/m)	Maximum Sodium chloride content (%)(m/m)	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
1. Hard Cheese	Austria	Tiroler Bergkäse	At least 45	*	60	20	*	40	*	
	France	Comté	45-54	*	62	17	*	*	0.6	
		Emmental de Savoie	*	*	45	10	*	*	*	
	Greece	Graviera Kritis	At least 40	*	*	12	*	38	*	
		Kefalograviera	At least 40	*	*	12	*	40	*	
	Italy		Asiago	At least 44	*	*	2	*	*	*
				At least 34	*	*	8	*	*	*
			Grana Padano	40-42	*	*	36	*	*	*
			Semi-fat Grana Padano	Less than 35	*	*	36	*	*	*
			Parmigiano Reggiano	At least 32	*	*	48	*	*	*
		Pecorino Romano	At least 36	*	*	20 (table cheese) 32 (grating cheese)	*	*	*	
		Dolce (mild) Pecorino Sardo	At least 40			2				
		Maturo (Matured) Pecorino Sardo	At least 35			8				
	Grated Pecorino Sardo	At least 35			16					

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1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
			At least 45	*	*	12	*	49-63	*	
	Portugal	Queijo S. Jorge	>60	36-43	*	*	17	*	49-56	*
			(Fat Content)	(Protein Content)						
			At least 45	*	65	24	5.1-5.4	*	*	*
			At least 45	25	55	8	4.9-5.5	*	*	*
			At least 38	*	*	21	*	*	*	*
			At least 50	30	55	4(>1.5kg)	4.8-5.8	*	*	2.3
			At least 43	*	*	8	*	56	*	*
	Greece	Feta	At least 40	*	*	12	*	45	*	*
			At least 45	*	*	12	*	*	*	*
			At least 40	*	*	16	*	*	*	*
	Italy	Pecorino Toscano	44-54							
			1 (<6kg)							
			4 (>6kg)							
12 (15kg)										
3			*	*	3	*	46.5	5.4		
Netherlands	Baby Edam	40-44	*	*	4	*	45.5	5		
		40-44	*	*	4	*	42.5	4		
		48-52	*	*	4	*				
United Kingdom	Blue Stilton	At least 48	*	*	6					
		Mature Blue Stilton			10					
		Vintage Blue Stilton			15					
		White Stilton			6					

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1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
3. Semi-soft Cheese	Denmark	Danablu 50+	At least 50	*	52	5	*	*		
		Danablu 60+	At least 60	*	56	5	*	*		
	France	Roquefort	At least 52	*	55	12	*	*		
4. Soft Cheese	Italy	Gorgonzola	At least 48	*	*	7 - 21 (large wheel, 'mild' type)	*			
						11 - 38 (large wheel, 'strong' type)				
						8 - 28 (small wheel, 'strong' type)				
	Portugal	Queijo Serra da Estrela	45-60 (Fat Content)	26-33 (Protein Content)	*	4	*	61-69	*	
	France	Brie de Meaux	Camembert de Normandie	At least 45	*	44	4	*	*	*
							3	*	*	*
							3	*	*	*
	Italy	Pecorino Toscano	Taleggio	At least 45	*	45	2	*	*	*
							2	*	*	*
							4	*	*	*
Spain	(Farm manufactured) Arzua-Ulloa	Mozzarella di Bufala Campana	At least 50	35	65	1	5.0-5.5	68-73	*	
						1	5.0-5.5	68-73	*	
5. Fresh cheese	Italy	Mozzarella di Bufala Campana	At least 52	*	*	*	*	65	*	

*Not specified

This permission is subject to the following conditions:

- (a) All other conditions of the relevant regulations shall be complied with.
- (b) It may be withdrawn at any time should a valid complaint be received.
- (c) **The indication of Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) or Protected Geographical Indicator (PGI) on each cheese shall be marked as per the EU regulation concerned.**
- (d) All importers and retailers of cheeses enjoying protection as Geographical Indications indemnify this Directorate and the Department from any detrimental effect, financially or otherwise, which may emanate as a result of this permission.
- (e) Termination date: When the next amendment to regulation R.260 is published in the Government Gazette.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a series of loops and curves, extending from the left side of the page towards the right.

**EXECUTIVE OFFICER:
AGRICULTURAL PRODUCT STANDARDS ACT**