

SPECIFICATION

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006 on protected geographical indications and protected designations of origin

“Traditional Ayrshire Dunlop”

EC No:

PDO () PGI (✓)

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

1 RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT IN THE MEMBER STATE: UNITED KINGDOM

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2 GROUP

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Composition: Producers and processors (✓) Other ()

The applicant company is the only company producing ‘Traditional Ayrshire Dunlop’ cheese in the defined area. However, the applicant recognises that any producer in the defined area has the right to produce the product in accordance with the specifications and the obligations imposed by the regulatory framework. This application seeks to protect the term ‘Traditional Ayrshire Dunlop’ in its entirety.

3 TYPE OF PRODUCT

Class 1.3 Cheeses

4 SPECIFICATION

4.1 Name:

Traditional Ayrshire Dunlop

4.2 Description:

Traditional Ayrshire Dunlop is a hard cheese made from the raw or pasteurised whole milk of Ayrshire cows. It is a natural pale yellow in colour which is attributable to the Ayrshire milk. When cut it has a smooth close surface which feels moist to the touch. This is due to the high moisture content of the cheese. It is cylindrical in shape and has a hard thin golden rind with a very slight mottling.

In its early stages Traditional Ayrshire Dunlop has a very mild nutty flavour and smooth close texture. As it ages, subtle, nutty, creamy flavours develop and the texture becomes smooth and slightly springy. The shorter the period of maturation the milder the cheese – as the cheese ages stronger flavours develop. The youngest cheese would be 6 months and the oldest 18 months but the most popular age is between 10 and 12 months. The more mature cheeses will have a drier texture as with time they will have lost some moisture.

The average moisture content of the cheese ranges from 39% - 44%. The milk butterfat content can range from 3.9% to 4.4% which passes into the high fat content of the cheese. This high fat content is enabled by the smaller fat globules of the Ayrshire cow's milk, which allow an ease of incorporation of fat into the curd.

The cheese is traditionally produced in 3 sizes: a 7inch diameter by 4.5inch deep cheese weighing approx. 3kg, or 14-16inch diameter by 9inch deep cheese weighing approximately 20 kg. A smaller cheese is also produced weighing 350g, from a mould measured 3.5inch diameter by 3inch deep. However, other sizes can be produced to meet specific customer requirements

The cheese is packaged for sale in either pre-packed wedges which are vacuum sealed, or whole cheeses which are wrapped in cloth then in wax paper.

Characteristics of cheese:

- Consistency: Body moderately firm
- Colour: Natural pale yellow
- Aroma: clean, no taints or odour
- Flavour: mild nutty, as it ages more nutty, creamy flavours develop.
- Appearance: milky white slightly open
- Texture: smooth close texture, slightly springy when young. Smooth as it ages.

Physio-chemical properties:

- pH: 5.2 – 5.4
- dry matter:31.3%
- Fat content:52.1%
- Sodium chloride:1.6 – 1.8%

Microbiological limits:

- *Escherichia coli*: maximum of 10 colonies/gram,
- *Staphylococcus aureus*: maximum of 10 colonies/gram,
- *Salmonella*: absence in 25 grams,

4.3 Geographical area:

The cheese is produced in an area around the traditional parish of Dunlop. The geographical area boundaries are:

West - The A737 road between the towns of Beith and Dalry.

South – The following roads between Dalry and Stewarton - the B707, south on a short section of the A736, then the B778 to Stewarton.

East - The B769 from Stewarton to the junction with Glanderston Road

North - West along Glanderston Road, then south on Springhill Road. West along Kirkton Road to Neilston. North along Kingston Road to Station Road. Then south on Main Street, to the junction with Holehouse Brae. Along Holehouse Brae to where it meets the A736. A736 to Lugton, then the B777 to Beith.

4.4 Proof of origin:

The cheese is produced from the milk from Ayrshire Cows. Where milk from the dairy's own herd is used, milking records are kept which record the number of cows milked each day and the total amount of milk produced. The milk is piped straight from the milking parlour to the dairy.

Milk sourced from elsewhere would be required to have the appropriate details upon delivery to the dairy.

A cheese making log is kept showing the details of the milk used in each batch with the date and time that batch is started. Records trace each batch of milk back to the day it was produced.

The only other raw materials included in Traditional Ayrshire Dunlop are small quantities of starter culture, rennet and sea salt with records being kept of date of delivery and volume. The amounts used in each application are also recorded along with the time they are inserted into the cheese making process.

Each stage of the process is recorded with details including time/temperature and individual processes such as cutting/settling etc all covered. The number and sizes of each cheese made from the batch are also recorded.

Before going into storage the cheese is labelled with details of the batch number, the date of production, Best Before date and weight, which is sewn onto the cloth bandage surrounding the cheese.

When the cheese has matured and is distributed records are kept of all places where each cheese is sent. Invoices and farmers market sheets are also kept to provide a double check.

4.5 Method of production:

The cheese is produced using whole milk from Ayrshire Cows. The milk is heated to around 72 °c and held at that temperature and pasteurised for 15 seconds. It is then cooled to 30°C. The milk is then transferred to vat where a starter culture - R.A. Range, freeze dried concentrated lactic starter for the direct vat inoculation of milk and milk bases - is added and left to ripen for 1 hour.

Milk from Ayrshire cows has smaller fat globules than other breeds, which allow an ease of incorporation of fat into the curd. Large fat globules which are often found in other breeds 'milk tend to be more easily pressed out of the curds and lost in the whey or fill gaps in the curd giving a greasy mottled effect.(This would result in the cheese lacking the full fat which is necessary to achieve its desired characteristics.)

Rennet is then added and the mixture left to coagulate for 40-50 minutes. The resultant solid curd within the mixture is cut into ¼inch cubes by hand with knives within the vat, which is a skilled process. The skill of the cheesemaker also determines the correct time for cutting (usually between 45 and 60 minutes after rennet has been added).

The temperature in the vat is raised to 38°C and the mixture stirred to allow the curd to float to the surface. The cheesemaker's experience is used to determine the length of time that stirring is required. This is likely to take between 60 and 90 minutes. The mixture is then left to settle.

Once settling occurs the liquid whey is run off through a sieve and a channel is made through the centre of the solid curd remaining in the vat. This curd is cut by the cheesemaker and turned with the slabs being placed to the side of the vat.

When the acidity of the curd is 0.55%-0.65% it is put through a pegmill to break the curd into smaller pieces and then returned to the vat ready for salting. Sea salt is added by hand, mixed into the curd and allowed to dissolve for between 5 -20 minutes before the curd is put into a mould and pressed overnight.

The amount of salt added is around one kilo for each 100 gallons of milk, although this could vary slightly on the specific batch of curd. Experience and skill is required to ensure that the salt is evenly distributed throughout the curd at the correct amount (1.6 – 1.8% in final product).

Traditional cylindrical shaped moulds in 3 sizes of 350g, 3kg and 20kg. are used.

After pressing overnight the cheeses are scalded in hot water – small cheeses by dipping in scalding water, large cheeses by pouring scalding water over them. They are then wrapped in cloth bandages that have also been immersed in scalding water. Scalding helps to produce an even rind on the cheese, while the bandages help to maintain the shape of the cheese, reduce the thickness of the rind and produces a cleaner appearance of the cheese when the cloth is removed after maturing.

The cheeses are then put back into the moulds to enable the cloth to be pressed on. The following day the cheeses are taken out the moulds and left to dry off before being placed on wooden shelves in the cheese store. The cheeses are regularly monitoring and judging maturity and quality of the product are skills that have to be learnt and developed through experience.

The length of this maturation depends on the strength of taste required by the customer. The minimum maturing period for the cheese is 6 months. The shorter the period of maturation the milder the cheese – as the cheese ages stronger flavours develop. The youngest cheese would be around 6 months and the oldest 18 months

but the most popular age is between 10 and 12 months. The cheeses are classified as mild (6-10 months), mature (10-12 months) and extra mature (12-18 months). The more mature cheeses will have a drier texture as with time they have lost some moisture.

Pre-cut and packed wedges will be in sealed vacuum pouches with a label describing the cheese. Whole cheeses may be sold in a natural state with cloth and sewn on label stating the cheese, date of manufacture and batch number.

4.6 Link:

Traditional Ayrshire Dunlop was first developed around 1690 by Barbara Gilmour who brought the recipe back from Ireland where she had been temporarily exiled. She settled in the village of Dunlop where she made and taught the techniques of making the cheese which eventually became known as Dunlop.

This cheese was made with whole milk as previously a poor-keeping cheese was made from skimmed milk, a by-product of butter making.

The milk used in Barbara Gilmour's original cheese came from her own Dunlop cows which produced a creamy milk derived from the local lush pastures arising from the favourable rainfall. As the reputation of the Dunlop cows spread through the area the name of the breed eventually changed to become known as the Ayrshire cow, which is what it is still known as today. Old parish accounts from the 1790s identify the cheese being made in the area as Dunlop cheese.

The geographical area has traditionally been used for dairy farming for many centuries. The combination of the mild wet climate of the designated geographical area combined with the heavy clay/loam soils produces rich, lush, green grass and natural vegetation with clovers which provides permanent pasture with traditional grass species, giving a distinctive forage ideal for both grazing and conservation. The wet and heavy clay soils produce grasses that, when grazed by the cows of the Ayrshire breed, produce a rich and creamy milk with the high butterfat content necessary for making Traditional Ayrshire Dunlop. The wet climate of the area allows the cheese to be matured in the damp atmosphere that helps the cheese to retain moisture and stops it drying out, helping to give the cheese its smooth, springy surface when cut and creamy nutty flavour.

Due to its geographical position within the British Isles, south west Scotland is influenced by both the prevailing weather systems from the west and the Atlantic Gulf Stream. This creates a mild west climate that produces grassland conditions ideally suited to dairy farming. As a consequence this region, in which Dunlop is located, has a long tradition of dairy farming that can be traced back for more than 200 years.

Many farms traditionally produce cheese for their own use, selling any surplus locally, but the introduction of the railways in the middle of the 19th century saw the growth of some of these farms as they sent their cheese to markets in Glasgow and Edinburgh. Traditional Dunlop Ayrshire is a hard, fully flavoured cheese which was able to travel well. Other local cheeses were soft cheeses which could not be sent to markets in Glasgow so this new cheese quickly gained a reputation for its unique characteristics. This has continued to the present day.

This trade continued until the middle of the 19th century when the advent of the large industrial cheese processing units saw a rapid decline in the number of small artisan cheese producers, to the extent that they almost disappeared.

The development of the rail system in the nineteenth century further developed the move from cheese making on small farms to larger production facilities. Cheese could then be easily moved around the country and by the Second World War very little cheese was made on the farm.

The production of Traditional Ayrshire Dunlop Cheese was revived in 1989 and the recipe followed today remains the same and is true to the original recipe while taking consideration of the requirements of modern hygiene regulations. The cheese is still made in open vats and the curd is hand cut – these are the same methods that were being used 50 years ago. The cheese is cloth bandaged and matured on wooden shelves resulting in a rind forming on the cheese that would not be present using more modern methods.

Successful production of the cheese is dependent on the skill and experience of the cheesemaker. They must judge the product throughout the production process and adapt to ensure consistency of the final product. These skills have had to be learned, and then developed from the experience of adapting to changes in the milk. Making the cheese in open vats, hand cutting, stirring and salting of the curd, scalding and bandaging the cheeses, as well as monitoring of the cheeses and quality control of the product require skill that has to be learned locally and developed through experience. The cheese maker must have the skill and knowledge to assess the product throughout the production process, taking into account the seasonal changes in the specification of the milk and the seasonal ambient air temperature and moisture content. With these skills, the cheese maker is able to ensure the desired moisture and acidity is achieved to produce finished cheeses that are consistent in terms of appearance, flavour and texture.

These traditional methods combined with the rich creamy milk from the Ayrshire cow, which contains the high butterfat necessary for making Traditional Ayrshire Dunlop, create a traditional cheese. Its characteristic natural pale yellow colour is attributable to the Ayrshire milk. When cut, Traditional Ayrshire Dunlop has a smooth close surface which feels moist to the touch. This is due to the high moisture content of the cheese. The smaller fat globules in the milk from the Ayrshire breed and the specific grass being eaten from the area allow Traditional Ayrshire Dunlop to better retain moisture than other cheese types. Traditional Ayrshire Dunlop is creamier, with a rounder depth of flavour than other Dunlops and it is also lighter in colour.

The cheese has been a consistent winner of awards over the years and is particularly popular at farmers' markets and specialist delicatessens and cheese shops. Awards gained include several 1st and 2nd awards at the Royal Highland Show between 1991 and 1996; the British Cheese Awards in 1999 (silver), 2001 (gold) and 2004 (bronze) and the Nantwich International Cheese show 1992 (1st) and 2005 (gold).

Traditional Ayrshire Dunlop has been sold by Clarks Specialty Foods near Edinburgh for over twenty years, and their Managing Director Alastair Clark has described the cheese as "a cheese that has a unique flavour and creamy texture that is unlike any other cheese that bears the Dunlop name that is made outside of Ayrshire."

Malcolm Webster who is executive chef at The Sheraton Grand Hotel in Edinburgh states that Traditional Ayrshire Dunlop "is a very consistent cheese which I've been using for my seven years in Scotland, it has a unique flavour and texture which no other Dunlop cheese matches and I would highly recommend this cheese to anyone."

The reputation and uniqueness of Traditional Ayrshire Dunlop is recognised throughout the food and hospitality industry in Scotland, highlighted by its use at top establishments and testimonials from those who buy and use it.

4.7 Inspection body:

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4.8 Labelling: