

**Application to Register the name
'Orkney Island Cheddar' as a
Protected Geographical Indication (PGI)
under the EU Protected Food Name Scheme**

A Consultation Paper

March 2011

Dear Consultee

**APPLICATION TO REGISTER THE NAME 'ORKNEY ISLAND CHEDDAR' AS A
PROTECTED GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION (PGI) UNDER THE EU PROTECTED
FOOD NAME SCHEME**

I am writing to you concerning an application the Scottish Government has received to register 'Orkney Island Cheddar' as a Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) under the above scheme. You or your members may have an interest, or have previously declared an interest, in this application. Details of the scheme can be found at:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Business-Industry/Food-Industry/national-strategy/rep/PFNs>

If the application is successful and the name is protected then only Orkney Island Cheddar conforming to the registered specification would be permitted to use the name. However, before a decision on whether to forward the application to the European Commission for the next stage of the process can be made, in compliance with Article 5.5 of Council Regulation (EC) 510/2006, we are required to consult interested parties within the UK to give them an opportunity to comment or object to the application.

I am therefore attaching the specifications which set out the conditions which would need to be met should the application be approved. If you wish to comment or object to the application please let me have your response by **5pm on 28 June 2011**. Any objections to the application will need to specify the grounds on which it is based and must meet the admissibility criteria outlines in article 7(3) of Council Regulation (EC) 510/2006.

If you are aware of other organisations, businesses or individuals who you think should be consulted, please feel free to copy this consultation to them, or inform us of the omission.

Please send your response with the completed Respondent Information Form (see "Handling your Response" below) to:

Ewan Scott
Food and Drink Industry Division
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Saughton House
Broomhouse Drive
Edinburgh EH11 3XD

Email: Protectedfoodnames@scotland.gsi.gov.uk
Tel: 0300 244 9148
Fax 0300 244 9990

Handling your response

We need to know how you wish your response to be handled and, in particular, whether you are happy for your response to be made public. Please complete and return the **Respondent Information Form** which is attached to this letter as this will ensure that we treat your response appropriately. If you ask for your response not to be published we will regard it as confidential, and we will treat it accordingly.

All respondents should be aware that the Scottish Government are subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 and would therefore have to consider any request made to it under the Act for information relating to responses made to this consultation exercise.

Next steps in the process

Where respondents have given permission for their response to be made public and after we have checked that they contain no potentially defamatory material, responses will be made available to the public on the [Scottish Government consultation](#) web pages. Responses can be copied and sent to you, but a charge may be made for this service.

What happens next ?

Following the closing date, all responses will be analysed and considered along with any other available evidence to help us reach a decision on the final specification for Orkney Island Cheddar to be registered as a PGI. Thereafter the application goes to Defra, before being submitted to the European Commission for their approval.

seConsult

This consultation, and all other Scottish Government consultation exercises, can be viewed online on the consultation web pages of the Scottish Government website at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/consultations>.

The Scottish Government now has an email alert system for consultations ([SEconsult](#): <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/consultations/seconsult.aspx>). This system allows stakeholder individuals and organisations to register and receive a weekly email containing details of all new consultations (including web links). SEconsult complements, but in no way replaces SG

distribution lists, and is designed to allow stakeholders to keep up to date with all SG consultation activity, and therefore be alerted at the earliest opportunity to those of most interest. We would encourage you to register.

Comments and complaints

If you have any comments about how this consultation exercise has been conducted, please send them to Ewan Scott at the email or postal address given above.

THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION PROCESS

Consultation is an essential and important aspect of Scottish Government working methods. Given the wide-ranging areas of work of the Scottish Government, there are many varied types of consultation. However, in general, Scottish Government consultation exercises aim to provide opportunities for all those who wish to express their opinions on a proposed area of work to do so in ways which will inform and enhance that work.

The Scottish Government encourages consultation that is thorough, effective and appropriate to the issue under consideration and the nature of the target audience. Consultation exercises take account of a wide range of factors, and no two exercises are likely to be the same.

Typically Scottish Government consultations involve a written paper inviting answers to specific questions or more general views about the material presented. Written papers are distributed to organisations and individuals with an interest in the issue, and they are also placed on the Scottish Government web site enabling a wider audience to access the paper and submit their responses¹. Consultation exercises may also involve seeking views in a number of different ways, such as through public meetings, focus groups or questionnaire exercises. Copies of all the written responses received to a consultation exercise (except those where the individual or organisation requested confidentiality) are placed in the Scottish Government library at Victoria Quay, Edinburgh (G-D 42, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ, telephone 0131 244 8455).

All Scottish Government consultation papers and related publications (eg, analysis of response reports) can be accessed at: [Scottish Government consultations](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/consultations) (<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/consultations>)

The views and suggestions detailed in consultation responses are analysed and used as part of the decision making process, along with a range of other available information and evidence. Depending on the nature of the consultation exercise the responses received may:

- indicate the need for policy development or review
- inform the development of a particular policy
- help decisions to be made between alternative policy proposals
- be used to finalise legislation before it is implemented

Final decisions on the issues under consideration will also take account of a range of other factors, including other available information and research evidence.

¹ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/consultations>

While details of particular circumstances described in a response to a consultation exercise may usefully inform the policy process, consultation exercises cannot address individual concerns and comments, which should be directed to the relevant public body.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further information regarding the consultation process.

Yours sincerely

EWAN SCOTT
Food and Drink Industry Division

LIST OF CONSULTEES

5 Legal Deposit Libraries
Age Scotland
Aldi
Alyn Smith MEP
APSE Scotland
Arla Foods UK - Lockerbie Creamery
Asda
BEMIS
British Cheese Board
British Hospitality Association
British Library
British Retail Consortium
British Sheep Dairying Association
Caithness Cheese
Caledonian Cheese Company
Catherine Stihler MEP
CBI SCOTLAND
CEMVO
Clarks Speciality Foods (Edinburgh)
Clerk of Committee at Scottish Parliament with interest in consultation
Connage Highland Dairy
Consumer Focus Scotland
Co-operative
COSLA
Craft Guild of Chef's
Craigmyle Cheese Company
Dairy Farmers of Scotland
Dairy Industry Federation
Dairy UK Ltd
Dairy UK Scotland
David Martin MEP
Defra
DG Environment Committee liaison officer
Engender
Equality and Human Rights Commission
Equality Network
Federation of Chefs Scotland
Federation of Small Businesses
First Milk
Food and Drink Federation
Food Standards Agency
Food Standards Agency - Scotland
Galloway Farmhouse Cheese
George Lyon MEP
George Mewes Cheese (Glasgow)
Graham's Family Dairy
Grimbister Farm Cheese
Highland Fine Cheeses
Highlands and Islands Enterprise
I J Mellis Cheesemonger
Ian Hudghton MEP
Inclusion Scotland
Institute of Hospitality
Intellectual Assets Centre
Saughton House, Broomhouse Drive, Edinburgh EH11 3XD
www.scotland.gov.uk

Intellectual Property Office
Inverloch Cheese Company
Island Cheese Company
Kingdom Cheese
Knockraich Dairy
LACORS
Lidl
Loch Arthur Creamery
Lymekilns Cheesemonger
Mains of Shevado
Marks & Spencer
Masterchefs
Morrisons
National Dairy Council
National Farmers Union
National Farmers Union Scotland
Provision Trade Federation
Provision Trade Federation
Quality Meat Scotland
Quality Milk Producers Ltd/JCS UK Ltd
Robert Wiseman Dairies
Sainsbury's
SCDI
Scotland Food and Drink
Scottish Agricultural College
Scottish Dairy Cattle Association
Scottish Disability Equality Forum
Scottish Enterprise
Scottish Environment Link
Scottish Environment Protection Agency
Scottish Food Advisory Committee
Scottish Food and Drink Federation
Scottish Food Quality Certification
Scottish Grocers Federation
Scottish Interfaith Council
Scottish Natural Heritage
Scottish Retail Consortium
Scottish Women's Convention
SG Library
Specialist Cheese Makers Association
SPICE Library
Struan Stevenson MEP
Tast of Arran
Tesco
The Crown Estate
The Guild of Fine Food Retailers
The Patent Office
Visit Scotland
Waitrose
Welsh Assembly Government
West Country Farmhouse Cheesemakers Ltd
West Highland Dairy
Wester Lawrenceton Farm LTD

SPECIFICATION

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

“ORKNEY ISLAND CHEDDAR”

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

Food and Policy Unit

Area 6c

Nobel House

17 Smith Square

London

SW1P 3JR

United Kingdom

Tel: +44207 238 6075

Fax: +44207 238 5728

Email: protectedfoodnames@defra.gsi.gov.uk

2 GROUP

Name: Orkney Cheese Company Limited

Address: Crowness Road

Hatston Industrial Estate

Kirkwall

Orkney

KW15 1RG

Tel.: 01856 872824

Fax: 01856 872402

E-mail: tim@orkneycheese.com

Composition: Producers/processors (1) Other (20 milk producers)

The applicant company is the only company producing “Orkney Island Cheddar” in the defined area. However, the applicant company includes 20

dairy farmers from within the geographical area. 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.

3 TYPE OF PRODUCT: CHEESE – CLASS 1.3

4 SPECIFICATION

4.1 Name: “Orkney Island Cheddar”

4.2 Description: Orkney Island Cheddar is produced with locally sourced milk from within the defined geographical area. It has moderate levels of sharp acid notes whilst remaining fairly rounded with savoury and nutty notes. The aroma is clean and characteristic of cheddar with a firm but malleable texture which is smooth and closed. Orkney Island Cheddar cheese is typically matured for 10 to 18 months giving a variety of medium, mature and extra mature flavour profiles.

The cheeses are typically sold in three age profiles:

- Medium Mature 6-12 months which has a smooth texture with slight savoury flavour.
- Mature 12-15 months which has a firm smooth texture with slightly sharp savoury flavour.
- Extra Mature 15–18 months firm slightly brittle texture with sharp savoury notes and lactate crystal.

The cheese is produced in a 20kg block shape which is then cut into varying shapes and sizes up to 20kg after maturation. The cheeses are made in either white or coloured types which will have a bright even colour through out the body of the cheese. The coloured cheese differing from the white by having a vegetable colour pigment added after pasteurisation.

The chemical standards of the cheese are:

- Moisture 33-36%
- Fat 33-36%
- Fat in dry matter 50-52%
- Salt 1.6-2.1%
- PH 5.1-5.4 at make

The microbiological limits for the cheese are:

- Listeria Monocytogenes absent in 25g
- Staphylococcal enterotoxins absent in 25g
- Salmonella absent in 25g.

4.3 Geographical area: Orkney Islands, North of Scotland, with the town of Kirkwall at its centre. The area is defined by the Orkney Islands of MAINLAND, BURRAY and SOUTH RONALDSAY which are all linked by the A961.

4.4 Proof of origin: The fresh raw milk is produced on farms defined as within the geographical area. The milk is uplifted by bulk tankers on a daily basis with farm, volume and temperature information recorded. Samples are retained for reference on a daily basis with one sample a week being sent to a third party laboratory for quality testing which along with the volume collected form the basis of the payment and traceability systems.

All milk collected is subject to quality testing before being accepted with tanker load details and storage silo being used recorded.

To ensure safety, quality and traceability of all ingredients and packaging used during the production process comprehensive records are kept from milk collection through to cheese despatch, these include milk reception record sheet, cheese processing record sheet, laboratory/grading and daily silo records. As milk is collected on liquid bulk tankers it is only possible to trace the raw milk to individual day's delivery to the creamery for production purposes as it is possible to have 2-3 days milk from all farms in the same vat of cheese. The system of having a unique label allows traceability back to an individual vat and where a full pallet of cheese is sold to a customer we have a record of the individual customer.

4.5 Method of production: Orkney Island Cheddar is made from raw milk which has been produced within the defined geographical area. The milk is produced from dairy cattle on a fresh grass and silage based production. The cattle are on grass for 6 months and housed for the remainder of the year. The diet is supplemented by home grown barley, turnips and brewers grains sourced from a local distillery. There is also non-gm Soya (protein supplement), sugar beet (energy supplement) and mineral supplement sourced from outwith the area to complete the rations. This feeding regime allows the cattle to produce well balanced milk in terms of fat, protein and lactose. All milk is picked up on a daily basis and delivered the short distance to the creamery (26 km). The cheese milk is pasteurized and at this stage is also standardized by removing cream to maintain a given butterfat to protein ratio with a centrifugal separator. The process of standardizing the milk will maintain a consistence in the firmness of the body of the cheese, which would otherwise vary over the course of the year.

The milk is then pumped to the cheese vat where a lactic acid forming culture (*Lactococcus lactis* subsp. *cremoris/lactis* and *Streptococcus salivarius* subsp. *thermophilus*) is added which develops acid and flavour in the cheese. If the cheese is to be of the coloured variety a liquid called annatto is mixed in at this stage (annatto is a pigment which is extracted from the seed of the annatto tree). The milk is stirred continuously during this period for 60 minutes at 31°C until the rennet is added and the milk is allowed to coagulate into a solid junket which the cheesemaker checks by hand and takes approximately 25 minutes. The junket is cut very slowly at first by rotating machine blades to split the curds and whey. The curd particles are then firmed up by raising the temperature in the vat up to 40°C in 40 – 45 minutes.

The next stage is for the curds and whey to be drained onto an open finishing table where the whey is drained off and the curds are continuously stirred up until the point at which salting is carried out at approximately 3hrs 20mins after renneting. The process of continuously stirring the curd from pitching of the vat until salting is the dry stirring technique. The exact point at which salting is carried out is determined by the skill of the cheese maker when an acidic titration of around 0.28 is reached. The dry salted curds are then drawn by vacuum to a block forming tower where the curds bind together before being ejected by the machine in the form of a 20kg block.

The cheeses then will be vacuum sealed in bags and given a unique label for full traceability before wooden slats are strapped to the cheese by hand to maintain the block shape while maturing takes place. The cheeses are matured for between 6-18 months at 8-10°C before they are cut into varying pack sizes up to 20kg.

The cheeses are then graded at 12 weeks of age by an independent grader and only cheese that fall into the First Grade category are called Orkney Island Cheddar.

First Grade Definition:

General requirements are that all cheese are hard pressed, made from cows milk and containing a minimum of 48% of butterfat in the moisture free substance.

- Flavour is clean and milk free from any trace of bitterness or any other taint.
- Colour is even and uniform throughout with no apparent mottling. White: Not chalky. Coloured: Bright even colour throughout.
- Body is firm, smooth and silky.
- Texture is closed with absence of gas holes.
- Finish and appearance is showing square sides with tight bag and no signs of blowing or mould growth.

4.6 Link: Orkney cheese is made using local milk from the Orkney Isles, following a traditional recipe and process. The production of Orkney Island Cheddar is a marrying of the craftsmanship of the cheese maker and the use of the local Orkney Island milk.

Geographical area

The designated geographical area is typically on low undulating farmland which has deep fertile topsoil which is the result of the farming of the land over the last 5000 years. The area is renowned for its world heritage site status for Neolithic monuments and for large areas having been classed as Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA) or Sites of Special Scientific Interests (SSSI). With the proximity of the Gulf Stream it has resulted in a temperate climate and also a rich source of iodine and sulphur in the soil which combined with the constant daylight around mid summer due to the northern latitude, produces a rich lush pasture for the predominately Holstein/Friesian and Ayrshire dairy cattle. This combination of conditions has led to a unique source of high quality milk for cheese making which is ring fenced by its physical geographical area.

Skill of cheese maker

The cheese maker, who is using state of the art equipment, is still in control of the process by monitoring the acidic development and when at correct levels carries out pitching from the vat, running whey and by his labour when working the dry curd on the table. The salting of the curd requires a great amount of skill as the curd needs to be at the correct consistency and acidity.

The salt is applied by hand by a technique that is akin to broadcast sowing of seed that the early crofters would have used in the fields of Orkney for generations before. It is essential this is skilfully done as the correct amount of salt must be applied and spread evenly through the curd. In addition the skill of the cheese maker monitoring the production of the cheese is essential to ensure it remains at the correct consistency and acidity throughout the process. It is through many years of experience that the cheese maker produces a cheese that has the correct texture and flavour. This requires skill and experience to ensure consistent production of a high quality cheese that must meet the First Grade Definition.

Dry Stir Technique

Orkney Islands Cheddar differs from other traditional cheddars due to the unique dry stir technique. This method of production was developed in 1984 and is still used today having been a real synergy of ideas of the management who were striving to produce cheddar efficiently with a short process time but also having a point of difference over traditional cheddar cheeses. It created a firm dense bodied cheese and by using milk that has been standardized gives the cheese a consistent body and texture over the whole year with a rounded mellow flavour.

Dry stirring is an adaptation of the traditional cheddar recipe which is carried out after the vat has been pitched onto the finishing table and is achieved by not allowing the curd to bond together after the whey has been run. It is continuously stirred up and to the point salt is added and allowed to mellow. The benchmark is for salting to be carried out at approximately 3hrs 20 minutes after renneting and have a acidic titration of 0.28 This gives the cheese a closed texture and when the salting is skilfully carried out by hand it is being applied to a smaller curd particle which gives a more consistent distribution than with a traditional cheddar make. The curd is then allowed to cheddar together in the blockforming towers, after which it is bagged and matured in bound wooden slats.

Provenance

The cheese making industry in Orkney goes back hundreds of years with the crofting culture whereby to supplement a meagre income the crofters wife would sell surplus handmade cheeses. There would of also have been some cheeses that would be stored in an oatmeal girdel for supplementing the diet in the long winter months.

The original creamery was set up in Kirkwall in 1946 as a consequence of the milk supply having increased during the Second World War to feed the 60,000 service personnel based on the islands. A hard cheese in traditional clothed cylinders, blocks and wheels were made until due to increased milk production a switch to more modern method of production and a cheddar recipe was made with a new creamery in 1958. This cheddar recipe was then modified with a "dry stir technique" being carried out in 1984 after a period of trialling this innovative variation to the traditional cheddar recipe.

The cheese is now produced in a state of the art creamery commissioned in 2002 which has replicated the production process of the previous creamery and maintained its quality, which is reinforced by its continued success at winning prizes at major competitions at Nantwich International Show (Gold Mild White 2009), Royal Highland Show (Gold and Best Scottish Exhibit 2009), The Bath and West Show (1st Mild White 2007), British Cheese Awards (Gold Mild White 2006) and Great Yorkshire Cheese And Dairy Show (1st mild White 2010).

The cheese has featured on the menu at the prestigious Langham Hotel in London and celebrity chef Nick Nairn quoted in 2009 "The quality of Orkney Cheddar is down to the islands unique climate and to the dry stir method. It's particularly good for cooking, unlike some cheddar, due to its production

method which results in less oil being released when melting. Using Orkney cheddar to cook helps create a creamier, more flavour some dish”.

4.7 Inspection body:

Name: Orkney Islands Council Trading Standards

Address: Council Offices

School Place

Kirkwall

Orkney

KW15 1NY

Tel.: 01856873535

Fax: 01856886450

E-mail: trading.standards@orkney.gov.uk

4.8 Labelling:

Orkney Island Cheddar PGI Application



RESPONDENT INFORMATION FORM

Please Note this form **must** be returned with your response to ensure that we handle your response appropriately

1. Name/Organisation

Organisation Name

Title Mr Ms Mrs Miss Dr Please tick as appropriate

Surname

Forename

2. Postal Address

<input type="text"/>		
Postcode	Phone	Email

3. Permissions - I am responding as...

Individual / Group/Organisation
Please tick as appropriate

(a) Do you agree to your response being made available to the public (in Scottish Government library and/or on the Scottish Government web site)?

Please tick as appropriate Yes No

(b) Where confidentiality is not requested, we will make your responses available to the public on the following basis

Please tick ONE of the following boxes

Yes, make my response, name and address all available

or

Yes, make my response available, but not my name and address

or

Yes, make my response and name available, but not my address

(c) The name and address of your organisation **will be** made available to the public (in the Scottish Government library and/or on the Scottish Government web site).

Are you content for your **response** to be made available?

Please tick as appropriate Yes No

(d) We will share your response internally with other Scottish Government policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for Scottish Government to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise?

Please tick as appropriate Yes No



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APS Group Scotland
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