

PRODUCT SPECIFICATION

“Swaledale Ewes Cheese”

PDO (✓) PGI ()

1. Responsible Department in the Member State:

Name: Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)
Area 3A
Nobel House
Smith Square
London
SW1P 3JR
United Kingdom
Tel: 0207 238 6075
Fax: 0207 238 5728
Email: Protectedfoodnames@defra.gsi.gov.uk

2. Group:

Name: The Swaledale Cheese Company
Address: Mercury Road
Gallowfields Trading Estate
Richmond
North Yorkshire
DL10 4TQ
Tel:
Fax:
Email:
Composition: producer/processor (2) other (0).

3. Type of product:

Cheese – class 1.3

4. Specification (summary of requirements under Art 7(1) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012)

4.1. Name:
“Swaledale Ewes Cheese”

4.2. Description:
Swaledale Ewes Cheese is a full fat hard cheese made from the milk of sheep grazed in Swaledale to the traditional Swaledale recipe.

The cheese has the following characteristics:

Flavour:	fresh, slightly acid, sweet not bitter, mild but distinctive
Colour:	White
Body:	Quite firm but not hard
Texture:	Firm open texture, moist and crumbly
Finish and appearance:	traditional cylindrical shape, coated with a greeny blue greyish mould or coated in wax

4.3. Geographical area:
Swaledale in the County of North Yorkshire

4.4. Proof of origin:

4.5 Method of production:
The cheese is made throughout the year from full fat sheeps milk collected from farms in the designated area and delivered daily to the cheese making dairy.

- i) The milk is fed into a cheese making vat. The temperature is adjusted to 28°C, a pre-determined amount of lactic culture is added and left to ripen for two hours
- ii) To precipitate coagulation rennet is added and the milk is left to curdle for one hour
- iii) When the acidity of the curd is deemed to be at the right level the curd is cut into cubes and hand stirred for 40 minutes maintaining a temperature of 28°C
- iv) The curd is allowed to settle and drain until firm enough to cut with a knife but still very moist
- v) The curd is cut into blocks 30cms x 15cms, and allowed to drain for a period

- vi) The curd is cut again into 15cm x 15cm blocks, stacked two high and allowed to stand for a period
- vii) The curd is broken by hand into small nuggets and into moulds lined with muslin
- viii) The cheeses are lightly pressed for a period of 18 hours at a temperature of 20°C and are turned one after approximately 4 hours
- ix) After pressing the cheeses are removed from the mould and are brine soaked for 24 hours in an 85% solution measure on a brinometer
- x) After soaking in brine the cheeses are allowed to drain and either:
 - a. Transferred to temperature/humidity controlled maturing store where they are turned every two days for a minimum period of 3/4 weeks; or
 - b. Transferred to a cold store for 24 hours after which they are coated with wax and stored at 5°C for a minimum period of 3/4 weeks
- xi) The cheeses are removed from store when they are required for marketing

4.6 Link:

Swaledale, as with each of the Yorkshire Dales, has its own distinctive characteristics, from its geological make up and climate, through to the herbs and grasses in its pastures. All these things combine to give Swaledale its very own unique character.

Swaledale Cheese has been made in the Dale that bears its name for centuries. It is though that cheese making was first brought to the Yorkshire Dales almost one thousand years ago by Christian monks who arrived from Normandy and settled in the local abbey. They in turn passed on the cheese making technique to the local farmers of Swaledale, and thus, Swaledale Cheese was born.

Originally Swaledale Cheese was made with the milk from Swaledale sheep and it was not until the 17th century when dairy cows were introduced into the Dales.

The farmers would make cheese by way of preserving the excess milk after calving time, some would be kept to feed the family and some would be bartered with grocers and corn-merchants, for food and flour.

By the turn of the century numerous creameries had been opened, milk was collected from the farms, taken to the creameries, where cheese was made in large quantities. This started the decline of on-farm cheese making in Swaledale, and after two world wars it was on its way to extinction. By 1980 there was only Mr and Mrs Longstaff of Harkerside above Reeth in Swaledale, still making traditional Swaledale

Cheese. The recipe, which was shrouded in mystery, had been handed down her family for generations.

In the early eighties Mr Longstaff died and Mrs Longstaff sold her small-holding and retired from cheese making, so Swaledale Cheese was all but extinct.

In November 1986 Mrs Longstaff gave the original recipe to Mr & Mrs Reed and acting as chief taster she helped them to re-establish authentic Swaledale Cheese. The Swaledale Cheese Company was set up by Mr & Mrs Reed in February 1987 and since then the business has developed year on year. The company now produces approximately 1 tonne of Swaledale Cheese a week, supplying specialist cheese shops, delicatessens, one supermarket chain and various other outlets in the UK.

The aim of Mr & Mrs Reed is to continue to produce authentic Swaledale Cheese made to the traditional recipe in Swaledale without the fear of a large creamery elsewhere making a mass produced product and calling it Swaledale Cheese. A fate that has be-fallen so many traditional cheeses that were once locally produced in the UK.

The characteristics of the cheese are considered to be in large part due to the geographical environment of that part of North Yorkshire known as Swaledale. The land in the dale and the climate produce pastures on which the cows are grazed, of distinctive characteristics. This together with the authentic and unvarying cheese making practices gives the cheese its specific properties which have come to be so highly regarded in the specialist cheese market in the UK. All milk used for Swaledale Cheese is produced in Swaledale.

Swaledale is in the Penine Dales Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA), which is part of the Dales National Park. The area contains some of the best examples of Britain's most fragile habitats – the Hay Meadows – which in late spring and early summer blossom with a great variety of wild flowers. The milk produced from cows and sheep grazing on this fauna has its own unique flavour which is subsequently passed on to the cheese.

4.7 Inspection body:

Name: Product Authentication Inspectorate Ltd (PAI)

Address: Rowland House
65 High Street

Worthing
West Sussex
NB11 1DN

Tel: 01903 237799

Fax: 01903 304445

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4.8. Labelling:
N/A