

From: [redacted]

Sent: Tues 02/04/2013 09:39

To: [redacted]

Hello [redacted]

I will need to look back at files we hold here internally and speak to colleagues who handled the case at the time. However if you have copies of your "original objection" it would be helpful to have sight of that.

I must say that it is not my current understanding (that may change in light of any evidence to prove differently) that you made an objection within the consultation period of 12 weeks, which would have been held at the time the name "Staffordshire Cheese" was seeking protection. It is my understanding that because this did not take place, within that time frame (of 12 weeks) an amendment was written up (and agreed by yourself at the time) to seek co-existence as a way to resolve the problem of the two names in the market place. Please correct me if I am wrong in this understanding.

In light of all this, I do suggest we look at meeting up soon, with [redacted] if possible.

If you agree, I will suggest some dates for a meeting to be held in Defra offices over the next few weeks.

Thank you and kind regards

[redacted]

Tel: [redacted]

Mob: [redacted]

From: [redacted]

Sent: 28 March 2013 13:50

To: [redacted]

Cc: [redacted]

Subject: Re: Staffordshire Cheese PDO

Hello [redacted]

Thank you for your message.

Given the situation you have outlined I do believe it would be useful to discuss this situation further.

As you can perhaps imagine, this current situation is clearly unsuitable and I will not accept being "in breach" of what I consider to be an unsuitable PDO regulation.

I would request that you outline what, if any, information was forwarded to the EC at the time the Staffordshire PDO was initially passed by them in terms of my original objection. Were they aware of that objection and of the existence of our name at that time?

Regards

[redacted]

----- Original Message -----

From: [redacted]

To: [redacted]

Cc: [redacted]

Sent: Thursday, March 28, 2013 11:59 AM

Subject: Staffordshire Cheese PDO

Dear [redacted]

After further reflection and discussion on your confirming you do not find the amendment to seek co-existence of “Staffordshire Cheese PDO” and “Staffordshire Organic” cheese acceptable, consequently we find that we do not have an amendment before us.

However we do find that “Staffordshire Organic” cheese remains in breach of misuse of the protected name “Staffordshire Cheese PDO”, as outlined in Article 13 (b) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council.

I would like to make clear that in order for an amendment to be submitted, the individual or group (wishing to submit an amendment) must first satisfy certain criteria. They are stated in the attached Regulations. Points to satisfy are listed here:

- A group having a legitimate interest may apply for approval of an amendment to a product specification (Art 53(1)).
- A group is defined in Art 3(2) as ‘any association, irrespective of its legal form, mainly composed of producers or processors working with the same product.’
- A single natural or legal person may be treated as a group where: a) the person concerned is the only producer willing to submit an application; and b) with regard to PDO/PGI, the defined geographical area possesses characteristics which differ appreciably from those of neighbouring areas or the characteristics of the product are different from those produced in neighbouring areas (Art 49(1), second indent).
- Article 53 details the procedure that needs to be followed once an amendment application has been made (the procedure depends on whether the amendment is minor (as defined by the Regulation in Art 53(2)) or major.

I would be happy to meet to discuss this with you, (I consider this would be the fastest and most effective way to move forward), in order to see what options would be available. Should you consider this helpful, please let me know.

I attach the Regulations 1151/20012 for your information. I am copying in *[redacted]* for information but also in case you wish to discuss this with her directly.

Kind regards

[redacted]

[redacted]

Tel: *[redacted]*

Mobile Tel: *[redacted]*

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: [redacted]

Sent: 21 February 2013 12:43

To: [redacted]

Subject: Re: Staffordshire Cheese PDO

Hello [redacted]

Thank you for your message.

I appreciate the change in circumstances due to closure of [redacted] and your reaction to that situation.

I am somewhat puzzled when you state that there were no objections to the co-existence of Staffordshire names however.

In the letter you attached I wrote:

"Finally I must state very clearly that the proviso under "labelling" in the amendment limiting the use of the name Staffordshire cheese with reference to our product is not acceptable."

Please take this as a clear objection. I was hoping that my intention here was clear.

If there is any further "due process" that this situation needs to travel down please keep me informed.

I also should reiterate at this point that if my original objections to this PDO application had been dealt with better by [redacted] before the application was forwarded to Europe, then I believe this situation would not still be causing such trouble so many years on.

I don't see why the detail in the original letter from [redacted] should be altered. The PDO cheese should be referred to as a Staffordshire Moorlands product or the PDO should be withdrawn.

I hope you can appreciate that this is one of the key aspects of the entire PDO saga that I feel very strongly about.

I would welcome any further assistance you can offer to move this forward to a "speedy" resolution. I'm sure we can all agree that it has dragged on far too long.

Regards

[redacted]

----- Original Message -----

From: [redacted]

To: [redacted]

Cc: [redacted]

Sent: Thursday, February 21, 2013 11:11 AM

Subject: Staffordshire Cheese PDO

Hello [redacted]

With the announcement of the [redacted] no longer producing Staffordshire Cheese PDO, then its application to make some amendments to the current PDO specification have effectively come to an end.

This leaves the amendment that did go to consultation which was intended to allow for the co-existence of the names Staffordshire Cheese PDO and Staffordshire Organic Cheese. No objections to that amendment were received during that consultation. Though I understand from your letter dated November 2011, you were not satisfied with this outcome. (The letter is attached at the end of this email).

I am conscious, of course, that you had concerns over the geographical area of the current Staffordshire Cheese PDO specification. There is now new EU legislation in place for the PDO/PGI schemes - Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs. Article 53 of that Regulation outlines who is eligible to request an amendment. If you still wish to proceed with the other amendment request, I will write again with more information about the process.

I have contacted the sole producer of Staffordshire Cheese PDO, [redacted], and they inform me that they are meeting the requirements as stated in the PDO specification and do not foresee any changes. I am also contacting the Trading Standards officer [redacted] at Staffordshire Trading Standards as [redacted] too had concerns over the PDO specification. However, the fact that the company seeking these amendments is no longer producing this cheese, removes the reason to seek the amendments they listed. This does not, of course,

remove any legitimate interest you may have in seeking to amend the specification if you still wish to.

Please let me know your thoughts

Kind regards

[redacted]

Email: *[redacted]*

Office Tel: *[redacted]*

Mobile Tel: *[redacted]*

[redacted]

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)

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