

Updated product specification

3.1. Name(s) to be registered (Article 2 of Regulation (EC) No 1216/2007)

“Boerenkaas” (in Dutch only)

3.2. Whether the name is

Specific in itself

Expresses the specific character of the agricultural product or foodstuff

The name “Boerenkaas” is specifically linked to a product traditionally made on the farm from raw milk obtained mainly from the farm’s own herd. “Boeren” means farmers, so Boerenkaas is cheese made by farmers on the farm.

3.3. Whether reservation of the name is sought under Article 13(2) of Regulation (EC) No 509/2006

Registration with reservation of the name

Registration without reservation of the name

3.4. Type of product [as in Annex II]

Class 1.3.

Cheese

3.5. Description of the agricultural product or foodstuff to which the name under point 3.1 applies (Article 3(1) of Regulation (EC) No 1216/2007)

“Boerenkaas” is a (semi-)hard cheese made from raw milk from cattle, goats, sheep or buffalo. The fat content of “Boerenkaas” varies depending on the fat content of the milk used.

The cheese may contain cumin or other seeds, herbs and/or spices. The older the cheese becomes and the longer it ripens, the firmer and drier it becomes, thus producing hard cheese.

Examples of names of products are “Goudse Boerenkaas”, “Goudse Boerenkaas met kruiden”, “Edammer Boerenkaas”, “Leidse Boerenkaas”, “Boerenkaas van geitenmelk” and “Boerenkaas van schapenmelk”.

3.6. Description of the production method of the agricultural product or foodstuff to which the name under point 3.1 applies (Article 3(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1216/2007)

The raw material used may be:

(a) raw milk;

- (b) cream or fully or partially skimmed milk obtained directly from the milk referred to in point (a);
- (c) water.

The milk used must not have undergone heat treatment above 40 °C; the phosphatase activity must be compatible with that of the raw milk used.

The milk must be processed into cheese within 40 hours of milking.

Auxiliary materials and additives:

- (a) cultures of microorganisms forming lactic acid, propionic acid and aromas (not genetically modified);
- (b) rennet (within the meaning of Article 5(a) of the Dairy Products (Commodities Act) Decree);
- (c) calcium chloride;
- (d) sodium nitrate;
- (e) seeds, herbs and/or spices;
- (f) sodium chloride (through soaking in brine).

Manufacturing process

- The raw milk is curdled at a temperature of approximately 30 °C within 40 hours of milking.
- A mixed strain culture of lactic acid bacteria brings about acidification.
- After cutting, stirring and draining off part of the whey, the whey and curd mixture is washed once or twice with hot water, raising the temperature of the mixture to no more than 37 °C.
- After processing, the curd is placed in cheese moulds.
- Before or during pressing a casein mark is put on the cheese bearing the name “Boerenkaas”, and possibly also the name of the type of milk.
- After pressing and acidification over a number of hours, the cheese is soaked in a brine solution of 18 to 22 % common salt (sodium chloride).
- The minimum ripening period on the farm is 13 days after the day on which processing began at a temperature of at least 12 °C.
- To obtain its fully characteristic flavour, “Boerenkaas” is left to ripen further in the ripening room on the farm or on the cheese merchant’s premises. The length of the ripening process varies from a few weeks to over a year.

3.7. Specific character of the agricultural product or foodstuff (Article 3(3) of Regulation (EC) No 1216/2007)

“Boerenkaas” is a cheese made on the farm from raw milk from cattle, goats, sheep or buffalo. At least half of the milk must come from the farm’s own herd. Milk may be bought in from no more than two other dairy farms, but the total quantity bought in may not be greater than the farm’s own production.

Summary of characteristic properties and composition of “Boerenkaas”

Properties	“Goudse Boerenkaas”	“Leidse Boerenkaas”	“Edammer Boerenkaas”	“Boerenkaas (van geitenmelk)”, “Boerenkaas (van schapenmelk)”, “Boerenkaas (van buffelmelk)”
Raw material	cow’s milk	cow’s milk	cow’s milk	goat’s milk, sheep’s milk, buffalo milk
Shape	Gouda-shaped (flat cylinder with rounded edges)	Leiden-shaped (flat cylinder with sharp edges)	ball- or loaf-shaped	
Rind	white to yellow rind, if required with cheese coating	red rind, if required with cheese coating	white to yellow rind, if required with cheese coating	white to yellow rind, if required with cheese coating
Texture	firm to soft and malleable	firm to hard, sliceable	soft to firm or hard, sliceable	firm to soft and malleable
Hole formation	regular throughout the cheese, hole diameter from 2 to approx. 15 mm; no cracks (longer than 1 cm)	limited number of small holes created during production, regular throughout the cheese, hole diameter from 1 to 3 mm; no cracks	limited number of holes, regular throughout the cheese, hole diameter from 2 to approx. 8 mm; no cracks	holes spread evenly throughout, distributed or closed body
pH	after 12 days between 5,20 and 5,40	after 12 days between 5,20 and 5,30	after 12 days between 5,20 and 5,30	after 12 days between 5,10 and 5,30
Fat content in dry matter (%)	full fat, at least 48 %	30 % +, fat content in dry matter more than 30 % but less than 35 %; or 35 % +, fat content in dry matter more than 35 % but less than 40 %	40 % +, fat content in dry matter more than 40 % but less than 45 %	at least 45 % +

Max. moisture content	42,5 % (12 days after manufacture)	45 % (12 days after manufacture)	47 % (12 days after manufacture)	46 % (12 days after manufacture)
Salt content (%)	0,4 % to a maximum of 4 % salt in the dry cheese	0,4 % to a maximum of 4 % salt in the dry cheese	0,4 % to a maximum of 5 % salt in the dry cheese	0,4 % to a maximum of 4 % salt in the dry cheese
Added ingredients	possibly cumin, seeds, herbs and/or spices	cumin	possibly cumin	possibly seeds, herbs and/or spices
Minimum length of ripening	13 days after first day of manufacture	13 days after first day of manufacture	13 days after first day of manufacture	13 days after first day of manufacture
Minimum ripening temperature	12 °C	12 °C	12 °C	12 °C
Phosphatase activity	normal level for raw milk	normal level for raw milk	normal level for raw milk	normal level for raw milk

3.8. Traditional character of the agricultural product or foodstuff (Article 3(4) of Regulation (EC) No 1216/2007)

The name “Boerenkaas” is specifically linked to a product traditionally made on the farm from raw milk obtained mainly from the farm’s own herd.

Up to 1874 all milk was processed on the farm. After that, milk gradually began to be processed industrially. Milk used in cheese-making began to be pasteurised in the first few years of the 20th century. Pasteurisation meant that the character of dairy-made cheese was lost. On the farm, the traditional method of processing raw milk continued.

As a result of enzymes naturally present in milk, i.e. milk lipase, and the presence of a bacteria flora that enters the milk during and after milking, the cheese made from this raw milk has more taste, described as fuller, stronger and tangier. For many consumers, this is what distinguishes the taste of “Boerenkaas” from “industrially made” cheese. The taste becomes stronger as ripening progresses.

In 1982 new rules were laid down by the Decision and Decree on Cheese Products on the basis of the Agricultural Quality Act. These rules cover cheese quality, the origin of the milk and the method of production. The related national mark guarantees that “Boerenkaas” is a farm product, and is made from raw milk which is kept for only a short time and comes mainly from the farm’s own herd.

This legislation also introduces the possibility of using milk from goats, sheep and buffalo in addition to cow's milk. It also opens up the possibility of making cheese from raw milk with a lower fat content.

The foregoing clearly illustrates the specific character of the raw materials used and of the method of production.

3.9. Minimum requirements and procedures to check the specific character (Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 1216/2007)

The requirements of this specification, as described in section 3.6 (Description of the production method of the agricultural product or foodstuff to which the name under point 3.1 applies) and the table in section 3.7 (Character of the agricultural product or foodstuff (Article 3(3) of Regulation (EC) No 1216/2007)), apply to "Boerenkaas" as a traditional speciality guaranteed under Regulation (EC) No 509/2006.

Every six to eight weeks each farm is inspected to ensure that fresh raw milk (not more than 40 hours old) is used in cheese-making and to check on use of the casein mark. Once a year administrative checks are performed to verify from which farms the milk used comes. Checks for compliance with the composition requirements cover the fat content in dry matter, moisture content and salt content in dry matter. These parameters are checked at the same time once every six to eight weeks [\(*1\)](#).

In addition, the inspection procedure is designed to check for compliance with the other characteristic properties of the various types of "Boerenkaas" given in the table in section 3.7. These checks on characteristic properties are carried out visually, also at the same time once every six to eight weeks.