18.84.95

APPLICATION FOR THE REGISTRATION OF DORSET BLUE VINNY CHEESE AS A PROTECTED DESIGNATION OF ORIGIN

1. Competent Authority

Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food
Whitehall Place
West Block
London
SW1A 2HH

2. Applicant

Dorset Blue Cheese Co
Woodbridge Farm
Stock Gaylard
Sturminister Newton
Dorset
DT10 2BD

3. Name of Product

Dorset Blue Vinny Cheese

4. Type of Product

Cheese - Category 1.3

5. Description of Product

b) Dorset Blue Vinny is a lightly pressed cheese made from unpasteurised milk. The cheese has a firm texture, a uniform colour with irregular blue/green veining and a rough, dry brown mould coating. The flavour is piquant, peppery mild to strong.

c) Definition of Geographical Area:

The county of Dorset (in particular the areas of Bridport, Dorchester and the Blackmore Vale).

d) Background

Dorset provides one of the earliest indications of cheese Manufacture in Great Britain. Impressions of baskets (used for separation of whey) have been found at Windmill Hill in Dorset. Dated 1800 BC, these indicated that cheese may have been made there well before Roman Times.

The word 'vinney' comes from the old english word for mould, 'vinew', which was used in the 17th century. The word later became part of the dialect in south west England, the area where Dorset is situated. In the 18th and 19th centuries the cheese was made from residual milk left after cream had been removed for sale or for butter making. Blue Vinney Cheese was produced as a quality alternative to the ubiquitous cheddar, providing an income from the speciality cheese and also a second income from the skimmed cream used to make butter.

There is a little documentary evidence for Dorset Blue Vinny, although it is well remembered by elderly locals and the recipe is printed in "Cheese making Practice" by R. Scott (1981).

e) Method of Production

Milk is collected from local farms adjacent to the cheese making dairy.

The milk is skimmed to give a milk fat of approximately 3%. At certain times of the year it is necessary to add skim milk powder to reach the required fat level.

Starter culture and rennet are added as the milk is filled into a vat. When the junket has reached the desired consistency it is cut

with vertical and horizontal knives and heated. While heating takes place the junket is stirred to float the curd in the whey. The curds and whey are kept constantly warm overnight.

The following morning the whey is drained, the curds are allowed to compact and are then cut into blocks. The blocks are piled double, turned every 20-30 minutes to release whey until the correct acidity levels are reached. The curd is broken up by hand, salted, filled into moulds and lightly pressed for 4 hours then turned.

Four days later the moulds are knocked out and the sides of the cheese rubbed down to allow the mould coat to develop.

Dorset Blue Vinny is matured under temperature and humidity controlled conditions and are turned daily. At four weeks the cheeses are pierced repeatedly from side to side to break up the curd, to allow air to enter the cheese and activate the mould present in the curd which produces the characteristic blue veining.

The cheese is turned daily and left to ripen for a further 12 to 20 weeks.

f) Link with the Geographical Area

Traditionally produced farmhouse Dorset Blue Vinny Cheese is remembered by older residents of the area. Cream was traditionally made into butter or clotted, hence the need to produce a high value cheese from semi skimmed milk; the sale of fresh milk being very limited due to the low population level, lack of urban or city area, and poor transport links to the more heavily populated areas. The flavour of the cheese is due to the quality of the milk from cattle grazing on pastures of the Blackmore Vale which is renowned for dairying. Low lying permanent pasture on top of Oxford clay produces lush sward which contributes to the flavour of the milk.

g) Inspection Body

ADAS,
Quantock House
Paul Street
Taunton, Somerset TA1 3NX

h) Labelling

PROTECTED DESIGNATION OF ORIGIN

Justification for the criteria laid down in Article 1 Regulation (EEC) No 2037/92

a) authentic and unvarying local methods:

The cheese is made to a traditional and local recipe using skills learnt from families who used to make the cheese at the beginning of the century. All production of the cheese occurs at present on the one farm in Dorset.

b) the geographical area defined possesses characteristics which differ appreciably from those of neighbouring areas, and/or the characteristics of the product are different:

The quality of the milk used, the fact that the milk is skimmed, and the quality of the resulting product is influenced by the geographical factors already mentioned.



DORSET BLUE VINNY CHEESE

Geographical area:

The County of Dorset