EC REGULATION NO 2081/92 ON PROTECTION OF GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS AND DESIGNATIONS OF ORIGIN

APPLICATION FORM: Registration PDO Fast Track

1 Competent Authority

MAFF
Ergon House
c/o Nobel House
17 Smith Square
London SW1P 3JR

Contact: Mrs L Harkett
Tel: 071 238 6702
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2 Name of Foodstuff

West Country Farmhouse Cheddar

3 Type of Product

Class 1.3

4 Name of Applicant

Farmhouse Cheesemakers Limited (FCL).

5 Name and address of co-ordinator of this application

Mr David Johnson
Secretary
Farmhouse Cheesemakers Limited
23 Union Street
Wells
Somerset BA5 2PU

Tel: 0749 679279

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6 Details of Applicant

FCL is a co-operative registered under the Industrial and Provident Societies Acts whose members are dairy farmers who also produce West Country Farmhouse Cheddar on their farms. FCL was formed in 1981 from the membership of the Farmhouse Cheesemakers Federations (covering respectively Farmhouse Cheshire Cheese, Farmhouse Lancashire Cheese, Farmhouse Cheddar Cheese and Farmhouse Caerphilly) which were themselves formed between 1928 and 1932.

FCL has two divisions. One deals exclusively with the interests of the Farmhouse Lancashire and Cheshire cheese

makers (10 members all based in the counties of Cheshire, Shropshire and Lancashire). The other deals exclusively with the interests of the Farmhouse Cheddar makers in the West Country ie the counties of Dorset, Somerset, Devon and Cornwall (18 members).

All cheese made by members is sold to FCL who in turn have appointed a sole agent to market that product. In 1993, sales of West Country Farmhouse Cheddar by members of FCL amounted to some 12,000 tonnes, worth more than £66 million at retail selling prices. Most of this cheese was sold through retailers to the general public in the UK. Only limited volumes are exported.

The names and addresses of the 18 members are provided in Schedule 1. Indications are given as to which Members are also Directors of the Society.

Apart from the 18 Cheddar members of FCL, there are also a number of other farmhouse cheddar makers in the West Country. All of these were members of the Farmhouse Cheddar and Caerphilly Federation but now act independently in the marketing of their cheese. It is estimated that these other makers also produce somewhere in the region of 12,000 tonnes of cheese a year, most of which is Cheddar.

Should this application be successful, a number of these non members of FCL have already indicated that they would wish to use the EC designation. Subject to those makers agreeing to submit themselves to the proposed inspection and grading arrangements and to pay the normal fees involved, FCL would see this as a very positive development in improving the marketing of West Country Farmhouse Cheddar.

7 Product Specification

See Schedule 2

8 Evidence to demonstrate that the name has become established by usage

The variety "Cheddar" cheese is synonymous with the West Country. There is evidence to suggest that the variety was first made in the traditional cheese making County of Somerset, in the area of Cheddar, as far back as the 15 th century. At this time Cheddar cheese was made exclusively on farms throughout the region and was generally sold at local markets. It was claimed that the best Cheddar was always made in the area around Cheddar Gorge, hence the adoption of the name. Tradition has it that all the cheese made near the Gorge was actually stored within the caves that stretch under the Mendip Hills because conditions there were ideal for the correct maturation.

The reputation of the cheese spread and with the growth of milk production, factories were built to make Cheddar on a larger scale not just within the UK but also in countries of

the Commonwealth and the USA. Today the cheese is made throughout the world and Cheddar now describes the method of manufacture and the unique process of stacking and turning the curds designed to speed up the draining of the whey.

However, the traditions of Farmhouse Cheddar manufacture are still evident in the West Country and the product achieves wide recognition as a distinctive, full flavoured and mature Cheddar cheese made by traditional methods. The designation "West Country Farmhouse Cheddar" differentiates very clearly this Cheddar from that produced elsewhere in the UK by virtue of:

- its historical links with the original cheese producing area,
- the source of milk,
- the methods of manufacture,
- its maturity, and
- its distinctive taste.

Only Cheddar Cheese produced on farms within the County Boundaries (as defined in 1955) of the four Counties of Dorset, Devon, Somerset and Cornwall may carry this designation.

9 Undertaking

Subject to the entry of "West Country Farmhouse Cheddar" on the Community Register of Protected Designations of Origin and Protected Geographical Indications, we undertake to:

(i) produce West Country Farmhouse Cheddar in accordance with the registered product specification;

(ii) ensure that all West Country Farmhouse Cheddar makers wishing to use this designation will provide the authorised inspection body, during normal working hours, access to all units where the product, subject to Community Protected Designation of Origin, is produced, prepared and/or stored and access to all relevant records and supporting documentation.

It is expected that the inspection body will be the Milk Marketing Board or its successor Milk Marque Limited. This will be confirmed in due course.

(iii) Pay all appropriate charges relating to this scheme.

Signed on behalf of Farmhouse Cheesemakers Limited:

Name

Position

Date

SCHEDULE 2 PRODUCT SPECIFICATION

(As per Article 4 of Council Regulation EEC No 2081/92)

a Name Of Product - West Country Farmhouse Cheddar

b Description of Product - West Country Farmhouse Cheddar is made from cows' milk produced predominantly in the designated area, which may or may not have been pasteurised.

West Country Farmhouse Cheddar is only sold after it has been stored for at least 9 months.

West Country Farmhouse Cheddar may be produced in either a traditional cylinder shape (in varying sizes to suit the needs of different customers) or in a block form (again in varying sizes to suit the needs of different customers).

West Country Farmhouse Cheddar has the following characteristics:

Flavour : A nutty, full, rounded flavour with a hint of sharpness

Body : Internal - Firm with slightly open texture

External - Cylinders - Regular shape, free of cracks

- Blocks - Regular shape, free of cracks

Colour: Internal - uniform consistent creamy yellow colour

Fat : Minimum 48 % fat in dry matter

Moisture : Maximum moisture content - 39 %

Age : Matured for at least 9 months

c Definition of Geographical Area - West Country Farmhouse Cheddar may only be produced within the county boundaries of Dorset, Somerset, Devon and Cornwall as defined in 1955.

d Evidence that the product originates in the specified geographical area - As previously stated in Paragraph 8 of this application.

e Method of Production - All farms making West Country Farmhouse Cheddar will use the same basic recipe but there will be slight variations in product between farms depending on the techniques used and the source of their milk.

Fresh cows' milk is collected regularly (and normally on a daily basis) from the farm(s) of the Farmhouse Cheddar Maker

(in fact some 50 % of all milk comes from the members' own farms) and where required from other farms. At most times of the year this milk will come from farms within the defined geographical area but there will be occasions when milk will be supplied from other parts of England eg to cover seasonal shortfalls in supplies.

The milk may be standardised according to season particularly when the natural balance in the milk between fat and casein differs significantly from a ratio of 1:0.7. Milk is tested prior to use to determine its suitability for West Country Farmhouse Cheddar production.

If the maker produces West Country Farmhouse Cheddar from pasteurised milk, the milk will first be pasteurised. From here the process of manufacture is similar regardless of whether the milk is pasteurised or not.

The milk will be pumped into stainless steel vats and brought to the required temperature. Starter culture is then added to produce the acidity in the milk required during the early stages of cheese making. The starter is mixed into the milk before rennet (natural animal rennet or vegetable rennet) is added to coagulate the milk.

After the milk has been allowed to coagulate to form a junket the curds are cut either by hand or by knives attached to paddles in the cheese vat. This process causes the junket to divide between the curds and whey which are then scalded at a temperature of around 103 to 106^{o}F. This scalding process involves constant heating and stirring until the desired level of acidity is reached and the whey is extracted from the curds.

Throughout this process it is the skill of the cheesemaker which determines the correct balance between time, temperature and acidity necessary to make West Country Farmhouse Cheddar.

When the scalding process is complete the curds and the whey have to be separated. This is done either in the cheese vat or on a cooling table. Surplus whey is allowed to drain off through wire strainers which prevents the loss of valuable curd. During this separation process the curds have to be pulled back from the centre to allow a channel to be formed for effective drainage of the whey. The curds are then allowed to cool whence they are cut into large rectangular pieces ready for "cheddaring".

The "cheddaring" of the curds is a technique unique to the manufacture of Cheddar cheese. It is a labour intensive process which is still done by hand in the manufacture of West Country Farmhouse Cheddar. The rectangular pieces of curd are turned and stacked by hand on top of each other along the side of the vat or cooling table so assisting the drainage of whey from the curd. This continues until the

correct level of acidity is reached at which stage the curds are ready for milling.

Milling involves cutting the curd into small cubes after which it is salted and mixed thoroughly.

The salted curds are then put into moulds the shape and size of which will vary between different West Country Farmhouse Cheddar makers. Cylindrical moulds are still used by some makers. Most makers will use rectangular moulds since blocks are better suited to the needs of supermarkets who sell most of their cheese in a pre packed form.

The cheese is pressed within the moulds to remove any excess moisture; each maker will vary the length of time for pressing and the pressure applied according to the cheesemaker's preference. Some makers will then scald the cheeses by bathing them in hot water so as to seal them before returning them to the presses for a final pressing.

The process for wrapping West Country Farmhouse Cheddar after pressing may differ between cylinders and blocks.

In the case of cylinders, the cheeses are sealed either by bandaging them in muslin cloth that has been dipped in melted lard or a suitable natural fat or oil or by smearing this onto the outside of the cheese which is then bandaged. This bandaging helps form a hard rind on the cheese during maturation so allowing the cheese to breath, yet preventing mould penetration. This bandaging is removed prior to sale.

The cylindrical cheeses are placed in temperature and humidity controlled stores and are turned regularly to ensure an even distribution of moisture loss.

In the case of rindless rectangular blocks, the cheeses are wrapped after pressing in a food grade semi permeable membrane and then packed in wooden slats or boxes for ripening and maturing. Wrapped in this way the cheese does not lose moisture during maturation and so the maker will tend to produce a drier curd than would be the case for a cylindrical cheese. Some cylindrical cheese is also packed in a similar way during the early stages of maturation before a rind is allowed to form.

Length of storage of both cylindrical and block West Country Farmhouse Cheddar will vary but it will be for a minimum of 9 months.

During the maturation process representative samples of cheeses produced from each vat will be graded at between 2 and 4 months of age to determine the development of the cheese. Cheese which is not expected to develop the necessary flavour characteristics associated with West Country Farmhouse Cheddar will be sold as standard Cheddar.

After the required maturation period, the Cheese will be reviewed and then selected according to the needs of individual customers.

(f) Link with Geographical Area

Although Cheddar is made throughout the world, there is undisputable evidence to show that Cheddar production originated on farms in the Cheddar area of Somerset. Production spread to farms in other parts of the West Country and descendants of those early producers are still involved in the manufacture of West Country Farmhouse Cheddar on their farms today. West Country Farmhouse Cheddar has a unique flavour and taste and is still produced according to the original method using the skills and traditions handed on in the area. There is no evidence to suggest Cheddar cheese produced outside of the defined area has ever been referred to as West Country Farmhouse Cheddar.

(g) Inspection Arrangements

Since its registration in 1955 usage of the MMB Certification Trade Mark - "Farmhouse Cheddar Cheese" - has been restricted to makers who meet certain key requirements, namely that:

- the cheese is made on the farm
- milk, all or part of which, must come from the maker's own cows
- the cheese is produced using in vat methods (rather than moving belt or cheddarmasters)
- the cheese is made by hand
- the cheese is subject to independent grading at between 2 to 4 months - only cheese which has the unique characteristics of Farmhouse Cheddar may use the mark
- cheese sold as Farmhouse Cheddar bearing the logo must be kept for at least 9 months.

The independent inspection of the cheese and the routine checking of the farmhouse cheesemaker's premises have been a regular feature of the verification process for true farmhouse Cheddar.

It is intended that these arrangements would continue. Although firm decisions have not been made by the MMB on the future involvement of its successor (Milk Marque Limited) in the grading of cheese, it would be FCL's preference for Milk Marque to continue the role undertaken by the MMB in the grading of cheese and the inspection of premises. Details of this will not be known until after this application has been filed. We undertake to inform the competent authority

in the UK of these arrangements as soon as is possible and before (and if) this application is approved.

(h) Labelling Details

Provided that the present application is approved, all West Country Farmhouse Cheddar cheese which meets the requirements of The Product Specification will be eligible to carry the European Community logotype as well as the designation West Country Farmhouse Cheddar in order to inform the public that the product has been granted a Protected Designation of Origin.

Since a large proportion of West Country Farmhouse Cheddar is subsequently pre-packaged into consumer portions or into quarters or other sizes, the above indications may also be used on those packs provided that:

- up to date records are maintained by the packer of the quantities of West Country Farmhouse Cheddar which have been delivered to the establishment and the quantities of West Country Farmhouse Cheddar that have been despatched from the establishment;

- these records are available for inspection by duly authorised persons.

In addition, manufacturers of processed foods may use the above indications provided that the foods in question actually contain West Country Farmhouse Cheddar which meets the aforementioned requirements. West Country Farmhouse Cheddar may have been processed in some way prior to its use for manufacture.

(i) Other Requirements

West Country Farmhouse Cheddar will be produced in conformance with all UK and EC Legislation relating to the manufacture of cheese.

January 1994

SCHEDULE 1 MEMBERS OF FARMHOUSE CHEESEMAKERS LIMITED - CHEDDAR DIVISION

1 Tony Austin
Bagborough Farms Limited
Bagborough Farm
Pylle
Nr Shepton Mallet
Somerset BA4 6SX

2 Brian Baker
F A W Baker's Kingston Farms Limited
Leaze Farm
Haselbury Plucknett
Crewkerne
Somerset TA18 7BJ

3 Simon Clapp
R L Clapp & Son (Cheesemakers) Ltd
West Town House
Baltonsborough
Glastonbury
Somerset BA6 8RH

4 Trevor Allen*
H W Clothier Milton Westcombe Farms Limited
Lower Westcombe Farm
Evercreech
Shepton Mallet
Somerset BA4 6ER

5 Graham Fry*
Cricket Malherbie Farms Limited
Estate Office
Nether Stowey
Bridgwater
Somerset TA5 1LL

6 Philip Crawford
Denhay Farms Limited
Denhay
Broadoak
Bridport
Dorset DT6 5NP

7 Fred Gould
E & J Gould & Sons
Batch Farm
East Pennard
Shepton Mallet
Somerset BA4 6IH

8 H & E J Grant Limited
Hamwood Farm
Trull
Taunton
Somerset TA3 7NH

9 John Green
H G Green Cheesemakers Limited
Newton Farm
West Pennard
Glastonbury
Somerset BA6 8NN

10 Stewart Baker
Hawkridge Farmhouse Cheese Ltd
Hawkridge Farm
Coldridge
Crediton
Devon EX17 6AR

11 Stephen and George Keen
Mrs D M Keen & Sons
Moorhayes Farm
Charlton Musgrove
Wincanton
Somerset BA9 8JR

12 Jon Longman*
J K Longman Limited
Ditcheat Hill Farm
Ditcheat
Shepton Mallet
Somerset BA4 6TL

13 Richard Longman*
W H Longman (Farmhouse Cheesemakers) Limited
North Leaze Farm
North Cadbury
Yeovil
Somerset BA22 7DW

14 Simon Barber*
Lovington Farmhouse Cheesemakers Limited
Brue Farm
Lovington
Castle Cary
Somerset BA22 7PS

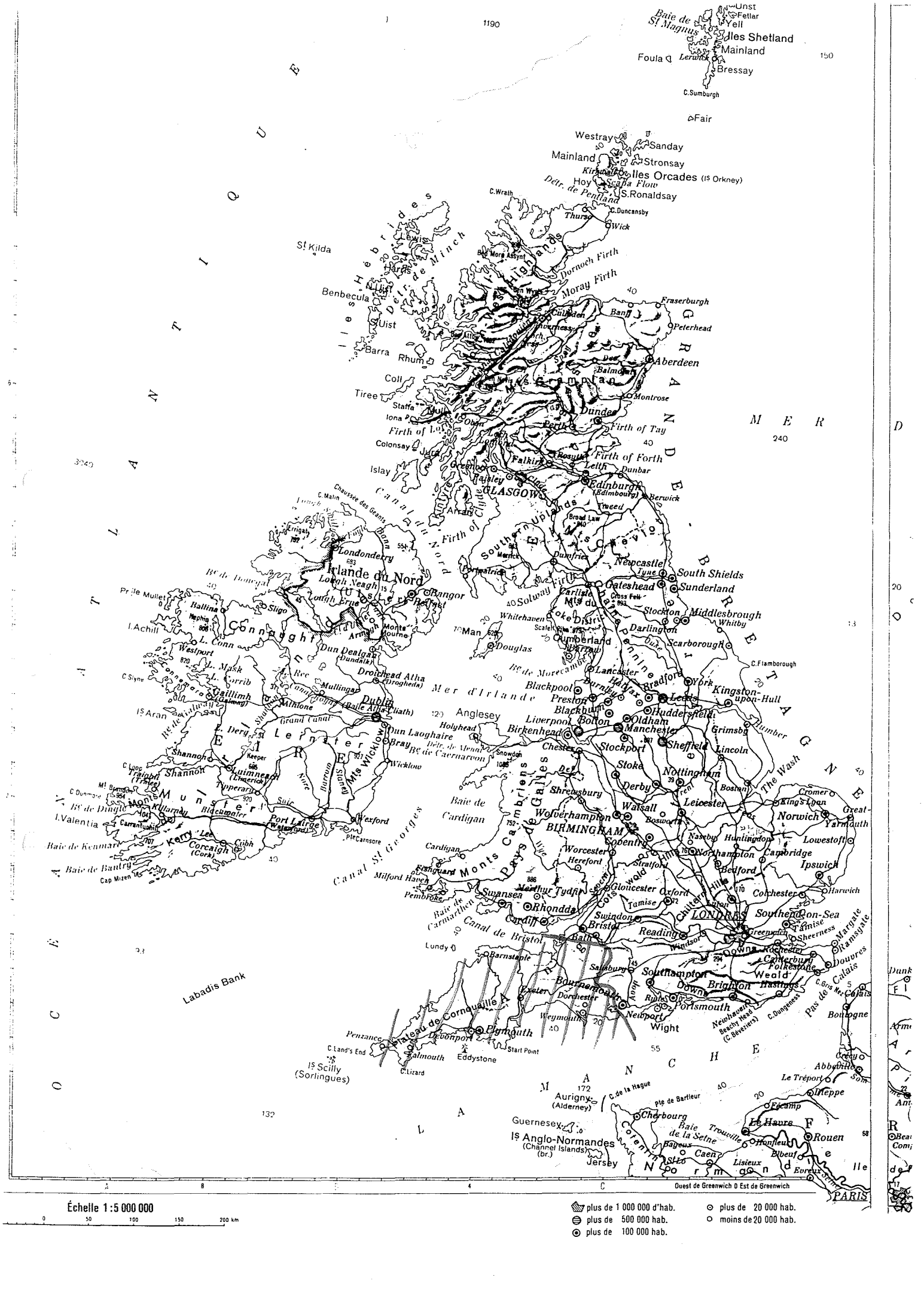
15 James Montgomery*
J A & E Montgomery Limited
North Cadbury Court
Yeovil
Somerset BA22 7DW

16 David Willes
Parkham Farms Limited
Higher Alminstone Farm
Woolsery
Bideford
Devon EX39 5PX

17 Morgan Saunders*
J J Saunders Limited
Old Down Farm
Emborough
Nr Bath
Somerset BA3 4SA

18 Nancy Ralphs*
A H Warren (Coombe Farm) Limited
Coombe Farm
Crewkerne
Somerset TA18 8RS

* Signifies Director of FCL


Échelle 1 : 5 000 000
0 50 100 150 200 km
plus de 1 000 000 d'hab.
plus de 500 000 hab.
plus de 100 000 hab.
plus de 20 000 hab.
moins de 20 000 hab.
Ouest de Greenwich
Est de Greenwich
OCEAN ATLANTIQUE
MER DU NORD
MER D'IRLANDE
MANCHE
Irlande du Nord
Connaught
Munster
Leinster
Ulster
Highlands
Southern Uplands
Pennine Chain
Pays de Galles
Cambrian Mts
Mts Grampian
Mts Wicklow
Mts Cheviot
Mts du Cumberland
Lake District
Chiltern Hills
Cotswold Hills
Weald
Downs
Fens
Wash
Broads
Canal Calédonien
Canal de Bristol
Canal St Georges
Canal du Nord
Canal de Manche
Baie de Cardigan
Baie de Carmarthen
Baie de Caernarvon
Baie de Morecambe
Baie de Dingle
Baie de Kenmare
Baie de Bantry
Baie de St Magnus
Détr. de Pentland
Détr. de Minch
Firth of Clyde
Firth of Lorn
Firth of Forth
Firth of Tay
Moray Firth
Dornoch Firth
Solway Firth
Scapa Flow
Lough Neagh
Lough Erne
Lough Corrib
Lough Derg
Lough Ree
Lough Mask
Lough Conn
Shannon
Liffey
Boyne
Barrow
Nore
Suir
Slaney
Foyle
Bann
Lagan
Tamise
Tyne
Tweed
Humber
Mersey
Severn
Trent
Dee
Ouse
Yare
Wye
Usk
Taff
Tamar
Exe
Avon
Stour
Medway
Thames
Clyde
Forth
Tay
Dee
Spey
Ness
Tummel
Garry
Tay
Orkney
Shetland
Mainland
Westray
Sanday
Stronsay
Hoy
S.Ronaldsay
Fair
Foula
Unst
Fetlar
Yell
Lerwick
Bressay
C.Sumburgh
C.Wrath
C.Duncansby
Thurso
Wick
St Kilda
Benbecula
S.Uist
Barra
Rhum
Coll
Tiree
Staffa
Iona
Colonsay
Islay
Jura
Arran
Gigha
Kintyre
Mull
Oban
Fraserburgh
Peterhead
Aberdeen
Banff
Inverness
Culloden
Balmoral
Montrose
Dundee
Perth
Falkirk
Rosyth
Leith
Dunbar
Edinburgh
(Edimbourg)
Berwick
GLASGOW
Paisley
Greenock
Ayr
Stranraer
Portpatrick
Dumfries
Carlisle
Gretna Green
Cross Fell
Broad Law
Tweed
Newcastle
Lyne
South Shields
Sunderland
Gateshead
Stockton
Middlesbrough
Whitby
Darlington
Scarborough
Whitehaven
Scafell Pike
Douglas
Man
Barrow
Morecambe
Lancaster
Blackpool
Preston
Blackburn
Burnley
Halifax
Bradford
York
Leeds
Kingston-upon-Hull
Huddersfield
Oldham
Manchester
Liverpool
Bolton
Birkenhead
Chester
Holyhead
Anglesey
Snowdon
Grimsby
Lincoln
Sheffield
Stockport
Stoke
Derby
Nottingham
Boston
Shrewsbury
Wolverhampton
Walsall
Leicester
BIRMINGHAM
Coventry
Worcester
Hereford
Stratford
Northampton
Bedford
Cambridge
Ipswich
Harwich
Colchester
Norwich
Great Yarmouth
Lowestoft
King's Lynn
Cromer
Hunlingdon
Nasebu
Bosworth
Gloucester
Oxford
Swindon
Bristol
Bath
Cardiff
Swansea
Rhondda
Milford Haven
Fishguard
Pembroke
Aberystwyth
Cardigan
Barnstaple
Lundy
Reading
Windsor
LONDRES
Greenwich
Southend-on-Sea
Sheerness
Margate
Ramsgate
Canterbury
Rochester
Folkestone
Douvres
Calais
Pas de Calais
Boulogne
Le Tréport
Abbeville
Dieppe
Fécamp
Le Havre
Rouen
Honfleur
Trouville
Cherbourg
Baie de la Seine
Bayeux
Caen
Lisieux
Bernay
Evreux
Seine
PARIS
Jersey
Guernesey
Is Anglo-Normandes
(Channel Islands)
(br.)
Aurigny
(Alderney)
C.de la Hague
Ple de Barfleur
Corentin
Normandie
Ile de France
Picardie
Is Scilly
(Sorlingues)
Land's End
Lizard
Penzance
Falmouth
Eddystone
Start Point
Plymouth
Devonport
Plateau de Cornouaille
Exeter
Dorchester
Weymouth
Bournemouth
Salisbury
Southampton
Portsmouth
Brighton
Hastings
Newhaven
Beachy Head
(C.Béveziers)
C.Dungeness
Newport
Wight
Labadis Bank
Cap Mizen
Carrantuohill
Killarney
Kerry
Corcaigh
(Cork)
Cobh
Youghal
Port Lairge
(Waterford)
Wexford
Arklow
Wicklow
Bray
Dun Laoghaire
Howth
Dublin
(Baile Atha Cliath)
Drogheda
Dundalk
Dun Dealgan
Mullingar
Athlone
Grand Canal
Tullamore
Kilbeggan
Shannon
Limerick
Tipperary
Keeper
Slieve Bloom Mts
Galway
Gaillimh
Westport
Ballina
Sligo
Nephin
Achill
Pride Mullet
Londonderry
Derry
Belfast
Bangor
Armagh
Monaghan
Enniskillen
Omagh
Erne
Foyle
Bann
Lagan
Chaussée des Géants
C.Malin
Erriga
Benbecula
Is Aran
C.Slyne
C.Loop
C.Dunmore
Ile Valentia
Ile Bull
Ile Fastnet
Ile Calf
Ile Cow
Ile Clear
Ile Saltee
Ile Lambay
Ile Man
Ile Anglesey
Ile Wight
Ile Portland
Ile Lundy
Ile Scilly
Ile Jersey
Ile Guernesey
Ile Aurigny
Ile Sein
Ile Ouessant
Ile Molène
Ile Batz
Ile de Bréhat
Ile de Noirmoutier
Ile d'Yeu
Ile de Ré
Ile d'Oléron
Ile d'Aix
Ile d'Oie
Ile de Groix
Ile de Belle
Ile de Sein
Ile de Molène
Ile de Batz
Ile de Bréhat
Ile de Noirmoutier
Ile d'Yeu
Ile de Ré
Ile d'Oléron
Ile d'Aix
Ile d'Oie
Ile de Groix
Ile de Belle



WEST COUNTRY FARMHOUSE CHEDDAR

Geographical area :

Cornwall

Somerset (incl Avon)

Dorset

Devon

~~**Avon**~~

WEST COUNTRY FARMHOUSE CHEDDAR

1. Justification of the link between the product concerned and the defined geographical area as referred to in Article 2(2) (a). Additionally that the quality and characteristics "are essentially due to a particular geographical environment"

The West Country is an area renowned for its dairying and milk production. This reputation rests on excellent pasturage arising from a uniform and relatively heavy rainfall, a temperate climate and distinctive soil types. These are predominantly clay with a loam base with influences from the limestone in the surrounding hills and peat from the moor areas. It is characteristically a brown soil.

Cheesemaking in the area is of ancient origin and the making of a long life stable cheese is intrinsically linked with production and storage in the Cheddar area. The cheesemaking skills involved spread from that area throughout the West Country many generations ago and the inherent skills have passed down from generation to generation.

2. Derogation in Article 2(4) of Regulation (EEC) No 2081/92. The raw materials of the products concerned come from a geographical area larger than or different from the processing area.

The milk used in the manufacture of the cheese comes from cows grazed within the defined area of Somerset, Dorset, Devon and Cornwall. The source of milk to individual producers is varied, and this combined with the subtle skills of the individual master cheesemaker and the microclimate of each dairy produces a distinctive subtle flavouring for each producer. Following the implementation of EC quotas, the consequent rigidity and decline in supply of milk has made it necessary to bring in milk from outside the designated area **at times of shortage in order to** continue production of the cheese at this time. Milk **at this time is from the** bordering counties **of Gloucestershire and Wiltshire.**

The skill of the individual cheesemaker is to identify the milk best suited for cheesemaking and, if necessary, to blend the milk to produce one that is comparable to the ideal one.