

**Application for approval of a minor amendment in accordance with  
the second subparagraph of Article 53(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012  
The European Commission has approved this minor amendment  
in accordance with the third subparagraph of Article 6(2)  
of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 664/2014 of 18 December 2013.**

# APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF A MINOR AMENDMENT

Application for approval of a minor amendment in accordance with the second subparagraph of Article 53(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012

**‘Carne de Cantabria’**

**EU No: PGI-ES-0185-AM01 – 16.08.2021**

PDO ( )      PGI (X)      TSG ( )

## 1. APPLICANT GROUP AND LEGITIMATE INTEREST

ODECA (*Oficina de Calidad Alimentaria* - Office for Food Quality), an autonomous body attached to the Regional Ministry for Rural Development, Livestock Farming, Fisheries, Food and Environment and tasked with exercising the competencies of the Autonomous Community of Cantabria in the area of designations of origin, in accordance with the requests received from the Producer Organisations and Groups included in Annex I to this application for an amendment.

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Cantabrian Law 3/2000 of 24 July 2000 creating the Autonomous Body of the Office for Food Quality (ODECA) sets out that its functions include collaborating with, promoting or carrying out studies to enhance the processes for eco-friendly or organic products, including those that are protected by designations of origin or other designations.

As the body which coordinates the operators participating in the differentiated quality schemes, it represents them by compiling their applications for amendments to product specifications for processing.

Producer groups and associations that have submitted the application for amendment of the product specification:

- *Federación de Agrupaciones de razas cárnicas de Cantabria* [Federation of cattle breeding groups in Cantabria]

## 2. MEMBER STATE OR THIRD COUNTRY

Spain

## 3. HEADING IN THE PRODUCT SPECIFICATION AFFECTED BY THE AMENDMENT(S)

- ☒ Description of product
- ☒ Proof of origin
- ☒ Method of production

- ☐ Link
- ☒ Labelling
- ☒ Other
  - Control body
  - Legislative requirements
  - Verification of compliance with the product specification

#### 4. TYPE OF AMENDMENT(S)

- ☐ Amendment to the product specification of a registered PDO or PGI to be qualified as minor in accordance with the third subparagraph of Article 53(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 and requiring no amendment to the published single document.
- ☐ Amendment to the product specification of a registered PDO or PGI to be qualified as minor in accordance with the third subparagraph of Article 53(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 and requiring an amendment to the published single document.
- ☒ Amendment to the product specification of a registered PDO or PGI to be qualified as minor in accordance with the third subparagraph of Article 53(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012, for which a single document (or equivalent) has not been published.
- ☐ Amendment to the product specification of a registered TSG to be qualified as minor in accordance with the fourth subparagraph of Article 53(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012.

#### 5. AMENDMENT(S)

##### **Introduction**

The application for amendment submitted is considered to be minor, i.e. it does not affect essential elements because, in accordance with the guidance issued by Unit B.3 at DG AGRI:

- It does not affect the name of the PGI
- It does not change the geographical area
- It does not change the characteristics, specificities or qualities of the product
- It does not affect the nature of the link between the product and the territory
- It does not amount to a restriction or limitation

The above applies even though the amendment concerns the description of the product, because the description of the breeds is included in that section of the current version of the specification, the wording of which needs to be amended. However, it does not affect the characteristics of the end product, i.e. the meat.

The first paragraph of the section on the link between the product and the territory in the current version of the specification states:

***‘The livestock management system and the feed regime, which is based on pasture during the growing season and preserved fodder mostly from natural grassland in winter, are the elements that determine the characteristics of the product.’***

On the other hand, the initial application for this PGI ‘Carne de Cantabria’ to be protected (October 2001) was backed up by a ‘survey on the reputation of ‘Carne de Cantabria’ conducted with consumers, which indicates that the application was not based on the breeds or on securing protection for the breeds, but rather on the characteristics of the meat obtained in accordance with the livestock management system and feed regime described, which is not being changed.

## 5.1. *Description of product*

### **5.1.1. Breeds**

The current wording

*‘Beef produced on the basis of the traditional feed regime and livestock management system in Cantabria. [...] Tudanca, Monchina and Asturian; Highland Brown absorbed into this stock and the Limousin breed, adapted to the local environment, and crosses thereof.’*

has been changed to:

*‘Beef produced on the basis of the traditional feed and livestock management techniques in Cantabria. [...] Tudanca, Monchina and Asturian; as well as the breeds Parda de Montaña, Limousin, Pirenaica, Charolais, Blonde d’Aquitaine, Fleckvieh and crosses thereof.’*

Grounds: The amendment requests that the breeds **Pirenaica, Charolais, Blonde d’Aquitaine and Fleckvieh** be included and that the reference to the Highland Brown breed be changed to ***Parda de Montaña***.

The reason for this amendment is to clarify the reference to the breeds in the current version of the specification. The current version states as follows in the section on the link:

*Over time, breeds have been introduced to enhance beef production by increasing the yield of the native cattle. One of the best accepted of these was the Limousin breed, because of its influence on live weight and how it has adapted to the geographical environment.*

However, there is no mention of which breeds have been introduced, apart from Limousin. The reason for this is that at the time that the PGI was being approved, only the breeds with the highest yield managed by the producer group applying for the PGI to be protected were included. However, the breeds now being added to the description have been bred in Cantabria long before the publication of the current version of the specification. They are part of the traditional livestock herds and have gradually become more significant in terms of the volume of meat produced, with the result that the producer organisations have been finding it difficult to manage the breeds already included in the specification separately from the others that are being farmed.

In the specific case of the reference to the Highland Brown breed included in the current version of the specification, this is being replaced by the name currently recognised in the herd book for the breed as *Parda de Montaña*.

As regards the other breeds included, we can vouch for their presence in Cantabria on the basis of the information set out in the Official Catalogue of Cattle Breeds in Spain, available from the Spanish Federation of Select Cattle Breeder Associations (<https://feagas.com/razas/bovino/>). The breeds **Pirenaica**, **Charolais**, **Blonde d'Aquitaine** and **Fleckvieh** are included in this catalogue and considered by the authorities to have **settled breed** status.

This catalogue proves that they are all traditional in Cantabria:

- **Pirenaica**: of Spanish and French origin, this breed has long been included in the catalogue.
- **Charolais**: included in the catalogue of settled breeds in 1962.
- **Blonde d'Aquitaine**: Included in the catalogue of settled breeds in the early 1970s.
- **Fleckvieh**: included in the catalogue of settled breeds in 1960.

The fact that new operators have joined the PGI means it is necessary to request that these breeds be included, in order to clarify the conditions for production and subsequent checks, so that the breeds that have traditionally been part of the agricultural system in Cantabria are not excluded from the scope of the PGI.

In all cases, the beef produced in Cantabria shares the same livestock management and production system and feed regime, based on the natural pastureland that makes up the landscape of the region. This is what sets its meat apart from that of animals that do not graze at any stage of their lives. It is this livestock system and feed regime, rather than the specific characteristics or the hardiness of the breeds, which are essential in differentiating the PGI, as stated in the section on the link between the product and the territory.

Analysis of the studies and bibliography carried out (enclosed) confirm that the product obtained from the breeds already acknowledged in the current version of the specification and that which is obtained from the breeds now being added in this application is equivalent. The conclusion is that the production system that is characteristic for 'Carne de Cantabria' has a decisive influence on the organoleptic properties of the meat, on the basis of the fat composition, fat cover and colour, which means that the product placed on the market is homogeneous.

A study carried out by one of the most highly specialised centres of research into livestock production and the characteristics and consumer assessment of the meat and products obtained from same, i.e. the Department of Animal Production and Food Science attached to the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Zaragoza, confirms as follows:

- In terms of fat conformation and cover, the Pirenaica breed would meet the characteristics set out in the specification for the 'Carne de Cantabria' PGI. Its sensory qualities do not differ from the Limousin breed, already included in the current version of the specification.
- For the Charolais breed, no differences were observed between animals of the Charolais and Limousin breeds as regards carcass characteristics, including

subcutaneous fat or the amount of intramuscular fat. There were also no differences in the amount of total or insoluble collagen, which means there was no difference in instrumental toughness between the two breeds. In view of the above, there were no sensory differences in terms of tenderness, juiciness, intensity of flavour or preferences between the meat of the two breeds.

- As regards the Blonde d'Aquitaine breed, although there are fewer comparative studies for this breed than for those analysed above, there are minimal or no differences between meat taken from the loin of young bulls of the Blonde d'Aquitaine and Limousin breeds, in terms of ultimate pH, the amount of total and insoluble collagen (the latter has a very significant impact on the texture of the meat and how tough it is perceived to be in sensory terms), enzymatic activity or the quantity of intramuscular fat. This means that there are no differences in sensory terms as regards the tenderness, flavour and general palatability of the meat of these two breeds.

- In the Fleckvieh breed, it has been confirmed that steers aged under 2 years of age that have been finished in a semi-intensive regime with maize silage, grass silage and concentrate feed, and slaughtered at the same stage of fattening, show no differences from the Simmental breed (as the Fleckvieh breed is also known in Europe) and the Limousin breed, as regards the characteristics of the carcass, including subcutaneous fat or the quantity of intramuscular fat. Their degree of palatability is therefore equivalent.

The amendment should be qualified as minor because it does not in any way affect the link between the product and the territory or entail any change to the product covered by the PGI. Neither does it entail an amendment to any of the items listed in Article 53(2) of Regulation (EU) 1151/2012.

It is also important to state and highlight that the current version of the specification did not at any point consider the hardy native breeds to be exclusive in terms of the link between the product and the territory.

#### **Bibliography enclosed:**

- Technical report *Ampliación de las razas incluidas en el pliego de condiciones de la IGP 'Carne de Cantabria'* [Addition to the breeds included in the specification for the 'Carne de Cantabria' PGI] , drawn up by the Department of Animal Production and Food Science attached to the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Zaragoza.

- <https://www.mapa.gob.es/es/ganaderia/temas/zootecnia/razasganaderas/razas/catalogo-razas/default.aspx>

- <https://feagas.com/razas/bovino/>

Due to the amendment of the current EU legislation and clarification of the current wording, the following changes must be made: Characteristics, carcass classification and characteristics of the meat.

### 5.1.2. Characteristics

#### Description and grounds:

Proposal for amendment to Section *E) Method of Production*, due to the need to adapt the identification and nomenclature of the product types to the **sales designation** that applies to beef depending on the category to which the animal belongs, which is established on the basis of its sex and age, in accordance with the applicable legislation, i.e. Royal Decree 1698/2003 of 12 December 2003 (as amended most recently on 7 December 2016) establishing the provisions of the EU Regulations which apply to the labelling system for beef (Regulation (EC) 1760/2000).

In the specific case of ‘**Ternera Blanca**’ and ‘**Vaca**’, it is not that new product types have been added; rather, these types were already included in the current version of the specification and must now be differentiated due to the need to specify the sales designations for the PGI in accordance with the applicable legislation.

In the case of ‘**Buey**’ and ‘**Vaca**’, EU legislation covers animals aged over 48 months and therefore the new version of the specification should cover the same range of animals, in accordance with the sales designations set out in the EU legislation.

The amendment should be qualified as minor because it does not in any way alter the product covered by the PGI or its essential characteristics or authenticity, as may be verified in the characteristics of the product and the description of the method of production.

### 5.1.3. Carcass classification

#### Description and grounds:

The sales designations **Ternera Blanca** (within the sales designation Ternera) and **Vaca** (within the sales designation Buey) are being specified in accordance with the proposal for amendment to point 5.1.2.. The provisions on fat conformation and cover already defined in the current version of the specification remain unchanged. Therefore this does not involve new products being added. The amendment is rather in response to the need to specify the sales designations for the PGI in accordance with the applicable legislation (Royal Decree 1698/2003 of 12 December 2003 establishing the provisions of the EU Regulations which apply to the labelling system for beef (as amended most recently on 7 December 2016)).

The amendment should be qualified as minor because it does not in any way alter the product covered by the PGI or its essential characteristics or authenticity.

#### **5.1.4. Characteristics of the meat**

##### Description and grounds:

With a view to clarifying and specifying the point at which the product covered by the PGI is defined, it is explained that the characteristics of the meat, which remain unchanged, are as described, after slaughter and dressing.

The sales designations *Ternera Blanca* and *Vaca* are also included in accordance with the proposal for amendment to point 5.1.2.. Once again, it is not that new products are being added. This amendment is rather in response to the need to specify the sales designations for the PGI in accordance with the applicable legislation (Royal Decree 1698/2003 of 12 December 2003 establishing the provisions of the EU Regulations which apply to the labelling system for beef (as amended most recently on 7 December 2016)).

The amendment should be qualified as minor because it does not in any way alter the essential characteristics or authenticity of the product covered by the PGI.

#### **5.2. *Proof that the product originated in the area***

##### Description and grounds:

Paragraphs affected by the application for amendment: first, second, third, fourth, sixth, seventh, ninth, tenth and eleventh.

The proposed amendment consists of a change to the inspection and control systems required in the specification for the PGI and a request that the inspection duties of the Regulatory Board be amended. These control activities have been defined by the competent authority in accordance with Law 3/2000 of 24 July 2000, creating the Autonomous Body of the Office for Food Quality (ODECA).

It is proposed to delete the reference to registration with the Regulatory Board in order to adapt the inspection and control system in accordance with the applicable legislation, and the inspection duties not associated to the Regulatory Board, which is understood to be the managing body.

It is proposed that the terminology used throughout the legislative document be unified in accordance with the checks carried out by ODECA.

It is proposed to delete the reference to the labels/ secondary labels being sent by the control body, as this procedure does not correspond to what is actually done by ODECA.

The amendments should be qualified as minor because they have no impact on the product characteristics; they merely clarify the control activities.



### 5.3. *Method of production*

#### Description and grounds:

Current paragraphs affected by the application for amendment: first, seventh, eighth, thirteenth, sixteenth, seventeenth, eighteenth and twenty-fourth.

The livestock production activities are identified and differentiated, as are the subsequent processing activities (understood to mean slaughter, dressing and cutting), up to the shipment of the meat cuts covered by the PGI.

It is proposed that the breeds be adapted to the application for amendment submitted in point 5.1.1 of this application. The breeds proposed for inclusion in the PGI 'Carne de Cantabria' do not differ in terms of the quality characteristics of their carcass and meat, as described in the specification for the PGI, from the breeds already included in said PGI. There are very few or no differences between the carcasses and meat of the breeds Pirenaica, Charolais and Blonde d'Aquitaine and those of the breeds Asturiana de los Valles and Limousin, already included in the PGI, or between the Fleckvieh breed and the Limousin or Asturiana de la Montaña breeds, in accordance with the conclusions of the study carried out and enclosed with this application.

The types produced are adapted to bring them into alignment with the application for amendment submitted in point 5.1.2 of this document. It is not that new products are being added. This amendment is rather in response to the need to adapt and specify the sales designations for the PGI in accordance with the applicable legislation (Royal Decree 1698/2003 of 12 December 2003 establishing the provisions of the EU Regulations which apply to the labelling system for beef (as amended most recently on 7 December 2016)).

The reference to the maximum finishing period is included for all product types. Although it is assumed that this is only relevant for animals slaughtered at a later age, for which this reference had been included, it has been deemed opportune to include this reference for all types and all slaughter ages, given that they all already meet this requirement. The amendment consists of a clarification to prove that it is the livestock management and feed regime linked to grazing that add value and sets the PGI apart.

It is proposed that details of the slaughter age and maximum finishing period be clarified for each of the sales designation in the application for amendment of point 5.1.2 of this document, given the need to adapt the specification to the applicable legislation, i.e. Royal Decree 1698/2003 of 12 December 2003 establishing the provisions of the EU Regulations which apply to the labelling system for beef (as amended most recently on 7 December 2016). This practice is carried out for all product types despite only being specified for older animals in the current version of the specification. The amendment consists of a clarification to prove that it is the livestock management and feed regime linked to grazing that add value to the PGI.

It is proposed to delete the reference to registration with the Regulatory Board in the sixteenth and eighteenth paragraphs, in order to adapt the inspection and control system required by the specification for the PGI in accordance with the applicable legislation.

It is proposed that the seventeenth paragraph include the following reference, '***It must always be possible to link the carcass to the animal from which it was taken***', given the importance and need for traceability to be maintained at all times.

It is proposed to delete the sending of labels from the duties in the twenty-fourth paragraph of the current version, in order to adapt the procedure to what is actually done by ODECA.

The amendments should be qualified as minor because they do not in any way alter the product covered by the PGI or its essential characteristics or authenticity.

#### 5.4. *Control body*

##### Description and grounds:

It is proposed that the **wording be amended**, to adapt the inspection and control system required in the specification for the PGI in accordance with the applicable legislation, and in particular, with *Law 3/2000 of 24 July 2000, creating the Autonomous Body of the Office for Food Quality (ODECA)*.

It is proposed that the postcode be updated.

#### 5.5. *Labelling*

##### Description and grounds:

It is proposed that the identification systems be included in accordance with the applicable legislation, to ensure that the product is identified and referenced correctly.

Proposal for amendment to unify the terminology used throughout the legislative document and adapt it in accordance with the applicable legislation and the checks carried out by ODECA.

The amendments should be qualified as minor because they do not entail any change to the product characteristics; they merely clarify the labelling requirements.

#### 5.6. *Amendment of national legislative requirements*

##### Description and grounds:

It is proposed that references to repealed legislation be deleted and that a reference to the applicable legislation in force be included, i.e. *Law 3/2000 of 24 July 2000, creating the Autonomous Body of the Office for Food Quality (ODECA)*.