

Brussels, 10 December 2010

Background note: Quality package

What are the PDO-PGI scheme, the TSG scheme and the quality terms scheme?

Since 1992, the European Union has developed a scheme to identify and protect the names of quality agricultural products and foods as **PDO (Protected Designation of Origin)** for products with a strong link to the defined geographical area where they are produced or as **PGI (Protected Geographical Indication)** for agricultural products and foods linked to a geographical area where at least one production step has taken place. There are more than 950 names of agricultural products registered as PDO or PGI.

Traditional Specialities Guaranteed (TSG) emphasise the product's traditional composition and traditional mode of production. 30 names are currently registered as TSG. It is proposed in the Commission that 'traditional' means 'proven usage on the domestic market for at least 50 years (compared to 25 currently).

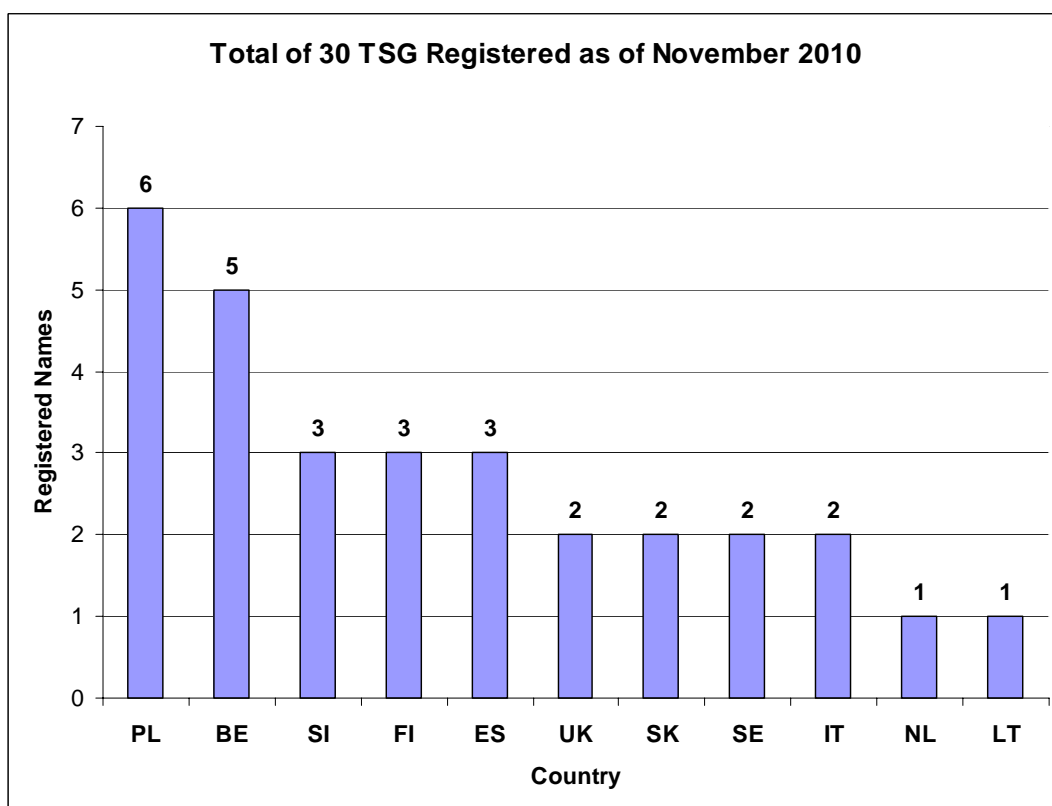
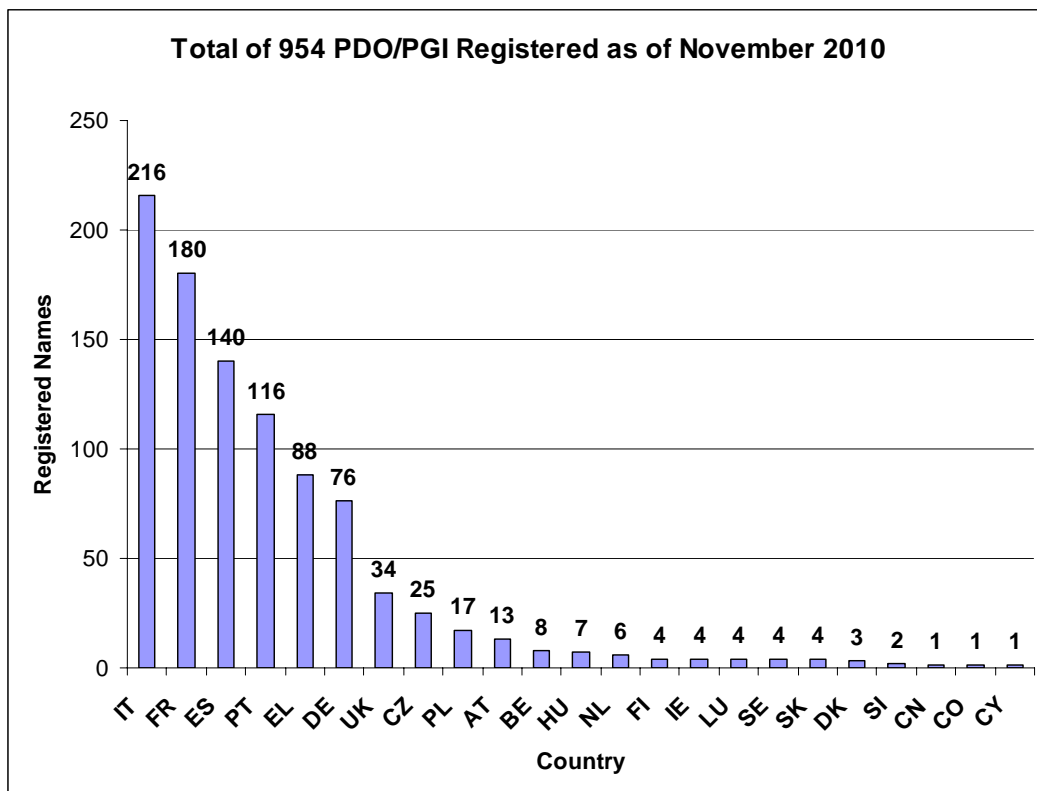
Optional quality terms inform consumers of value-adding attributes and characteristics of products. The term its conditions of use correspond to a strict definition laid down in the legislation. Only products that respect the definition may be labelled with the term. Existing terms include '*free range*' for chicken and '*first cold pressing*' for olive oil.

The quality scheme encourages the diversification of agricultural production, protect product names from misuse and imitation, and help consumers providing information on product characteristics and farming attributes.

For more information: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/quality/schemes/index_en.htm

Registered PDO, PGI and TSG in the European Union

The complete list of registered products (and pending applications) is available on DOOR: <http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/quality/door/list.html>

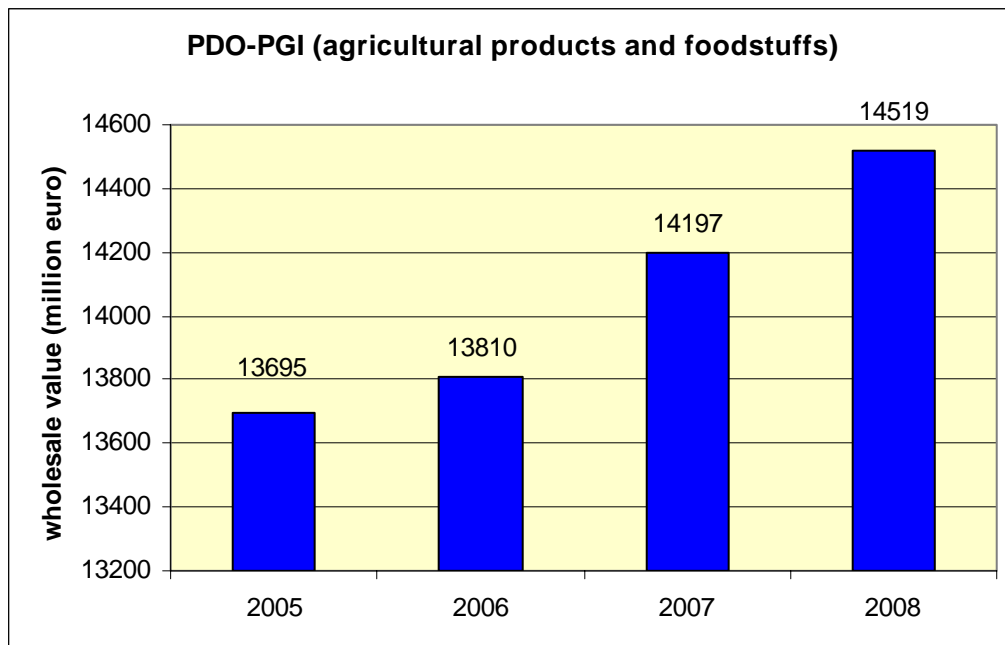


What is the value of production of PDOs and PGIs?

A study from the Commission showed that the PDO-PGI products had had a wholesale turnover of more than 14 billion euros in 2007: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/quality/schemes/newsletter-2010_en.pdf

<i>million euro</i>	2005	2006	2007	2008	<i>average</i>
cheese	5259	5258	5464	5625	5401
meat and meat products	3431	3411	3573	3731	3537
beer	2301	2407	2361	2366	2359
fruit and vegetables	770	764	900	870	826
bakery products	749	726	738	742	739
fish products	528	529	464	439	490
olive oil	204	220	198	228	213
other products	453	495	500	518	491
Total	13695	13810	14197	14519	14055

Wholesale value of agricultural products and foodstuffs (excluding wines and spirit drinks; includes beers and other beverages) sold under PDO and PGI designations



What are marketing standards?

Thanks to marketing standards products sold in the single market are of a given quality, in line with consumer expectations, and prices of products of equivalent quality can be easily compared. They are compulsory for most agricultural products (milk, products eggs, fruits and vegetables, olive oil, poultry, wine...) and they lay down product definitions and categories, minimum required characteristics and certain labelling requirements, such as place of farming.

What is the study on certification schemes about?

The aim of the project was to put in place an inventory of schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs which are marketed in the EU-27 and to describe the main parameters of these schemes.

The study shows 441 food quality schemes are operating in the EU. These schemes are increasingly used by retailers and farming groups to communicate to consumers about product characteristics and methods of production.

Many schemes are designed to promote a value-adding attribute specifically sought by a segment of consumers, such as integrated farming, product from a natural park or particular zone, environmental compliance, high animal welfare standards, use of particular ingredients or farming methods, etc. Other schemes give assurance to traders and retailers about the way in which standards and buyers' requirements have been met. The great majority (around 90%) of schemes operating in the EU are business-to-consumer (B2C), while nearly 10% operate at the business-to-business (B2B) level. Most of the B2C schemes use logos to communicate to consumers, while most of the latter (assurance schemes) are intended to communicate to the processor or retailer. The main product groups covered by the schemes are meat products, fruit and vegetables, and dairy products.

The study has been conducted in 2010 for the Commission by the consultant *Areté*. The Commission used the results as empirical background for the development of voluntary best practice guidelines for certification schemes.

Result of the study: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/quality/certification/index_en.htm