

Dairy
UK



PROVISION TRADE FEDERATION



**CODE OF PRACTICE ON COMPOSITIONAL
STANDARDS FOR UK NAMED VARIETY
CHEESES**

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Introduction

The dairy industry recognises the need for there to be a common understanding among consumers, manufacturers and retailers as to the nature of certain named variety cheeses, taking into account that, when the Food Labelling Regulations 1996 are revoked, there will no longer be specific legislation relating to product composition and labelling.

As a result, this Code has been drawn up Dairy UK and the Provision Trade Federation and will come into operation from the date the relevant provisions within the Food Labelling Regulations 1996 are revoked; i.e. on the 13th of December 2018.

The main provisions of this Code are to retain the compositional standards of some named variety cheeses set out in the Food Labelling Regulations 1996 and for the names of these cheeses to become customary, as defined in the EU Food Information to Consumers Regulation (EU 1169/2011).

This Code permits the variety name to be used for cheeses which have a modified composition so long as the name is qualified by other words describing the modification.

The provisions within this Code also apply to composite products as defined in Commission Decision 2007/275/EC, e.g. Wensleydale with apricots. These compositional standards only apply to the cheese component and do not take into account the composition of other ingredients.

The provisions of this Code do not in any way alter the law.

Definitions

“Cheese” means the fresh or matured product intended for sale for human consumption, which is obtained by the combining, by coagulation or by any technique involving coagulation, of any of the following substances, namely milk, cream, skimmed milk, partly skimmed milk, concentrated skimmed milk, reconstituted dried milk, butter milk, materials obtained from milk, other ingredients necessary for the manufacture of cheese provided that those are not used for replacing, in whole or in part, any milk constituent, with or without partially draining the whey resulting from coagulation.

The term “cheese” is protected by EU legislation - Regulation (EU) 1308/2013 - and can only be used for products derived exclusively from milk, on the understanding that substances necessary for their manufacture may be added provided that those substances are not used for the purpose of replacing, in whole or in part, any milk constituent.

All the cheeses described in this Code can be manufactured with milk from cows, goats or sheep.

Composition

Standard Milk Fat Levels

The name specified in the individual cheese variety table shall not be used in the labelling or advertising of any cheese as the name of the cheese, unless:

- a) the amount of water in the cheese expressed as a percentage of the total weight of the cheese does not exceed the percentage stated in the Maximum Moisture column expressed in the individual cheese variety table;
- b) the amount of milk fat in the cheese expressed as a percentage of the total weight of the cheese is in line with the parameters stated in the Minimum Fat and Maximum Fat columns expressed in the individual cheese variety table;
- c) the amount of milk fat in the cheese expressed as a percentage of Fat in Dry Matter (FDM), the dry matter of the cheese is in line with the parameters stated in the Minimum FDM and Maximum FDM columns expressed in the individual cheese variety table;
- d) the organoleptic properties of the cheese fall within the general characteristics of the cheese variety as detailed in the Characteristics section of the individual cheese variety table.

These tables have been developed using values included in former provisions contained in the Food Labelling Regulations 1996 (Annex 1). As such, the relevant cheese names listed in these provisions (when unqualified) are to be treated as customary names.

Modified Milk Fat Levels

For varieties where the milk fat content has been modified to be lower than that found in the standard cheese, the descriptors “reduced fat” and “half fat” along with the variety name can be utilised for labelling purposes as long as the moisture, milk fat and fat in dry matter meet the relevant criteria contained within the individual cheese variety table for the level of fat modification required (as detailed in a to c above). According to the Nutrition and Health Claims Regulation (EC 1924/2006), a claim stating that a food has “reduced fat” may only be made where the reduction in content is at least 30% compared to a similar product which is representative of the category.

Alternative descriptors to reduced fat and half fat with the variety name are also permitted.

If use is made of modified milk fat levels, the resultant cheese should exhibit as far as possible the characteristics traditionally associated with the named cheese in terms of flavour profile and texture as detailed in the Characteristics section of the individual cheese variety table.

Cheeses with fat contents lower than the half fat values are not permitted to use the variety name as with current technology their organoleptic qualities are not considered to be sufficiently close to those of the named variety.

Cheese Compositions and Characteristics by Variety

Cheddar Compositional Standards						
	Average fat (%)	Minimum fat (%)	Maximum fat (%)	Maximum moisture (%)	Minimum Fat in Dry Matter (FDM) (%)	Maximum FDM (%)
Standard	34.9	29.0	Not applicable	39	48	Not applicable
Reduced fat (@30%)	22.1	17.5	24.4	44.5	32	44
Half fat (@50%)	15.8	13.5	17.5	50	27	35
Cheddar Characteristics						
Colour: White to yellow.						
Texture: Generally waxy body which breaks down smoothly when kneaded between fingers. Some matured recipes may be flintier and may have small crystals of calcium lactate throughout or small crystals of tyrosine within the interior.						
Flavour: Clean, creamy and mellow at a young age with a more pronounced flavour at longer maturities. There are typically 4 dominant flavour profiles for more mature variants: farmy/earthy, meaty/savoury, sharp/tangy and sweet/nutty.						
May be manufactured and sold with or without rind which may be coated.						

Double Gloucester Compositional Standards						
	Average fat (%)	Minimum fat (%)	Maximum fat (%)	Maximum moisture (%)	Minimum FDM (%)	Maximum FDM (%)
Standard	35.0	27.0	Not applicable	44	48	Not applicable
Reduced fat (@30%)	Not available	17.5	24.5	49	34	47
Half fat (@50%)	Not available	13.0	17.5	55	29	38
Double Gloucester Characteristics						
Colour: Pale straw through to pale tangerine and orange.						
Texture: A close firm texture, some recipes may be flakier. Typically less firm than Cheddar.						
Flavour: A full clean and mellow flavour with a nutty character and slight tang with more pronounced flavours at longer maturities.						
May be manufactured and sold with or without rind which may be coated.						

Derby Compositional Standards						
	Average fat (%)	Minimum fat (%)	Maximum fat (%)	Maximum moisture (%)	Minimum Fat in Dry Matter (FDM) (%)	Maximum FDM (%)
Standard	33.9	28.0	Not applicable	42	48	Not applicable
Reduced fat (@30%)	Not available	17.0	23.7	47	32	45
Half fat (@50%)	Not available	13.0	17.0	53	28	36
Derby Characteristics						
Colour: Light yellow to pale honey.						
Texture: A close firm texture, can be slightly flaky. Typically less firm than Cheddar.						
Flavour: Clean, mild and buttery when young with a pronounced tang at full maturity.						
May be manufactured and sold with or without rind which may be coated.						

Cheshire Compositional Standards						
	Average fat (%)	Minimum fat (%)	Maximum fat (%)	Maximum moisture (%)	Minimum Fat in Dry Matter (FDM) (%)	Maximum FDM (%)
Standard	31.8	27.0	Not applicable	44	48	Not applicable
Reduced fat (@30%)	Not available	15.9	22.3	49	31	43
Half fat (@50%)	15.3	11.7	15.9	54	25	34
Cheshire Characteristics						
Colour: White to pale yellow.						
Texture: A firm and crumbly texture. Crumblier than Cheddar, becoming firmer as it matures.						
Flavour: Milky and slightly tangy when young, moving to rich, mellow and more rounded upon maturation.						
May be manufactured and sold with or without rind which may be coated.						

Caerphilly Compositional Standards						
	Average fat (%)	Minimum fat (%)	Maximum fat (%)	Maximum moisture (%)	Minimum Fat in Dry Matter (FDM) (%)	Maximum FDM (%)
Standard	31.3	26.0	Not applicable	46	48	Not applicable
Reduced fat (@30%)	Not available	15.7	21.9	51	32	45
Half fat (@50%)	Not available	11.7	15.7	56	27	36

Caerphilly Characteristics
Colour: White.
Texture: Semi-soft and flaky/crumbly.
Flavour: Clean, mild and slightly salty becoming more creamy, complex and rounded on maturation.
May be manufactured and sold with or without rind which may be coated.

Lancashire Compositional Standards						
	Average fat (%)	Minimum fat (%)	Maximum fat (%)	Maximum moisture (%)	Minimum Fat in Dry Matter (FDM) (%)	Maximum FDM (%)
Standard	31.7	25.0	Not applicable	48	48	Not applicable
Reduced fat (@30%)	22	15.9	22.2	53	34	46
Half fat (@50%)	Not available	11.5	15.9	58	27	37

Lancashire Characteristics
Colour: Crumbly Lancashire: bright white; Creamy and Tasty Lancashire: slightly yellow.
Texture: Crumbly Lancashire is crumbly, whilst Creamy and Tasty Lancashire has a semi-soft texture.
Flavour: Crumbly Lancashire has a clean, mild and slightly sharp flavour with a milky background; Creamy Lancashire has a slightly mellow flavour and creamy background with flavours becoming tangier as it ages to become Tasty Lancashire.
May be manufactured and sold with or without rind which may be coated.

Wensleydale Compositional Standards						
	Average fat (%)	Minimum fat (%)	Maximum fat (%)	Maximum moisture (%)	Minimum Fat in Dry Matter (FDM) (%)	Maximum FDM (%)
Standard	31.8	26	Not applicable	46	48	Not applicable
Reduced fat (@30%)	Not available	15.9	22.3	51	32	45
Half fat (@50%)	Not available	11.8	15.9	56	27	36

Wensleydale Characteristics
Colour: White.
Texture: Supple, crumbly and moist.
Flavour: Clean, mild and fresh with honeyed aftertaste and slight acidity when young. As it ages, the cheese develops more complex flavours.
May be manufactured and sold with or without rind which may be coated.

Leicester Compositional Standards						
	Average fat (%)	Minimum fat (%)	Maximum fat (%)	Maximum moisture (%)	Minimum Fat in Dry Matter (FDM) (%)	Maximum FDM (%)
Standard	33.6	28.0	Not applicable	42	48	Not applicable
Reduced fat (@30%)	Not available	16.8	23.5	47	32	45
Half fat (@50%)	Not available	12.9	16.8	53	27	36

Leicester Characteristics
Colour: White or bright orange/red to deep orange/red.
Texture: Generally loose textured, rather flaky. Some recipes can be closer textured.
Flavour: Clean, creamy, mellow and delicately sweet with slight nutty flavours which become more intense in more mature variants.
May be manufactured and sold with or without rind which may be coated.

Permitted Additives

The list of permitted additives (including colouring substances) can be accessed via the EU Database on Additives at

https://ec.europa.eu/food/safety/food_improvement_agents/additives/database_en

Declaration of Ingredients

A named variety of cheese, or a named variety of cheese qualified by other words, containing other ingredients (e.g. Caerphilly with apricots) can, as an alternative to a full list of ingredients, have a list headed "Ingredients" consisting of the named variety, or variety qualified by other words, and the other ingredients (e.g. Caerphilly, apricots).

Annex 1 - Relevant provisions in the Food Labelling Regulations 1996

The name specified in column 1 of Part II of Schedule 8 shall not be used in the labelling or advertising of any cheese as the name of the cheese, whether or not qualified by other words, unless—

(a) the amount of water in the cheese expressed as a percentage of the total weight of the cheese does not exceed the percentage stated in column 2 of Part II of Schedule 8 opposite that name, and

(b) the amount of milk fat in the cheese expressed as a percentage of the dry matter of the cheese is not less than 48 per cent.

Schedule 8 Part II

Column 1	Column 2
Variety of cheese	Maximum percentage of water
Cheddar	39
Derby	42
Leicester	42
Cheshire	44
Double Gloucester	44
Caerphilly	46
Wensleydale	46
Lancashire	48

Annex 2 - Relevant legislation

Food Labelling Regulations 1996 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukSI/1996/1499/contents/made>

Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2011 on the provision of food information to consumers <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32011R1169&from=EN>

2007/275/EC: Commission Decision of 17 April 2007 concerning lists of animals and products to be subject to controls at border inspection posts under Council Directives 91/496/EEC and 97/78/EC <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32007D0275&from=EN>

Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 establishing a common organisation of the markets in agricultural products <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32013R1308&from=EN>

Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 December 2006 on nutrition and health claims made on foods <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:02006R1924-20121129&from=EN>

Regulation (EC) No 1333/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 on food additives <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32008R1333&from=EN>