

Consorzio del Formaggio "Parmigiano Reggiano",

Sede: Via Kennedy, 18 - 42100 Reggio Emilia - Cod. fiscale P.IVA 00621790351
tel: + 39 (0)522 307741 – fax: 307748 – e-mail: staff@parmigiano-reggiano.it

PARMIGIANO-REGGIANO CHEESE PRODUCTION STANDARD

Semi-fat hard cheese obtained from cooked and slowly matured paste. It is made with cow's milk from animals whose feeding mainly consists of forage from the area of origin. The milk used is raw and cannot undergo any thermal treatments. The use of additives is strictly forbidden.

The milk from the evening milking and that from the morning milking is delivered to the dairy within two hours from the end of each milking. Milk can be cooled immediately after milking and kept at a temperature not below 18 °C.

The evening milk is partly skimmed by removing the cream naturally risen to the surface in open-top stainless steel basins. The morning milk, immediately after arriving at the dairy, is mixed with the partly skimmed milk from the previous evening. It may also be partially skimmed by removing the naturally risen cream.

A maximum of 15% of the morning milk may be kept for processing on the following day. In this case, the milk must be kept in the dairy in suitable refrigerated containers, equipped with special agitators and at a minimum temperature of 10°C, and poured into the resting basins in the evening of the same day.

Starter whey is then added to the milk. This is a natural starter culture of lactic ferments obtained from the spontaneous acidification of the whey remaining after the previous day's cheese processing.

The milk curdling takes place inside copper vats shaped like truncated cones with the exclusive use of calf rennet. After curdling, the curd is broken up into grains and cooked. These curd grains are then left to settle to the bottom of the vat in order to form a compact mass. The cheese mass is subsequently placed into special moulds for the moulding process.

After a few days, cheeses are salted in a bath of salt solution. Maturation must last at least 12 months starting from the cheese moulding. In summer, the temperature of maturation rooms must not be lower than 16°C.

Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese has the following features:

- cylinder shape with slightly convex to straight sides, upper and lower faces slightly chamfered;
- dimensions: diameter of upper and lower faces from 35 to 45 cm; side height from 20 to 26 cm;
- minimum wheel weight: 30 kg;
- external appearance: natural gold-coloured rind;
- paste colour: from pale straw-yellow to straw-yellow;
- typical aroma and taste of the mass: fragrant, delicate, tasty yet not sharp;
- paste texture: fine granules, breaks in brittles;
- rind thickness: approximately 6 mm;
- fat content: minimum 32% of dry matter

For anything that is not specified herein, the procedure sanctioned by local, fair and consistent usages shall be applied. Any changes shall be subject to the favourable outcome of experiments and studies assessed by the Consorzio del Parmigiano-Reggiano, which, if positive, may lead to an amendment of the Production Regulations.

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Production region: territory of the provinces of Parma, Reggio Emilia, Modena and Mantua on the right bank of the River Po and Bologna on the left bank of the River Reno.