

**Requests for clarifications to the application for PDO status  
for the product name/terms:  
'Ġbejna tan-nagħaġ' / 'Ġbejniet tan-nagħaġ'**

Requests for clarifications received as of today, 16<sup>th</sup> June 2022 are copied below. They have been paraphrased for clarity and transparency. Replies are indicated in red text.

1. If the application is approved and given the go-ahead by the authority, will we still be able to use the word (product name) 'ġbejna' or 'ġbejniet' without the PDO logo?

Yes, as only the product names / terms: 'ġbejna tan-nagħaġ' / 'ġbejniet tan-nagħaġ' are being submitted for protection.

2. Can we use pasteurized milk for products with the product name 'ġbejna' / 'ġbejniet'?

Yes, as only the product names / terms: 'ġbejna tan-nagħaġ' / 'ġbejniet tan-nagħaġ' will be under protection and will be required to adhere to the imposed relevant quality criteria and applicable processing method.

3. '**Ġbejna tan-nagħaġ friska**' does not have a parameter for 'Total Solids' content and does not have a pH range? [It is not indicated in the Single Document or the Product Specification.] Please confirm the 'Total Solid' content and pH range for '*ġbejna tan-nagħaġ friska*'.

The 'Total Solids' content is 61-76% and the pH range is between 4.9 and 5.5.

4. '**Ġbejna tan-nagħaġ friska**' – Can you please clarify whether the quality parameters 'Total Protein' content and 'Total Fat' content mentioned in the product specifications, are values expressed in 'dry matter'?

Yes, the values given are on a dry matter basis.

5. '**Ġbejna tan-nagħaġ niexfa**' – Can you please clarify whether the 'Total Solid' content, 'Total Protein' content and 'Total Fat' content mentioned in the product specifications, are values expressed in 'dry matter'?

Yes, the values given are on a dry matter basis.

6. '**Ġbejna tan-nagħaġ tal bżar**' – Can you please clarify whether the 'Total Solid' content, 'Total Protein' content and 'Total Fat' content mentioned in the product specifications, are values expressed in 'dry matter'?

Yes, the values given are on a dry matter basis.

7. '**Ġbejna tan-nagħaġ tal bżar**' – Can you please outline why there is a difference in the weight between the value of the '*ġbejna tan-nagħaġ niexfa*' (30g – 100g) and '*ġbejna tan-nagħaġ tal-bżar*' (30g - 65g)?

The processing method used for the two products is distinct and there is a different and additional step to the latter product. The former is air-dried and must be consumed within six weeks, whereas the latter is first air-dried then further processed by being pickled in vinegar and freshly ground pepper. Vinegar acts as a desiccant which effectively dries out the *ġbejna tan-nagħaġ* by removing the water. Hence the net weight is reduced and this is reflected in the final product weight having a narrower weight range.

8. Can you please definitively confirm the value stated as the yield per litre of sheep milk given in the product specification?

1 kg of *ġbejniet tan-nagħaġ* at 24-hour drip are produced from 6.8 to 8 litres of sheep milk depending on the season and the diet. This works out as 125 to 147 grams of *ġbejniet tan-nagħaġ* (i.e. 0.125kg to 0.147kg of *ġbejniet tan-nagħaġ*) at 24-hour drip per litre of sheep milk."

9. Can you please clarify whether the 'band sticker' is being included in the description as a 'seal of integrity' for the packaging and therefore that the revised application will allow for other forms of tamper-proof sealing?

Yes, to both parts of the question, in fact the nutritional value sticker is already being used as a tamper-proof seal.

10. Can you please clarify whether a plastic bag qualifies as a container under the packaging definition in Art. 5?

Yes, this can be negotiated further as producers should not be limited due to packaging and packaging equipment exigencies and this should not be an issue.

11. In Section 8 – Labelling rules, can you please outline why the label must be rectangular?

This can be negotiated further as producers should not be limited due to labelling and labelling equipment exigencies and this should not be an issue.

12. The raw milk quality parameters are the same (and the yield per litre of milk is the same) as in the previous application, however some quality parameters for the '*friska*' and '*niexfa*' and '*tal bżar*' varieties have been changed. Can Xirka please clarify as to why there are now the said changes in the quality parameters?

This was carried out to accommodate all forms of *ġbejniet tan-nagħaġ* produced from sheep milk.

13. With regard to the acceptable weights of the different varieties, the revised application has a wider range tolerance as compared to the previous application. The variety '*friska*' from the range of **65-80g** has been increased to **65-110g** and for '*niexfa*' variety from a weight range of **30-50g** to **30-100g** and for '*tal-bżar*' from a weight range of **30-50g** to **30-65g**. Can this change be clarified?

This was done to accommodate the larger moulds used in the island of Gozo.