

# PARMIGIANO REGGIANO GUIDELINES

[www.parmigianoreggiano.com](http://www.parmigianoreggiano.com)

**PARMIGIANO  
REGGIANO**

## GUIDELINES FOR POINT OF SALE STAFF<sup>1</sup>

## “PARMIGIANO REGGIANO” CHEESE

These guidelines, drawn up by the Consorzio del Formaggio Parmigiano Reggiano, have the purpose of giving some brief and useful information about Parmigiano Reggiano cheese, its characteristics and procedures at the point of sale.

The point of sale staff shall therefore be able to give consumers correct answers and suitable product information.

For additional information, please refer to the website [www.parmigianoreggiano.com](http://www.parmigianoreggiano.com)

Parmigiano Reggiano is a hard cheese, obtained from cooked and slowly matured paste, made from raw cow's milk, partially skimmed, produced by cows whose feed consists mainly of forage from the area of origin.

**AREA OF ORIGIN:** the milk and the cheese are produced in Italy in the defined geographical area which comprises the provinces of **Parma, Reggio Emilia, Modena, Mantua (on the right bank of the Po river) and Bologna (on the left bank of the Reno river)**, in compliance with strict standards.

Since 1996 the name Parmigiano Reggiano has been recognized in the European Union as a PDO (Protected Designation of Origin):

<sup>1</sup>The present guidelines should not be deemed to constitute a legally binding interpretation of the relevant legislation. Indeed, such an interpretation falls solely within the power/competence of the Courts. The responsibility of the compliance with the relevant legislation is of any operator. These guidelines may be amended.



EU PDO symbol

# PARMIGIANO REGGIANO

zona di produzione

*Parmigiano Reggiano*

Fatto a mano ogni giorno  
senza additivi né conservanti,  
da sempre.



Parmigiano Reggiano is made in compliance with a strict specification that provides for, among others, the following standards:

1

Dairy cows fed mainly with forage from the area of production (Silage is forbidden)

2

Milk, chees making process, and minimum aging (12 months) in the area of origin

3

Always only 3 ingredients: **milk, salt and calf rennet**

4

100% of the wheels checked by the Consorzio

## PARMIGIANO REGGIANO IN FIGURES:

Less than **3000** milk producers

More than **300** dairies

More than **3,700,000** wheels produced/year

**520** liters (137.6 gal) of milk to make one wheel

**40.5** kg (89.28 lb.) average weight of a wheel



# WHEEL OF “PARMIGIANO REGGIANO” CHEESE

## - How can we recognize it?

On every wheel of Parmigiano Reggiano the following identification elements are present:

- **CASEIN PLATE** that shows: alphanumeric code for full product traceability that identifies every single wheel; it is usually placed on the flat face of the wheel from birth.



Do you want to know who and when the wheel was made? Insert the alphanumeric code in the field “wheel code”([www.parmigianoreggiano.com/dairies/ext/CercaCaseifici](http://www.parmigianoreggiano.com/dairies/ext/CercaCaseifici)) and find out which dairy that produced that specific wheel and the birthday.



## SEARCH DAIRIES

Search by keyword

State  ▼

Local Area  ▼

Types of dairies

- Dairies with sale
- Dairies with e-commerce
- Dairies with a web site

WHEEL CODE



IDENTIFICATION



- ALL THE FOLLOWING MARKS:

The certification mark pin dot wording “Parmigiano Reggiano” placed on the side rind of each wheel.

The numeric code identifying the dairy: find out about the dairy that produced the wheel on [www.parmigianoreggiano.com/dairies/ext/CercaCaseifici](http://www.parmigianoreggiano.com/dairies/ext/CercaCaseifici)



Oval certification mark “Consorzio Tutela Parmigiano Reggiano” and the production year: all the wheels are carefully examined by Consorzio experts each year and only those that pass a detailed inspection with the traditional cheese “hammer” at 12 months, are given this symbol.

The approval number of the establishment is provided for by EU legislation laying down specific hygiene rules for food of animal origin.

Month (in Italian language) / year of production proving how old the cheese is!

Remember: starting from January 2016 each wheel features production month and year, as well as dairy numeric code 3 times.



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If a wheel is marked with parallel grooves around the side rind, it means that this wheel has been classified as “**Mezzano**” **Parmigiano Reggiano**, i.e. a Parmigiano Reggiano second category/“medium grade” cheese that should be eaten young.

On the wheels classified as third category, consisting of the wheels characterized by the presence of a number of serious defects the marks of origin around the side rind are removed: **these wheels can't be named “Parmigiano Reggiano”**

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## Voluntary selection marks

### What does the “Export” mark mean?

If the oval certification mark “Parmigiano Reggiano Export” is affixed on the cheese, it means that this wheel has been quality checked by the Consorzio experts at 18 months of aging and it is classified as “first grade”, namely without defects.

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### What does the “Premium” mark mean?

If the mark “Parmigiano Reggiano Premium” is affixed on the cheese, it means that this wheel has been quality checked by the Consorzio experts at 24 months of aging, it is classified as “first grade”, namely without defects, and has been deemed suitable according to a sensory analysis score.

**What does the “Prodotto di montagna” mark mean?**

If this fire brand is on the cheese, it means that this wheel was produced in a mountain area within the production area, that it has been quality checked by the Consorzio experts at 24 months of aging and that it has undergone a sensory analysis.



## PORTIONED OR GRATED “PARMIGIANO REGGIANO” CHEESE

- **Pre-packaged in Italy**

On the labelling of Parmigiano Reggiano cheese that has been grated, portioned and pre-packaged under official controls within the defined geographical area of origin in Italy, the use of the “Parmigiano Reggiano and wheel and wedge” certification mark is mandatory as well as the indication of the minimum aging on the portioned wedge.

“Parmigiano Reggiano and wheel and wedge” certification mark can be any of the following four, as appropriate.



## Example of a labelling of pre-packaged Parmigiano Reggiano cheese



- **Operations allowed in the US retail store**

You can cut or grate Parmigiano Reggiano cheese at the retail outlet

**Remember:** the pin dot wording “Parmigiano Reggiano” on the rind is distinctive and every portion that is cut and wrapped in store should feature a piece of rind bearing at least a part of the pin dot wording “Parmigiano Reggiano” that acts as a guarantee of authenticity for consumers.

### Wrong way



### Correct way

(pin dot wording on each piece)



Would you like to learn about the best way to open and cut a wheel of Parmigiano Reggiano cheese? Look at our tutorial [www.parmigianoreggiano.com/taste/store](http://www.parmigianoreggiano.com/taste/store) or read the QR code.



- **How can Parmigiano Reggiano cheese be labelled at the store?**



**BE CAREFUL!**

This certification mark cannot be placed on the labelling of the Parmigiano Reggiano cheese cut or grated in the store!! Ad above highlighted, this mark shall be used only on the labelling of the pre-packaged Parmigiano Reggiano cheese cut and grated by operator with plants located in the area of origin, subject to the PDO Parmigiano Reggiano control system.

The name to be used is **PARMIGIANO REGGIANO CHEESE** or **PARMIGIANO REGGIANO GRATED CHEESE**.

The certification mark “**PARMIGIANO REGGIANO**” shall be accompanied by the relevant statement of identity, i.e. cheese or grated cheese.

As “**Parmigiano Reggiano**” is a certification mark, other uses such as “**domestic Reggiano**” “**Parmesan reggiano**”, “**Parmigiano Regg.**”, “**Parm. Reggiano**”, “**Parmigiano Grana Padano**” ... are **NOT ALLOWED!**

The words “**PARMIGIANO**” or “**REGGIANO**” must not be used on cheese that is not **PARMIGIANO REGGIANO** cheese.

Remember: the Consorzio owns many certification marks in the US consisting of or containing the name “Parmigiano Reggiano”, carries out monitoring activities on the market to control the use of such marks and picks up samples to be analyzed in order to check authenticity.

- **Ingredients: part-skimmed milk, salt, enzyme or part-skimmed milk, salt, rennet.**

The milk is from cows and Parmigiano Reggiano cheese is made from unpasteurized milk.

**No additives or preservatives are allowed.  
Do not add anticaking agents or cellulose to the Parmigiano Reggiano  
grated cheese: IT IS FORBIDDEN!**

# Nutrition Facts

Varied Servings Per Container

**Serving size** 1 oz (28g)

Amount per serving

**Calories** 110

% Daily Value\*

**Total Fat** 8g 10%

Saturated Fat 5g 25%

*Trans* Fat 0g

**Cholesterol** 25mg 8%

**Sodium** 180mg 8%

**Total Carbohydrate** 0g 0%

Dietary Fiber 0g 0%

Total Sugars 0g

Includes 0g Added Sugars 0%

**Protein** 9g

Vitamin D 0mcg 0%

Calcium 320mg 25%

Iron 0mg 0%

Potassium 30mg 0%

\*The % Daily Value tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

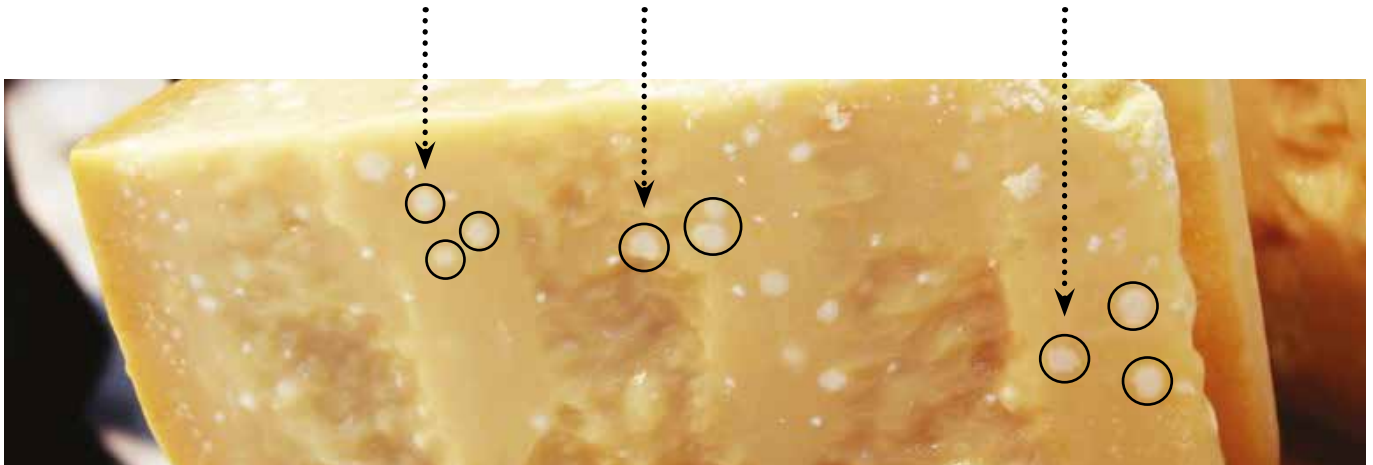
- **Further information**

You can write the age of the cheese stenciled on the cheese rind (production month/year) on the label **NUTRITIONAL and other information**

Parmigiano Reggiano cheese is **naturally lactose free** because of the natural cheese making process.

## What are these white spots?

Unlike what many people think, they are not grains of salt or calcium, they are crystals of tyrosine, that is an aminoacid present in the cheese, and it is an index of the degree of aging.



## Can the rind be eaten?

Yes, it can. After cleaning the rind to get rid of the foreign substances that may have accumulated, you can then eat it because it is completely natural!

## HOW TO STORE NON VACUUM-PACKED PARMIGIANO REGGIANO CHEESE

After purchasing a piece of Parmigiano Reggiano freshly cut cheese or after opening the vacuum pack, the cheese must be stored at home in the refrigerator at a temperature between 4 and 8 C°.

Parmigiano Reggiano cheese should be kept in appropriate glass or plastic containers. Another very practical solution is wrapping it in food-grade plastic film. In this way, Parmigiano Reggiano cheese can be stored for a limited period of time, whilst checking its preservation conditions.

Cheese should never be frozen: however, it is possible to freeze grated Parmigiano Reggiano cheese.

## ORGANOLEPTIC CHARACTERISTICS

**The sensory development of Parmigiano Reggiano during its various stages of aging**

In tasting a piece of Parmigiano Reggiano we must remember that the complexity of flavours and aromas are there not only because of how the cows are fed and the high technology in using the milk, but also because of the very long aging of the cheese.

**12- 18 months** – Parmigiano Reggiano with 12-18 months of maturation has a harmonious and delicate flavour with scents of milk, yogurt and fresh fruit. It is particularly suitable for aperitifs paired with sparkling white wines, or to enrich salads and cold dishes.

**22-24 months** – Parmigiano Reggiano with 22-24 months of maturation is soluble, crumbly and grainy with the right balance between mildness and richness, with notes of fresh fruit, nuts and meat stock. Perfect with medium body wines and to add flavour to all the dishes of the Italian tradition.

**30-36 months** – Parmigiano Reggiano with 30-36 months of maturation is particularly crumbly and grainy. The flavour is pronounced with notes of spices, nuts and meat stock. It is an ideal ingredient for filled and baked pastas or to be tasted at the end of meals, paired with fruit and honey.

**more than 40 months** – Parmigiano Reggiano with 40 months of maturation has passed the test of time and releases pleasant scents of spices. It is an exclusive gift and a pleasant accompaniment to be tasted with structured and meditation wines.

CONSORZIO FORMAGGIO PARMIGIANO REGGIANO

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