

Kashkaval of Pindos



REGION OF EPIRUS

DIRECTORATE OF RURAL ECONOMY & VETERINARY SERVICES

R.U. OF IOANNINA

DEPARTMENT OF PLANT & ANIMAL PRODUCTION

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Region of Epirus, GREECE



HELLENIC REPUBLIC
REGION of EPIRUS



Region of Epirus is located at the northwestern side of Greece.



- **Covers a territory of 9.203 Km², consisting of mountainous areas, wetlands, seashores and fertile plains.**
- **Main characteristics of its primary sector are the small and fragmented agricultural areas, the broad variety of soil and climatic conditions and the very rich biodiversity**

For previous developmental systems, these features were considered as serious drawbacks...

Region of Epirus, GREECE

....nowadays these features, leading to the production of local products with exceptional quality and a long history and tradition, are perceived as a good background for the implementation of a strategy aiming towards the....

production, certification and distribution of HIGH ADDED VALUE LOCAL PRODUCTS.

The Region of Epirus has a longstanding record in the production of a broad variety of traditional artisanal cheeses, well known for their unique distinctive texture, flavor and aroma.

These characteristics are clearly connected with their production terroir, emerging the need of supporting their proper certification and promotion in order to maintain and strengthen their production volume.

Epirus cheeses

Currently, the following cheeses certified as PDO products are produced within the region territory:

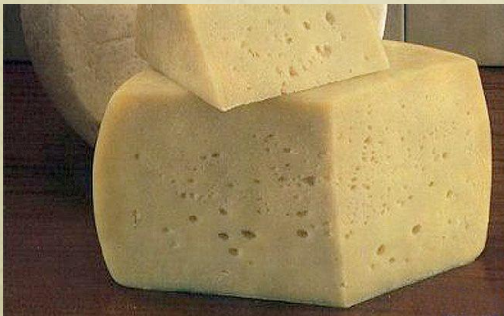
Metsovone



Feta



Kefalograviera



Galotyri



Kashkaval of Pindos

In the context of a continuing effort to maintain and promote the tradition of producing unique, high quality artisanal cheeses the Epirus Region has considered as intriguing case *Kashkaval of Pindos*, a traditional paste filata cheese produced seasonally by sheep and goat milk in the mountains of Pindos as a farmhouse product.



Kashkaval of Pindos is a well-known local cheese produced and exported in large quantities for at least three centuries. Its production was diminished after the 2nd World War but during the last years an increasing interest for its production and marketing is observed, initiated by consumers' demand.

Kashkaval of Pindos

In respond to this demand, the Governor of Epirus has several activities, which were performed by the Directorate of Rural Economy and Veterinary of Ioannina. These activities concern the:

- 1. Creation-gathering of *Kashkaval of Pindos* Producers' Union**
- 2. Determination and verification of its peculiarities and unique features. In this respect, the Dept. of Dairy Research of the Hellenic Agricultural Organization DIMITRA has implemented a wide research campaign, which was published in Intl. Scientific Journals**
- 3. Collection of numerous historical data, *retrieved from books, references and scientific journals*, concerning its production technology, fame and history.**

Kashkaval of Pindos

4. Assigning the Agricultural University of Athens as authority for composing an application dossier for the certification of Kashkaval of Pindos as PGI (Protected Geographical Identification) product.

Following the evaluation-acceptance of the request by the Greek Ministry of Rural Development & Foods, the application dossier is currently under evaluation by the EU authorities.

Kashkaval



Pindos constitutes the biggest mountain range of Epirus containing many picturesque villages such as Metsovo, Samarina, Syrako etc.

Traditionally, their inhabitants' lives are closely connected with sheep and goat breeding to produce mainly milk, meat and wool. In this respect, the art of cheese-making, using high-quality milks is part of their tradition.

Among the variety of cheese-products, Kashkaval comprises one of the most traditional and popular commodities.

Kashkaval spreading into Balkans

During the 18th century, the living conditions of Greek population within Ottoman Empire were harsh. Thus, a large portion of Pindos villagers were forced to travel abroad using several mountain trails, since at that time the countries borders were not clearly defined.

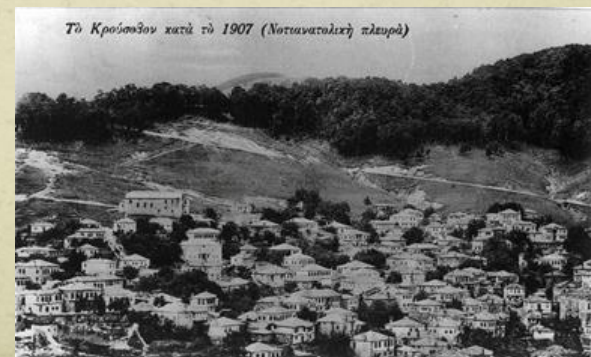
Thus, they were able to develop trades throughout Balkan Peninsula by travelling often with their horses to carry various products such as wheat, oil, wool and cheese in these markets.



Kashkaval spreading into Balkans

In this context, a large portion of Epirus and West Macedonia regions population emigrated to Serbia, Austro-Hungarian Empire, Eastern Rumelia etc, exchanging with the locals, habits, culture, recipes, products etc. Based on written historical monuments during the 19th century, merchants from Pindos mountain villages (eg Metsovo) commercialized in Venice, Istanbul, Alexandria, Odessa, Vienna, Budapest, products such as barrels, wool textiles and Kashkaval cheese.

Thus, the Kashkaval cheese was adopted by many nearby countries to become part of their tradition.



Kashkaval spreading

- Nowadays the production of Kashkaval cheese is spread to many regions and countries, including Bulgaria, Romania, Albania, Hungary, Northern Macedonia, Ukraine, Turkey, Italy, Moldova, Lebanon, Israel, Tunisia, Morocco, Syria
- A crucial difference from the original version comprise the utilization of cow milk in these countries instead of sheep-goat milk.



Kashkaval of Pindos

....is a whitish to pale yellow semi-hard cheese, with a cylindrical or parallel shape prepared using a special procedure.

Has a buttery, slightly sour and slightly salty taste that differentiates this cheese from similar products.

Its texture is cohesive and compact, with minimal holes and no skin. These structural characteristics are due to the cheese-making procedure used for its preparation.

The milk used for its preparation is characterized by high fat content and an intense-rich aroma.



Kashkaval of Pindos

Production procedure

The production procedure is composed by two steps. One implemented traditionally in the mountains concerning the on-site coagulation of milk that was produced during the summer period to a cheese mass. The latter was cut and placed into baskets and transported to the adjacent lowland areas.



The second step of cheese-making process includes the regeneration and re-kneading of the cheese mass in hot water and the maturation stage.

The cheese mass kneading process in hot water has the advantage of permitting the utilization of fresh and/or increased acidity milks.

Kashkaval of Pindos

preparation procedure

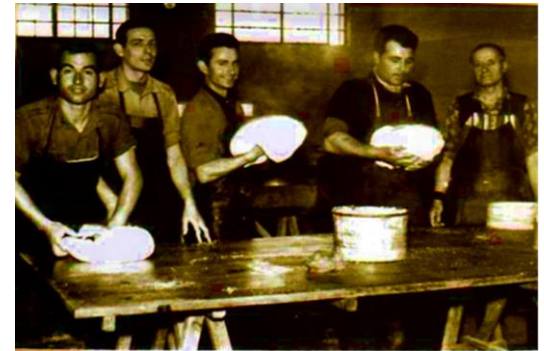
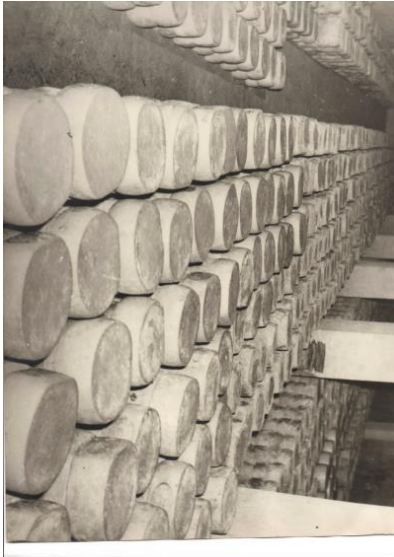
Its structural characteristics of cohesive-compact texture and minimal holes come from the applied cheese-making procedure, which includes the cheese mass shredding and re-kneading in hot water when the pH reaches the desired acidic value.

Specifically, the cheese mass is left to mature and then cut into slices, which are immersed in high temperature water. Thus, the cheese mass becomes very malleable like a dough and can easily be molded both in water and/or on the cheese table. This results in, after maturation, a homogeneous product, with an elastic-cohesive texture and no cracks.

The Kashkaval of Pindos cheese has obtained quality-taste during 2021 awards in PRODEXPO and the International Taste Institute

Pictures of Kashkaval production in Greece during the last century

Kilkis Vermio



Pictures of Kashkaval production in Greece during the last century

Metsovo



Pictures of Kashkaval production in Greece during the last century

Metsovo



Region of Epirus Strategy



HELLENIC REPUBLIC
REGION of EPIRUS

**Traditional
Agricultural
Product**



**Foodstuff
(*Business
Product*)**



**Visibility,
Marketing**

Region of Epirus Strategy, Next Steps



HELLENIC REPUBLIC
REGION of EPIRUS

- For ***Kashkaval of Pindos***
 - ✓ Product promotion through participation in National, European and International Food Fairs and Exhibitions. Action implemented by its Dept of Tourism.
- For ***non-certified traditional Agricultural Products and Foodstuffs***
 - ✓ Initiate a campaign for their location-registration.
 - ✓ Implement a preliminary study to determine the suitability for certification products.
 - ✓ Proceed with the necessary studies for the composition of relative application dossiers.

Thank you for your attention!!!!

