



Department of Agriculture, Food & Forestry

Application for protection under Regulation 2081/92 of
14 July 1992 on the protection of geographical indications
(PGI) and designations of origin (PDO) for agricultural
products and foodstuffs

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Application for protection under Regulation 2081/92 of 14 July 1992 on the protection of geographical indications (PGI) and designations of origin (PDO) for agricultural products and foodstuffs.

1. Product Name Imokilly Regato

2. Name of Group Dairygold Co-operative

Registration number with the Registrar of Friendly Societies 4621 R

3. Address for Correspondence Dairygold Co-operative
Mogeely
Co Cork

4. Telephone Number 021 667102

5. Fax Number 021 667109

6. Names & Addresses of Group Members

Dairygold Mogeely acting on behalf of the farmers of South-East Cork

A list of farmer suppliers is attached at Appendix 1

7. Type of Product Cheese

8. Geographical area The baronies of Imokilly, Fermoy and Muskerry, South-East Cork, Ireland. In times of exceptional shortage, milk from other adjacent areas is occasionally used.

A map of the catchment area is attached at Appendix 2. Also included are maps of the baronies of Imokilly, Fermoy and Muskerry, together with a wider map of Ireland showing the relative locations of the relevant baronies.

- ◆ All production takes place in this area
- ◆ All processing takes place in this area
- ◆ All preparation takes place in this area
- ◆ All milk used in the production of the cheese originates in this area

9. Raw Materials

List of Raw Materials	Source Area of Raw Materials
Milk	The milk used in the manufacture of Imokilly Regato cheese comes only from pasture-fed animals in the baronies of Imokilly, Fermoy and Muskerry.
Cultures	The growth medium and the cultures used are unique to Dairygold Mogeely and were developed specifically for Imokilly Regato
Rennet	The rennet used has been specifically developed for Imokilly Regato
Salt	

10. Describe the main characteristics of the product

The cheese has a rounded, piquant flavour, creamy-yellow colour and a firm texture.

Description	How these characteristics are different to similar products
Shape	Rolls are wheel-shaped with convex edges. A Celtic cord pattern, which has been patented, is embossed on the upper and lower surfaces.
Size	
Colour	The cheese colour is in the straw-yellow to golden-cream range. Similar cheeses made with milk from other areas or using different processing techniques (see Q12 below) are white to off-white in colour.

Texture	Texture is well-knit and firm. The cheese body may have some textured eyes. Similar products have a more pasty texture. When differentiating Imokilly Regato from other similar cheeses, texture is particularly important.
Flavour	Imokilly Regato has a rounded, piquant flavour which is instantly recognisable. The depth and substance of flavour in the cheese is the direct result of the unique processing and maturing techniques used by Dairygold Mogeely. See Q12 below. A cheese made with a different milk, with a different bacteriological input or matured for a different period characteristically presents a narrow flavour profile rather than the broad balance of flavours offered by Imokilly Regato.
Microbiological Qualities	Full specification attached at Appendix 8
Chemical Qualities	Full specification attached at Appendix 8
Organoleptic characteristics	Imokilly Regato has a distinctive sweet, piquant aroma which is unique to this cheese.

11. How the main characteristics are linked to the geographical area

The cheese has an individual colour, taste, aroma and texture recognised by consumers as specific to Imokilly Regato

The *colour* is directly linked to the unique qualities of the local milk supply.

The cheese is manufactured only from milk produced by cows grazing on pasture in the period March to October

The influence of the Gulf Stream on the climate of south-east Cork is such that cows in the catchment area spend an exceptionally large amount of their lactation period on grass.

The milk used in the manufacture of the cheese comes only from specified areas. Because of the uniquely long grazing season in these areas, the milk has a distinctive colour and natural flora which can be directly linked to the taste and colour of Imokilly Regato.

Attached at Appendix 3 please find reports from Teagasc confirming the unique combination of climatic and soil conditions of the milk catchment area, the effects of this on the annual

profile of grass growth in south-east Cork and the impact of this eleven-month grazing system on the colour, flavour and natural flora of milk collected by Dairygold Mogeely

The air and water in the region are both exceptionally clean. The most recent available data on water quality refers to 1996. At that time, river water in the Southern Region is reported to be 86% unpolluted, an outstanding statistic compared with the rest of the country.

Attached at Appendix 4 please find a map showing Ireland's river quality 1991-1994 (latest available information) produced by the Environmental Protection Agency. At Appendix 5 the ENFO Fact Sheet on river-water quality showing the exceptionally high quality of water in the Southern Water Resource Region. At Appendix 6, the specific report from the Environmental Protection Agency on river water quality in Hydrometric Area 19, encompassing the relevant milk catchment area

The taste, aroma and texture of Imokilly Regato are the direct result of the combination of this milk supply with a production process which is unique to Dairygold Mogeely and which incorporates cheese-making skills traditional to the region. These matters are reviewed in answer to question 12 below.

12.1 Describe each stage of the method of production

Full description attached at Appendix 7

12.2 Include the authentic local methods used

Three stages of production in particular use methods of production unique to the region:

1) The production and collection of raw milk:

As already outlined, raw milk production in the South East Cork region has certain characteristics which are unique to the region and are the consequence of the climatic and soil conditions which are not replicated elsewhere.

2) Milk holding following collection:

The tradition of holding milk for 18 hours prior to its use is characteristic of the manufacture of Imokilly Regato cheese.

3) Culture and Rennet:

As explained in the following paragraphs, the culture and rennet used have been developed by Dairygold Mogeely for the manufacture of Imokilly Regato.

12.3 How each stage contributes to the distinctiveness of the product

Stage 1: Milk Collection

Milk is collected from farmers in a designated local area. As already specified, certain characteristics of climate and soil in that area contribute to the characteristic colour and flavour of Imokilly Regato cheese.

Stage 2: Delivery to Milk to Factory

- 1) Milk is standardised to a specific butterfat content and a specific fat/casein ratio to ensure consistency in development of the Imokilly Regato flavour and texture in subsequent ripening and maturation.
- 2) Milk is aged for 12-18 hours before production begins. Because of the natural flora of the milk, the ageing process allows the growth of natural bacteria and enzymes which contribute to the unique texture and flavour of Imokilly Regato.

Stage 3: Addition of Culture

The growth medium used for the bulk culture was developed specifically for this process and is native to the area.

The mixture of cultures used is fundamental to the flavour and texture of the finished cheese.

The culture mix contains a strain of starter which has been isolated in Dairygold Mogeely for exclusive use in the production of Imokilly Regato.

Stage 4: Renneting & Milk Ripening

The rennet used has been developed specifically by Dairygold Mogeely for Imokilly Regato cheese. This, too, is fundamental to the development of the final flavour of Imokilly Regato.

The ripening process is conducted at about 5 degrees higher than is usual for cheese to encourage the growth of specific bacteria. These bacteria contribute to the mature flavour profile of the finished cheese. The higher temperature also aids the formation of a very solid

coagulum and increases the enzyme and bacteriological activity in the curd.

Stage 5: Cutting and Cooking

Regato cheese is cut very finely. These finely cut particles take up heat faster than a normal cheese curd. This encourages the growth of specific types of bacteria. The flora which survive the high cooking temperature contribute further to the development of the characteristic Imokilly Regato flavour.

Imokilly Regato curd is held in the whey for a shorter period of time than would be typical of most cheese types. The aim is to control appropriate lactic acid development which is important for the development of the characteristic body, texture and colour in the finished cheese.

Stage 6: Pressing and Moulding

The cheese curd is shaped in moulds which incorporate a Celtic cord motif.

Stage 7: Salting and Initial Maturation

The cheese is salted twice, once in a brine bath and then dry-salted by a traditional hand method. The characteristic rind of Imokilly Regato is developed by this salting process and by subsequent maturation.

Stage 8: Ripening and Maturation

Imokilly Regato undergoes a long period of slow maturation at controlled temperatures. Typically, the maturation period is 9-12 months. In this time all the characteristics already identified - colour, texture, rind and flavour - are fully developed.

The copy of the Quality Control plan and HACCP attached (see 14 below) cover monitoring of each stage.

12.4. The tradition, origin and history of the product

The Irish province of Munster has a long tradition of cheese-making. The baronies of Imokilly,

Fermoy and Muskerry have been recognised as uniquely suitable for dairying back to medieval times. Before the formation of Imokilly Co-operative in 1930, the region was famous for its farmhouse butter and for the manufacture of farmhouse cheeses.

References to a cheese-making tradition in the area can be traced back to the oldest Gaelic sources. Local records indicate that the monks in the abbeys of Fermoy and Cloyne were manufacturing cheese until the political and economic upheaval of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This tradition of monastic cheese-making was continued in Mount Mellery into the present century. Following the Plantation of Munster, the cheese-making tradition in South-East Cork was centered on the great landlords' houses. In the memory of local people, some of whom started their working lives in service in such houses, cheese was being made domestically in the area until the break-up of the Anglo-Irish tradition after the Second World War. A curd cheese is remembered as having been made commercially in the hydro-spa in Blarney for patients coming for treatment to that area.

The townland of Mogeely where the creamery is situated, is within the barony of Imokilly. The name Imokilly derives from the pre-Norman name given to the area lying between the towns of Middleton and Youghal, Uí MacCaille.

Imokilly Co-operative was formed in 1930.

In 1973 Ireland joined the EEC. That same year, Imokilly Co-operative amalgamated with another farmer-owned co-operative, Mitchelstown.

The management of the merged enterprise considered the resources of the south-east Cork region and the opportunities presented by Ireland's access to European markets. The art and skill of older cheese-makers from Mitchelstown Co-operative was made available to a younger generation, who started the new plant at Mogeely. Together, they designed a recipe for a multi-functional cheese incorporating the advantages offered by the unique geographical production environment. The recipe developed was a synthesis of traditional Cork cheese-making skills, the then-available technical know-how and the artisan tradition of cheese and butter-making in the surrounding baronies. For instance, the rennet developed specifically for Imokilly Regato drew on the experience of traditional coagulating materials described in Professor Micheál O Sé's article 'Old Irish Cheeses and Other Milk Products', published in 1948.

Imokilly Regato was developed on a trial basis through the late 1970s. In 1980 commercial quantities were manufactured.

In 1986 Mitchelstown Co-operative and Ballyclough Co-operative merged to create Dairygold Co-operative, which continues to be fully farmer-owned. While this application is made in the name of the legal entity, Dairygold Co-operative, Dairygold Mogeely continues to have an

independant existance within the Dairygold group as a collector and processor of milk from farmers in the South-East Cork region.

Starting from a base of 300-400 tonnes annually through the early 1980s, Dairygold Mogeely today produces about 4,000 tonnes of Imokilly Regato each year.

The consumer has come to associate the name 'Regato' with a mellow, piquant favoured, yellow-coloured, firm-textured cheese which originates in Dairygold Mogeely and is known as Imokilly Regato.

13: Recent Technological changes to the specification

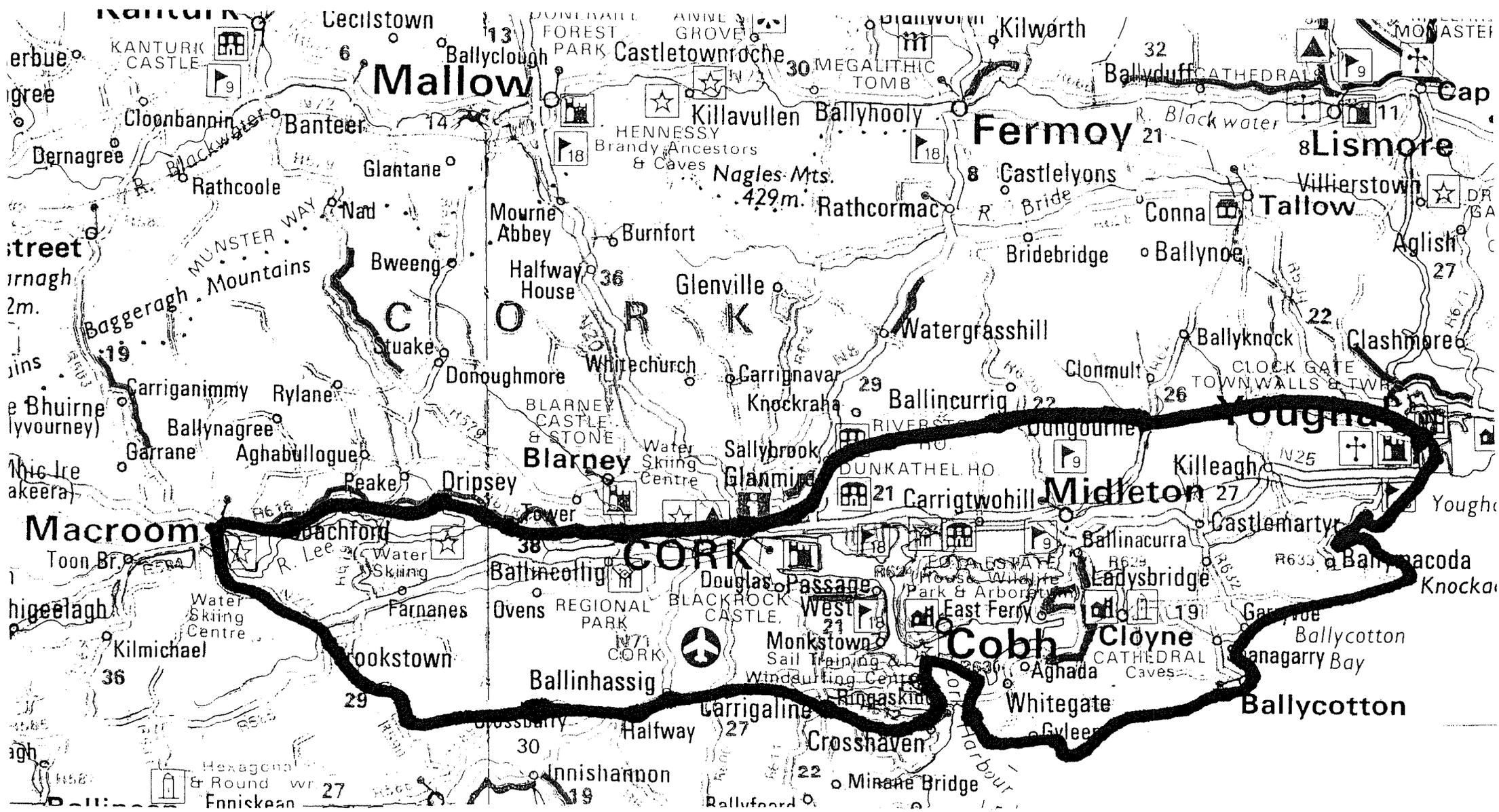
No recent technological changes

14: Quality Control procedures

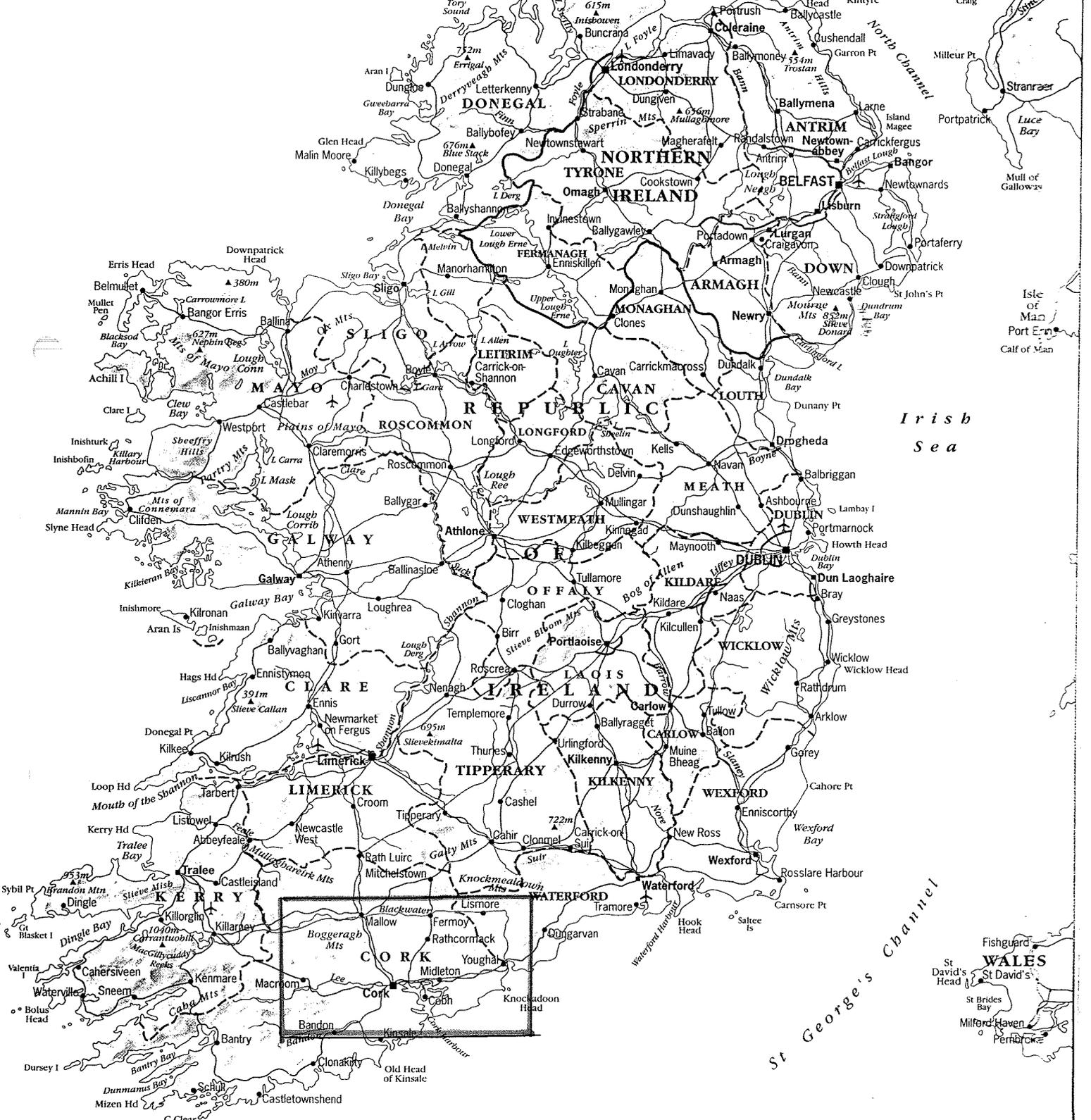
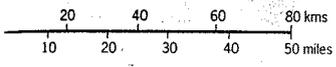
Quality Plan and HACCP Procedures are attached. at Appendix 9.

Appendix 2

Map of Catchment Area



Ireland



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