

OTHER ACTS

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Publication of an application for registration pursuant to Article 8(2) of Council Regulation (EC) No 509/2006 on agricultural products and foodstuffs as traditional specialities guaranteed

(2010/C 20/09)

This publication confers the right to object to the application pursuant to Article 9 of Regulation (EC) No 509/2006. Statements of objection must reach the Commission within six months from the date of this publication.

APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION OF A TSG

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 509/2006**‘OVČÍ HRUDKOVÝ SYR – SALAŠNÍCKY’****EC No: SK-TSG-0007-0046-20.10.2006****1. Name and address of the applicant group:**

Name: Družstvo – „Cech výrobcov ovčieho syra v Turci“

Address: Poľnohospodárske družstvo

Turčianske Kľačany 271

038 61 Vrútky

SLOVENSKO/SLOVAKIA

Tel. +421 4343085213

Fax +421 434308523

E-mail: tas_sro@stonline.sk

2. Member State or third country:

Slovak Republic

3. Product specification:**3.1. Name(s) to be registered:**

‘Ovčí hrudkový syr — salašnícky’

3.2. Whether the name:☐ is specific in itself☒ expresses the specific character of the agricultural product or foodstuff

The specific character is determined by the nature of the raw materials, i.e. raw sheep's milk and the traditional processing thereof in shepherd's huts. The term ‘salašnícky’ in the name expresses the product's specific nature and is derived from the word ‘salaš’, denoting a shepherd's hut, where the cheese is made, and hence also expresses a link to the place of production.

3.3. *Whether reservation of the name is sought under Article 13(2) of Regulation (EC) No 509/2006:*

- ☐ Registration with reservation of the name
- ☒ Registration, without reservation of the name

3.4. *Type of product:*

1.3. Cheeses

3.5. *Description of the agricultural product or foodstuff to which the name under point 3.1 applies:*

‘Ovčí hrudkový syr – salašnícky’ is a cheese which is produced from fresh sheep’s milk in shepherd’s huts and derives its characteristic taste as a result of the traditional technology used during its fermentation, and of being shaped by hand into a lump.

Physical properties

- spherical shape, in the form of a lump,
- size: weight up to 5 kg;

Chemical properties

- dry matter: at least 40 % by weight,
- fat content by weight in dry matter: at least 50 %,
- acidity: pH 5,2-4,9;

Microbiological criteria

Contains a range of microorganisms, including in particular:

Acidogenic microorganisms — *Streptococcus lactis*, *Leuconostoc mesenteroides*, *Lactobacillus casei*, *Lactobacillus plantarum*; yeasts and moulds — *Torulopsis candida*, *Geotrichum candidum*, *Geotrichum casei*;

Organoleptic properties

- external appearance: dry, intact, unblemished surface, slight crust in cross-section, with smallish holes and small cracks here and there,
- colour: white to yellowish on the surface, white with a slight yellow tinge in cross-section,
- taste and smell: mild, slightly acidic, clean taste, typical of sheep’s milk products,
- consistency: firm and elastic.

3.6. *Description of the production method of the agricultural product or foodstuff to which the name under 3.1 applies:*

Collection of sheep’s milk

- milk for the production of the cheese is obtained from healthy sheep (sheep of races reared in mountain and foothill areas) by hand-milking in a milking pen (*strunga*) located in natural conditions. The milk is collected in a rust-proof milking pail fitted with a filtering device (traditionally the milk was collected in a wooden pail). When the pail (*geleta*) is full, its contents are strained into a milk can through a sieve containing a cotton-wool filter (the milk may also be collected mechanically in a mobile or stationary milking parlour),
- the milk collected is transferred in the cans to the production premises — a shepherd’s hut (*salaš-koliba*).

Processing the milk into cheese — production of sheep's milk lump cheese

- the freshly collected milk is processed immediately after milking, after being transferred to the production area of the shepherd's hut, where it is poured from the can into a *putera*, a vessel used for cheese production; during this process, it is re-filtered through a cotton-wool filter. A wooden vessel (*putera*) or a stainless steel double-bottomed vessel is used to produce the cheese,
- the temperature of the milk is raised to 30-32 °C by adding hot drinking water (at a temperature of 50 °C) directly to the milk or by heating it with the aid of hot water in a jacketed vessel or *putera*, or by adding boiled sour sheep's milk whey,
- after the temperature has been raised to 30-32 °C, microbial liquid rennet (based on the salt-stabilised fungus *Rhizomucor miehei*) is added, accompanied by continuous stirring, at a quantity of 40 ml of rennet per 100 l of milk (the amount of rennet is determined by the producer on the basis of its strength). The amount of rennet used also depends on the milking period (i.e. the quality of the milk, which changes during the milking period). The milk curdles approximately 30-45 minutes after the rennet is added,
- the curds thus produced are stirred and cut with a curd-harp until a grain size of 0,5-1 cm is obtained,
- boiled drinking water, cooled to 65 °C, is added to the cut curds in order to heat them to 32-35 °C, thus improving the release of whey from the curd grains. The curds are stirred well and left to rest. Throughout the production of the sheep's milk lump cheese, the temperature of the milk and whey must not fall below 29 °C,
- the settled curds are compressed by hand after about 10 minutes and worked into a lump with the aid of a cheesecloth,
- the lump is left to drain for about two hours, hanging on a hook,
- after draining, the cheese is transferred to a warm storage area — the ripening room — where the fermentation process takes place. Cheese shaped in a cheesecloth is hung on a hook and later placed on a shelf that is designed in such a way as to allow whey to drain off,
- the temperature of the room during fermentation must not fall below 18-22 °C. The cheese ferments in two or, at most, three days under such conditions. The temperature during fermentation is monitored,
- when the production process is complete, the cheese may be sold. When sold, the cheese is packaged and labelled.

3.7. Specific character of the agricultural product or foodstuff:

- this product has been made for several centuries,
- its specific character is imparted by the quality of the milk produced in mountain and foothill regions (grazing of sheep and feeding them with feed obtained from grasslands in mountain and foothill areas),
- it has a typical taste and smell (a mild, slightly acidic, clean taste, typical of sheep's milk products),
- the product has a distinctive shape, being in the form of a lump,
- it is produced during a limited period, in spring and summer,
- it is made using a traditional method in shepherd's huts (not industrially),
- it is made by hand, using traditional technology, with manual processing of curds.

3.8. Traditional character of the agricultural product or foodstuff:

The 'salašnícky' element of the cheese's name is derived from the traditional production site, which was a shepherd's hut (*salaš*). Its traditional character stems from its traditional composition, production method and processing.

As P. Huba stated in the book entitled *Zázrivá*, 'Small-scale highland sheep-farming in Zázrivá was focused on the production of sheep's milk, which was always processed in the shepherd's home (*salaš*), where "ovčí hrudkový syr – salašnícky" was offered as a delicacy to people visiting the shepherd' (Martin: Osveta. 1988).

Traditional 'ovčí hrudkový syr salašnícky' was produced from fresh sheep's milk by curdling it with the aid of natural rennet (*kľag*) in a *putera* at an average temperature (of 32 °C) for 10-30 minutes. The coagulated milk was first shaken, then left to settle, and finally the curds were placed in a cheesecloth and pressed into a compact lump. The curd-filled cheesecloth was hung on a cleat, where it was left for the whey to drain off.

After draining, the lump of cheese was removed from the cloth and placed upside down onto a wooden shelf (*podšiar*), where it was left for several days to dry and ripen. Once ripened, the lumps of cheese were taken from the shepherd's hut to the homes of the people who owned the sheep (Podolák Ján: *Slovenský národopis* 25, 1977).

In the 20th century, the production of 'ovčí hrudkový syr salašnícky' and 'ovčí salašnícky údený syr' spread throughout the mountainous areas of Slovakia where sheep were reared.

'ovčí hrudkový syr – salašnícky' and 'ovčí salašnícky údený syr' are amongst the dairy products of traditional Wallachian sheep-farming, the production of which was the main reason for rearing sheep in the mountainous regions of Slovakia. As a culinary speciality, it was used fresh (succulent-sweet) or fermented or dried, or preserved by smoking (Podolák Ján: *Slovenský národopis* 25, 1977).

Prokop wrote as follows in an article entitled *Z histórie Ovčieho mliekárstva na Slovensku*: 'Wallachian culture is still evident in these parts owing to the carving skills of our shepherds; its influences are still to be seen in the exquisitely carved bowls (*črpáky*) which shepherds used' (*Slovenská spoločnosť pre racionálnu výživu*, Bratislava, 1969). Heart- or duck-shaped moulds are used for 'ovčí salašnícky údený syr'.

Dr Ján Balko, author of the publication *Bryndziarsky priemysel na Slovensku*, published by Osveta in 1968, made the following observation: 'We have no precise evidence showing who produced the first sheep's milk lump cheese here, or when they did so. However, we can safely assume that it was many centuries ago, given that, right up to 1914, the way sheep were farmed for milk did not differ much from the farming practices that existed at the time of the migration of the peoples.'

In *Ovčie mliekárstvo a syrárstvo po novom* it is stated that: '... the quality of the bryndza produced depends mainly on the quality of the "ovčí hrudkový syr salašnícky"' (*Edícia Povereníctva SNR pre pôdohospodárstvo*, Bratislava, 1966).

The name and traditional production method of 'ovčí hrudkový syr salašnícky' and 'ovčí salašnícky údený syr' were also used by shepherds from the municipality of Priečhod, who worked in shepherd's huts in the 1960s and 1970s in the Turiec region (observation made orally by Lamper, a shepherd, and Ivanič from Priečhod).

P. Jasenský, a shepherd from Dolná Jaseň recalls that "Ovčí hrudkový syr – salašnícky" and "ovčí salašnícky údený syr" have been made since time immemorial, but only in small quantities, and they were used for direct consumption in shepherd's huts or were, and are, sold to people visiting shepherd's huts. They are traditional delicacies enjoyed by Slovaks living in mountain and foothill regions' (*Prehlásenie pána Jasenského*, 1999).

3.9. Minimum requirements and procedures to check the specific character:

Checks are carried out on the following:

- the raw materials used: fresh, raw milk from grazing sheep and sheep fed with feed from mountain and foothill pastures. Checking is carried out in the form of visual checks during milking and on the basis of milking records,
- production in shepherd's huts and the seasonality of production (April to September),
- during the technological process, the temperature of the milk prior to curdling and the processing of the curds by hand; the shape of the cheese, which is checked visually after the lump has been formed; the ambient temperature in the storage area, which is monitored during fermentation. Checks are carried out on the basis of records of the temperature during fermentation,
- physical indicators of the finished product: shape and weight. Checks are carried out visually and by weighing,
- chemical indicators of the finished product: dry matter content, fat content in dry matter; the chemical values must correspond to those specified under point 3.5 in the specification. Checks are performed by means of laboratory analyses,
- organoleptic properties of the finished product: external appearance and colour, appearance and colour in cross-section, taste and smell, consistency. The organoleptic properties are checked after the technological process of cheese-making has been completed. Checks are carried out by means of a sensory analysis of the finished product,
- the use of implements, which is subject to approval of the operation of the shepherd's hut.

Checks by the authority or body verifying compliance with the product specification are performed once a year.

4. Authorities or bodies verifying compliance with the product specification:

4.1. Name and address:

Name: Štátna veterinárna a potravinová správa SR
Address: Botanická 17
842 13 Bratislava
SLOVENSKO/SLOVAKIA

Tel. +421 260257427
E-mail: buchlerova@svssr.sk

☒ Public ☐ Private

4.2. Specific tasks of the authority or body:

The specified inspection body is responsible for monitoring the specification in its entirety.
