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(Announcements)

OTHER ACTS

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Publication of an application pursuant to Article 6(2) of Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin for agricultural products and foodstuffs

(2012/C 1/05)

This publication confers the right to object to the application pursuant to Article 7 of Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 ⁽¹⁾. Statements of objection must reach the Commission within six months from the date of this publication.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006

‘PHÚ QUỐC’

EC No: VN-PDO-0005-0788-26.08.2009

PGI () PDO (X)

1. Name:

‘Phú Quốc’

2. Member State or third country:

Vietnam

3. Description of the agricultural product or foodstuff:

3.1. Type of product:

Class 1.7. Fresh fish, molluscs, and crustaceans and products derived there from

3.2. Description of product to which the name in (1) applies:

Phú Quốc extract of fish is the result of the lysis, hydrolysis and self-fermentation of fish flesh by enzymes, most of which are contained in the internal organs of fish, and the long time fermentation of the Clostridium bacterium in a fastidious condition at high temperature.

The main characteristics of Phú Quốc extract of fish are as follow:

— Colour: Phú Quốc extract of fish has dark red-brown colour.

— Smell: delicate special smell, without fishy and ammonia odor since it is produced from fresh fishes and naturally fermented. The prolonged naturally fermentation in the wood barrel for a long time ensures that there is no unusual odor and taste.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 93, 31.3.2006, p. 12.

- Tasty: salty, strong sweet with natural fatty taste. Aftertaste is sweet and fat as to natural protein and fish grease.
- Nitrogen values:
 - + Minimum: 20 gN/litre (for finished extract of fish in second or consecutive extract).
 - + Maximum: 43 gN/litre (for the first extract of fish).

Chemical indications:

- Nitrogen (100 %) (g/l):
 - + Special: 40
 - + Super-Duper: 35
 - + Standard 1: 30
 - + Standard 2: 25
 - + Standard 3: 20
- Proportion of nitrogen amino acid versus nitrogen (%):
 - + Special and Super-Duper: 14
 - + Standard 1, 2, 3: 15
- Acetic acid (%): ≥ 12
- Salt (NaCl) (g/l): $250 \leq x \leq 295$
- Histamine (mg/l): ≤ 200
- Lead surplus (mg/l): $\leq 0,5$

3.3. *Raw materials (for processed products only):*

Raw materials used for production of Phú Quốc extract of fish are only fish (anchovies). The anchovies used for production of Phú Quốc extract of fish are caught within the territorial waters of Kien Giang province and Ca Mau province, which belong to the gulf of Thailand (in the map, taking Ca Mau cape as a landmark, the fishery locates in the West of Viet Nam).

The traditional procedure begins with the throwing of the net by the fishermen. Once the fish has been caught and inside the boat, fishermen will make a manual separation between the anchovies and other species that could have been caught. Therefore the traditional fishing procedure ensures the integrity of the flesh and also that the total amount of other species does not exceed 15 %. Salt (NaCl) is added to the anchovies.

To satisfy the demands of some markets, the ingredients of the Phú Quốc extract of fish is supplemented with sugar, in the proportion 0,5 %-1,5 %, which does not influence the characteristics of the extract of fish.

3.4. *Feed (for products of animal origin only):*

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3.5. Specific steps in production that must take place in the identified geographical area:

The processing of Phú Quốc extract of fish must take place in the geographical area including:

- fishing and preparation of raw materials: the fishing of the anchovies for which fishers use a traditional tunny net with small meshes. Right after being caught anchovies are cleaned with sea water in order to eliminate the impurities and remove manually any other fishes and seafood. Accordingly, salt will be added to the fresh anchovies on the boat deck. Then, the anchovies are stored in the boat holder and being carefully covered and the water collected at the bottom manually removed,
- naturally fermentation of fish: the fish will be moved to producer's premises after the landfall, being then soaked and kept in barrels. After putting fish in barrels, the water from the container will be extracted during about 3-4 days. After 3 to 4 days, the pressuring process will start for which the producer use the fastening sticks. After that pouring the water extracted so that it is flooded on the surface. Fermentation process will be completely naturally lasting a period of 12 to 15 months in the barrels,
- withdrawing extract of fish: once the fermentation process is done, the extract of fish can be withdrawn from the barrels as a finished product. It will be possible to obtain different levels of concentration for the extract of fish: withdrawing first extract of fish and withdrawing 'long' extract. When the extract in the barrel turns yellow brown and good smell comes out, the fermentation is done and the extract can be drawn out. They open the hole for the extract to drain off until the barrel is empty. Then they untie the wooden cover and wash it carefully before re-covering it and pouring drawn extract back into the barrel. The extract is drawn out and poured back until the extract of fish turns red yellow, clear and viscous without turbidity. When the extract has faint aroma and strong taste of typical protein is when the first extract can be withdrawn and bottled as a finished product. To withdrawing 'long' extract, salt dissolves into clean water until saturated. The bittern is poured into the second-hand barrels (from which first extract is drawn out) following the order from-low-to-high content. The collected end-product is called 'long' extract 1. The process of withdrawing 'long' extract 1 through the system consisting of 7 second-hand barrels is called 'que long'. Time for each 'que long' is 7-9 days. This process is repeated in order to get 'long' extract 2 and 3. Then these extract are stored in holders.

3.6. Specific rules concerning slicing, grating, packaging, etc.:

Finished product of Phú Quốc extract of fish shall be in compliance with TCN 230:2006-Standards, which establishes quality standards and food hygiene safety for the product bearing Phú Quốc protected designation of origin, and will be finally bottled in closed devices that can be made of glass or plastic in the different forms that can be directly supplied to consumers. Bottled extract of fish should be stored in roofed storehouse in natural weather conditions.

Bottling of Phú Quốc extract of fish is only allowed to be done in Phú Quốc island to ensure stable and identical quality. The reason is that it is the climatic condition of Phú Quốc island and experiences of producers, which in combination with the anchovies caught in the area create such excellent extract of fish.

The bottling shall be done once the first extract and the 'long' extract have been obtained, starting by mingling of first extract with 'long' extract 1, 2 and 3 to get extract of fish with the required protein content. Accordingly, in order to get 20 litres of 350 N extract of fish from 400 N first extract and 200 N 'long' extract, mingle 15 litres of 400 N 'first extract' with 5 litres of 200 N 'long' extract.

3.7. Specific rules concerning labelling:

The label should bear at least the following information:

- Name: 'Phú Quốc'.

- Type of product: Nước mắm, for exported product: extract of fish is added.
- Indication: Tên gọi xuất xứ, for exported product: PDO is added.
- Name and address of packaging company, name and address of processing company; origin of a product for exportation.
- Ingredients.
- Quality indications (total content of protein gN/l).
- Extract of fish quantity (unit: litre or millilitre).
- Bottling date, expiration date.
- Directions for preservation and use.
- Package number code.
- Hygiene safety warning.

4. Concise definition of the geographical area:

Geographical area is the Phú Quốc Island, the biggest island of Vietnam, located in the Gulf of Thailand at 103°29'-104°09' of West longitude and 9°48'-10°26' of North latitude and the territorial waters of the Vietnamese provinces of Kien Giang and Ca Mau.

5. Link with the geographical area:

5.1. Specificity of the geographical area:

— Climate conditions

The temperature is high and stable all over the year with an average temperature of around 27,5 °C. Therefore, there is almost no difference in temperature between the seasons, being the average difference in temperature between the warmest month and the coldest month of 2 °C. Sunny hours will last about 1 445 hours per year, with around 6-7 sunny hours per day. Moreover, there is a close connection between the region's temperature and the monsoon regime, i.e. the rainy season with low temperature and strong wind (3,0-5,1 m/s), and the dry season with high temperature and light wind (2,8-4,0 m/s). This special characteristic of the region's weather has a decisive effect on the quality of Phú Quốc extract of fish because of the sunny hours which are quite numerous and stable, thus creating favorable conditions for the fresh fish's fermentation, and giving the special characteristics for the production of extract of fish.

— Sea conditions

The island is surrounded by the sea in Gulf Rach Gia-Ha Tien (Gulf of Thailand) which, as we previously mentioned, is the confluence of many rivers running through Mekong Delta and the Lake Sea of Kingdom of Cambodia which carry alluvium, and organic compounds, being the mud of the sea water in this area an ideal habitat for scads and anchovies, giving to these fish better quality (bigger and fatter) than those that could be found in other fisheries.

— Human factors

Each followed step to make the finished product is carried out manually, from the fishing stage as to the fermentation. To make their traditional extract, islanders ferment anchovies for about a year in massive wooden vats in dark warehouses, a technique that is said to yield a rich, golden liquid with pungent flavour and nuances far superior to rivals from other Asian regions, where fermentation periods are usually shorter.

5.2. Specificity of the product:

The Phú Quốc extract of fish has peculiar characteristics that difference to other extract of fish of Vietnam as Phan Thiet extract of fish, Cat Hai extract of fish or other extracts of fish of Vietnam with dark red-brown colour, delicate special smell, without fishy and ammonia, salty, strong sweet with natural fatty taste, aftertaste is sweet and fat as to natural protein and fish grease.

5.3. Causal link between the geographical area and the quality or characteristics of the product (for PDO) or a specific quality, the reputation or other characteristic of the product (for PGI):

The anchovies used for production of Phú Quốc extract of fish are caught within the territorial waters of Kien Giang province and Ca Mau province, which belong to the gulf of Thailand (in the map, taking Ca Mau cape as a landmark, the fishery locates in the West of VietNam). Thanks to characteristics of this fishery, the anchovies are bigger and fatter than anchovies caught in other fisheries such as Ba Ria — Vung Tau, Nha Trang and Gulf of Tokin. Thus, using the anchovies caught in this fishery for extract of fish production, the producers will get extract of fish with higher, stable nitrogen value and color, typical smell and taste that other extract fish can not have. The sea area of this fishery is relatively quiet, not too deep in the Gulf of Thailand and its water is not as salt as that of other sea areas. It is also a favorable environment for fish because it is the confluence of rivers from VietNam and Cambodia. It is an ideal area for anchovies to shelter and to look for food. The fishing time is the rainy season. At this time, the anchovies have grown up and huge amount of anchovies gather in this fishery area to shelter and to look for food. Thus, fishermen are able to catch large amount of big and fat anchovies.

The production procedure begins with the fishing of the anchovies for which fishers use a traditional tunny net with small meshes. Right after being caught by fishing nets or blinds and shifted into boat decks, anchovies are cleaned with sea water in order to eliminate the impurities and removed manually any other fishes and seafood. Then, salt will be added to the fresh anchovies on the boat deck by using wood mixing instruments in order to avoid any damage to the fishes.

The fish shall be stored along the process of input of raw material and the production of finished extract of fish in stable barrels. The barrel shall be cylinder-shaped, made of wood from typical trees from Phú Quốc Island called 'ho phat', 'chay', 'boi loi', 'den den', which are hundreds of years old and are not affected by intrusion of insects, termites and wood eaters. They are able to stretch, long-lasting exposure to salt water, insulating and avoiding bad effects to extract of fish.

The local traditional method to produce is the one of factor which creates the specificity of Phú Quốc extract of fish.

The climatic condition of Phú Quốc island and experiences of producers, which in combination with the anchovies caught in the area create such excellent extract of fish.

Reference to publication of the specification:

(Article 5(7) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006)
