

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 48/12)

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

SINGLE DOCUMENT

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006

'KRAŠKA PANCETA'

EC No: SI-PGI-0005-0833-13.10.2010

PGI (X) PDO ()

1. Name:

'Kraška panceta'

2. Member State or Third Country:

Slovenia

3. Description of the agricultural product or foodstuff:

3.1. Type of product:

Class 1.2. Meat products (cooked, salted, smoked, etc.)

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

'Kraška panceta' is a traditional dried meat product with a characteristic rectangular shape. The minimum weight of the final product is 2,2 kg.

'Kraška panceta' is produced from lean bacon. It is prepared for drying with the skin and without ribs. The dry salting procedure using only sea salt and the drying and maturing without heat treatment contribute to the characteristic organoleptic properties of the thin slices. The lean part of the panceta is dry and firm and remains appropriately elastic under pressure. The rib locations are quite visible. The skin is hard and smooth and is removed just before consumption. As they mature, the lean sections of the panceta acquire a characteristic pink colour. The fat is creamy white in colour. A slice is made up predominantly of lean meat with thin strata of fat running through it. The organoleptic properties particularly include the external appearance of a finely cut slice, which must be tender in texture. The lean meat and the fat must be firmly connected. The slice must have a full, harmonic aroma and a sweet, non-salty flavour.

Salt content is no more than 6 %, the degree of drying attained must be at least 33 %, aw must be no more than 0,92, protein content must be at least 23 % and fat content must be at least 36 %.

3.3. Raw materials (for processed products only):

Bacon from fleshy breeds of pig is selected for the production of 'Kraška panceta'. The bacon cut comprises part of the chest section with nine to 10 apparent rib locations. The fleshy part of the flank is also included in the bacon. Typical for 'Kraška panceta' is a standard rectangular bacon cut measuring 45 to 50 cm in length and 18 to 20 cm in width. The minimum weight of a fresh bacon cut is 4 kg. For drying, the bacon is prepared with the skin and without the ribs, with the sides cut level, and the lean meat and skin must be unblemished. The soft fat on the inside is removed.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 93, 31.3.2006, p. 12.

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 temperature of the fresh bacon must lie between + 1 °C and + 4 °C, as measured just before salting;
- Check of the lean-meat content of the bacon, the quality of dressing and the dimensions of the cut (18-20 cm × 45-50 cm);
- Exclusion of poorly dressed bacon: the skin must be smooth and without bristles, nicks, bruises or haematomas;
- Identification with the serial number and date of salting (day, month and year);
- Manual salting, by rubbing coarse sea salt into the rib locations. The quantity of salt is adapted to the weight of the individual bacon. Pepper and fresh garlic are added, sugar may be added;
- Storage of salted bacons on shelves or pallets;
- Salting at a temperature of between 1 and 6 °C for a duration of five to seven days;
- Cold phase: temperature of between 1 and 6 °C for one to three weeks;
- Drying at a temperature of between 14 and 22 °C for a period of two to seven days; mild cold smoking for one day is permitted;
- Drying/maturing at a temperature of between 10 and 18 °C, with a total production time of at least 10 weeks, an aw value less than 0,92, salt content less than 6 %, drying of at least 33 %, and a weight of the final product of over 2,2 kg;
- Organoleptic testing of a random selection of 'Kraška panceta';
- Identification by branding the skin of appropriate products;
- Matured products are kept in dark premises at a temperature of between 8 and 10 °C.

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

'Kraška panceta' with a protected geographical indication (PGI) is sold in the form of whole or half pieces, branded on the skin on the back part with the 'Kraška panceta' logo. To improve availability to buyers (delicatessen sales), the panceta may be cut into smaller pieces of a uniform size. To preserve its characteristic organoleptic properties, the characteristic red colour of the lean meat and the creamy white colour of the bacon fat, detailed technological supervision of the process of cutting and packaging 'Kraška panceta' is of paramount importance. Contact with air, making the meat subject to oxidation processes, can significantly impair the quality of the bacon. For that reason, 'Kraška panceta' may be cut and commercially packaged only in facilities registered for the production of 'Kraška panceta'. Thanks to these, the product can be packaged immediately, oxidation caused by exposure to air or inappropriate temperatures can be prevented and the desired necessary microbiological safety of the product can be ensured. This system ensures ongoing supervision, full traceability and preservation of the typical properties of 'Kraška panceta' that are of the utmost importance for authenticity and consumer confidence.

3.7. *Specific rules concerning labelling:*

All producers that have been awarded certificates of conformity with the production specification are entitled to mark their products with the 'Kraška panceta' name and logo. The logo consists of a stylised image of a bacon with the inscription 'Kraška panceta'. The producer's registration number is placed next to the logo. The use of the logo is compulsory for all forms of panceta that are marketed. Whole pieces of panceta also have the identification mark branded on the skin.

'Kraška panceta' must also be identified with the words 'protected geographical indication' and the national quality symbol.

4. Concise definition of the geographical area:

The production area for 'Kraška panceta' is delimited by a line running from Kostanjevica na Krasu to Opatje selo, from there to the border between Slovenia and Italy and along that border to the Lipica border crossing, from there along the road to the settlement of Lokev, then along the road to Divača, from there in a straight line to the village of Vrabče and on to Štjak, Selo, Krtinovica, Kobdilj, and from there in a straight line through Mali Dol to Škrbina towards Lipa and Temnica and back to Kostanjevica na Krasu. All the above-mentioned villages form part of the geographical area.

5. Link with the geographical area:

5.1. Specificity of the geographical area:

The Karst (Kras) is one of the largest landscape areas in Slovenia. It is an undulating limestone plateau with a typical Karst terrain (valleys, sinkholes, side-valleys, chasms and underground caves). Limestone soil is characteristic of the Karst; on this substratum has formed the famous red soil of the Karst region, often known as 'terra rossa'. There is little soil on the surface, which is mainly rocky, even though grasses, bushes or thin forest do grow in some places.

The proximity of the sea is the predominant influence on the climate in the Karst region. The mild Mediterranean climate encounters cold continental air. Temperature swings are common in the Karst region, where there is an influx of cold continental air into the Mediterranean area in the form of the Karst bora wind. The proximity of the sea means that, in the midst of winter, there is often a sharp rise in the temperature after days of icy bora winds. Whenever snow falls, it soon melts. The proximity of the sea has a significant effect in the summer, when hot clear weather predominates. The diversity of the Karst plateau and the immediate vicinity of the sea mean that there is always a wind or breeze and the relative humidity is comparatively low in the geographical area.

The natural conditions of the geographical area offer favourable microclimatic conditions for drying meat, which local people have exploited since time immemorial. They find the right combination of temperature and humidity using different rooms in the thick-walled Karst houses. Farmers transfer pršut (hams), panceta (fatty bacon), vratovina (pork neck), sausages and other products from one room to another in the constant search for the right combination of humidity and temperature for the individual technological stages of the maturing process. Thus, over time, technical skills and practical knowledge have evolved with experience and have become permanently established amongst local people.

5.2. Specificity of the product:

The specificity of 'Kraška panceta' lies in the rectangular cut which comprises part of the chest section with nine to 10 apparent rib locations and part of the flank. Such a cut provides the right ratio between lean meat and bacon. The bacon has a high proportion of meat to fat. Another specific characteristic is that only the dry salting procedure involving sea salt has traditionally been used. The drying/maturing process, which involves no heat treatment and takes place at temperatures under 18 °C, means that there is no deterioration of proteins due to heat and that the firmness of the fat tissue is preserved.

Combined with meticulous monitoring of the drying/maturing process, these procedures confer a characteristic quality, for which the 'Kraška panceta' is highly valued by consumers and which has made it a commercially successful product.

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 geographical indication 'Kraška panceta' is based on the tradition of production and its reputation.

In the Karst region, the mild Mediterranean climate encounters cold continental air. The diverse formation of the Karst plateau and the immediate vicinity of the sea mean that there is always a wind or breeze, promoting a comparatively low level of relative humidity. The favourable natural drying conditions and market demand have prompted local people, when producing pieces of bacon, to meet that demand.

There is an extremely long tradition of curing bacon, as was recorded back in 1689. Over time, technical skills have evolved with experience, have become permanently established amongst local people and have been handed down from one generation to the next. Thanks to their work, the people of the Karst region have contributed towards producing the standard recognisable shape and organoleptic properties of 'Kraška panceta'.

Unlike other regions in Slovenia, the Karst people always use exclusively dry salting and a moderate quantity of salt when producing 'Kraška panceta'. In other areas of Slovenia brine is usually used, or a combination of dry and wet salting. The dry salting process and the relatively long period of maturing at low temperatures have a significant impact on the characteristic organoleptic characteristics of 'Kraška panceta'. Thanks to its maturity and characteristic smell and taste, 'Kraška panceta' is a gastronomic speciality, which, together with the Karst prosciutto (Kraški pršut), has become a standard appetiser on ceremonial occasions.

A new era in the production of 'Kraška panceta' dawned in 1977, when producers began operating production units equipped with special technology.

There is testimony to the reputation of 'Kraška panceta' in various works of literature, brochures, leaflets, etc. Back in 1978 'Kraška panceta' was presented in the leaflet of one of the producers. Dr Stanislav Renčelj presented 'Kraška panceta' in the books 'Suhe mesnine narodne posebnosti' (Dried meat products — national specialities) (1991), 'Kraška kuhinja' (Karst cuisine) (1999), 'Suhe mesnine na Slovenskem' (Slovenian dried meat products) (2008) and 'Okusi Krasa' (Flavours of the Karst) (2009). 'Kraška panceta' was presented as a Slovenian gastronomic speciality in the book 'Okusiti Slovenijo' (Taste Slovenia) by Dr Janez Bogataj (2007). It was also presented in several promotional publications, such as the trilingual publication 'Do odličnosti za dober okus, Slovenija (1998)' (Rise to Excellence for the Gourmet, Slovenia, Dem Exzellenten Genuß Entgegen, Slowenien), in 'Edamus, Bibamus, Gaudeamus' (Interreg III project, 2006), 'Kras in Kraške posebnosti' (Karst and Karst specialities) (Phare programme), 'Pomlad Kraških dobrot' (The blossoming of Karst delicacies) (Karst pilot project, 2001), 'Dobrote Krasa in Brkinov' (Delicacies of the Karst and Brkini regions) (Municipality of Sežana, 2010), etc.

The producers of 'Kraška panceta' take part in the International Agricultural and Food Fair in Gornja Radgona, at which 'Kraška panceta' has been awarded high distinctions and prizes over the past 10 years.

Reference to publication of the specification:

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

http://www.mkgp.gov.si/fileadmin/mkgp.gov.si/pageuploads/Varna_hrana/junij2010/Spec_Kraska_panceta.pdf
