

Publication of an application pursuant to Article 50(2)(a) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs

(2013/C 134/11)

This publication confers the right to oppose the application pursuant to Article 51 of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽¹⁾.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006

on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin for agricultural products and foodstuffs ⁽²⁾

‘WATERFORD BLAA’/‘BLAA’

EC No: IE-PGI-0005-0980-05.03.2012

PGI (X) PDO ()

1. Name

‘Waterford Blaa’/‘Blaa’

2. Member State or third country

Ireland

3. Description of the agricultural product or foodstuff

3.1. Type of product

Class 2.4. Bread, pastry, cakes, confectionery, biscuits and other baker's wares

3.2. Description of product to which the name in point 1 applies

‘Waterford Blaa’/‘Blaa’ is a soft doughy white bread roll clearly identified by the white floury top on the product.

The bread has the following characteristics:

S h a p e

‘Waterford Blaa’/‘Blaa’ can be round or square. They are made both crusty and soft and are pinned out round and trayed up round but they batch together as they expand during baking, when they are pulled apart they are square shaped but their domed top gives them a round appearance.

S i z e

‘Waterford Blaa’/‘Blaa’ is 3-4,5 cm high with a diameter of 8-12 cm and weighs 40-65 g.

P r e s e n t a t i o n

‘Waterford Blaa’/‘Blaa’ may be presented in two different ways:

C r u s t y

Rustic square or round shape of bread with a dome-shaped, crusty top dusted with flour. Crunchy at first bite, then chewy with a subtle malt taste and a pleasing bitter aftertaste from the well cooked, dark crust.

S o f t

Soft, well-defined square, oval or round shape of bread, pale in colour and heavily dusted with flour. Slightly sweet, malt flavour, light but firm in texture and melts in the mouth.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 343, 14.12.2012, p. 1.

⁽²⁾ Replaced by Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012.

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

- Preservative-free strong baker's flour
- Table salt
- Compressed yeast
- Dough conditioner
- Water

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*

- Stage 1: mixing
- Stage 2: resting
- Stage 3: pinning
- Stage 4: sub-dividing and resting (including flour addition)
- Stage 5: flattening and rolling (including flour addition)
- Stage 6: proving (including flour addition)
- Stage 7: baking
- Stage 8: assessment
- Stage 9: cooling

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

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3.7. *Specific rules concerning labelling*

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4. Concise definition of the geographical area

The geographical area is restricted to the geographical area known as all of County Waterford and that part of South County Kilkenny, which directly adjoins County Waterford made up of the Ullid and Dunkitt electoral divisions which is part of the southern Piltown electoral area. The river Blackwater runs through the area and includes the town-lands of Dangan, Narabawn, Moolum, Newtown, Skeard, Greenvilleand and Ullid.

5. Link with the geographical area

5.1. *Specificity of the geographical area*

The tradition of baking 'Waterford Blaa' dates back to the arrival of the Huguenots. At the time and throughout the medieval period, Waterford was a powerful trading city; leather, wheat, flour, butter and other agricultural produce from the area around Waterford were shipped to and from England and the continent mainly to Spain, France and Italy.

During the civil war records were destroyed, therefore, oral history dictates that in 1685, a large section of French Protestants were exiled to whatever countries gave them shelter, including England and Ireland. Waterford became a point of attraction to French refugees due to its ease of access; it placed them within convenient distance of their own shores, should circumstances make their return desirable; and it afforded a port of trade capable of developing the mercantile abilities of the most enterprising.

According to the oral tradition of the period, the Huguenots introduced a bread product made from left over pieces of dough in the late 17th century. Waterford bakers believe that when the Huguenots introduced the 'Waterford Blaa'/'Blaa' it was called 'blaad' or 'blanc', and as the product gained in popularity, the Huguenot bakers began making dough specifically for its manufacture. The 'blaad' or 'blanc' was later corrupted to 'Blaa', a name which exists to the present day.

During the early 19th century, it gained popularity, chiefly among the poor, when the founder of the Christian Brothers, brother Edmund Ignatius Rice (1762-1844) began baking the 'Waterford Blaa'/'Blaa' at his own bakery in Mount Sion in Waterford City, in 1802. The simplicity of the 'Waterford Blaa'/'Blaa' basic ingredients made it cheap and popular with the local population.

The skills required to produce 'Waterford Blaa'/'Blaa' are specialised and have been passed on from the Huguenots. The tough dough requires a lot of handling, is hand floured at least three times during the various stages of production and the final product before baking is flattened by hand; this ensures that the product cannot be produced solely by machine and that the texture and flavour of the product is consistent.

5.2. *Specificity of the product*

Unlike other products in this category, 'Waterford Blaa'/'Blaa' contains no preservatives or enrichment and is made solely from preservative-free strong bakers' flour, table salt, compressed yeast, dough conditioner and water.

The addition of flour gives the product the white finish on top which results in the rough cracked appearance of the 'Waterford Blaa'/'Blaa', which is a characteristic of the product. As 'Waterford Blaa'/'Blaa' are not baked with steam, the heavy dusting of flour is both for protection from oven heat and to enhance the appearance. Throughout the production process of the 'Waterford Blaa'/'Blaa' there is excessive use of flour, at pinning, resting, etc. There can also be flour on the base.

'Waterford Blaa'/'Blaa' are characteristically not uniform in shape and size.

The dough that is used to make 'Waterford Blaa'/'Blaa' is tougher and does not contain as much water as other products. The 'Waterford Blaa'/'Blaa' is baked for longer, producing a stronger crust which contains the distinctive malt flavour. The flattening by hand process that the producers undertake ensures the irregular shape and distinctive features.

'Waterford Blaa'/'Blaa' is a popular breakfast product usually baked during the night and sold as a bread product normally eaten with butter or as a mid-day snack to make sandwiches with a variety of fillings, including fried potatoes, dillisk, Irish fillet steak and relish. However, it is a popular belief that 'Waterford Blaa'/'Blaa' is best when torn apart by hand and eaten fresh, straight from the bakery.

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 link between 'Waterford Blaa'/'Blaa' and the area is based on the reputation of the product, the traditional production method described below and the specific characteristics of the product described in Section 5.2.

The reputation of the 'Waterford Blaa'/'Blaa' draw on its early historical roots; the manufacture of the 'Waterford Blaa'/'Blaa' began with the arrival of the French Huguenots in the 17th century who taught the local population how to bake 'Waterford Blaa'/'Blaa'.

Such is the reputation of 'Waterford Blaa'/'Blaa' that it has featured in publications such as Eddie Wymberly's 'Well!: Recollections of Waterford in the 1940s and 1950s'.

Over the generations the reputation of the product remained. A delivery van of 'Waterford Blaa's' made its way into the local headlines in the spring of 1962, when a faulty handbrake on the delivery van gave way causing it to roll downhill trapping its driver between the van and a nearby wall.

It has a reputation of providing sustenance for workers, including those at the Waterford Crystal Factory. In an article from the 'Munster Express' newspaper from 30 January 2004 it states: 'It is known that many a complex creation of Crystal was made on the stomach of a freshly buttered blaa'.

At Taste Festivals Ireland/Euro-toques Food Awards 2008, the 'Waterford Blaa'/'Blaa' bakers received an award for the preservation of a traditional regional product, the 'Waterford Blaa'/'Blaa', because the 'Waterford Blaa'/'Blaa' is one of the distinguished regional foods of Ireland and dates back beyond the 1700s. The 'Waterford Blaa'/'Blaa' is so versatile and such an integral part of daily life in Waterford — its traditional recipe has survived generations.

The name is synonymous with the area, it is often used as a symbol of Waterford; the local radio station, WLR FM's morning programme is called 'The Big Blaa Breakfast Show'; within the area the 'Waterford Blaa'/'Blaa' is also used to promote local events, the 'Fleadh Blaa Hooley!', a traditional music event which is a fund-raiser for the 2012 Waterford Festival of Food, Dungarvan and Fleadh Cheoil na Mumhan (Munster Fleadh).

'Waterford Blaa'/'Blaa' is identified by its cracked flour appearance, irregular shape, chewy texture and malty flavour. This is due to the methods employed by the bakers using the traditional techniques of the Huguenots (handling, flouring, hand flattening and baking process) using the simple traditional recipe.

Reference to publication of the specification

(Article 5(7) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 ⁽³⁾)

<http://www.agriculture.gov.ie/gi/pdopgitsg-protectedfoodnames/products/>

⁽³⁾ See footnote 2.