Publication of an application for registration pursuant to Article 6(2) of Council Regulation (EEC) No 2081/92 on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin

(2002/C 76/04)

This publication confers the right to object to the application pursuant to Article 7 of the above-mentioned Regulation. Any objection to this application must be submitted via the competent authority in the Member State concerned within a time limit of six months from the date of this publication. The arguments for publication are set out below, in particular under 4.6, and are considered to justify the application within the meaning of Regulation (EEC) No 2081/92.

COUNCIL REGULATION (EEC) No 2081/92

APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION: ARTICLE 5

PDO ( ) PGI (x)

National application No: EL-07/00-5

1. Responsible department in Member State
   Name: Directorate for Production and Exploitation of Orchard Crops, Citrus Fruit and Subtropicals Division
   Address: Akharnon 2, GR-10176 Athens
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2. Applicant group
   2.1. Name: Union of Agricultural Cooperatives of Pieria
   2.2. Address: Solomou 10, GR-60100 Katerini
   2.3. Composition: producer/processor (x) other ( )

3. Type of product: 1.6.

4. Specification
   (summary of requirements under Article 4(2)):
   4.1. Name: Ακτινίδιο πιερίας (Aktinidio Pierias).
   4.2. Description: The plant yielding the fruit now internationally called kiwi belongs to the Actinidiaceae family of the order Ericales. It is a subtropical perennial deciduous climber requiring support. The fruit has a well-balanced sweet-sour taste, characteristic delicate aroma and flesh of a beautiful green. In addition to its attractive organoleptic properties it is of exceptional interest for its nutritional value. It has the highest vitamin C content of any fruit plus a high content of inorganic salts, chiefly of potassium, phosphorus and calcium but also of magnesium and iron. The whole fruit is edible apart from the easily removed peel. The ripe fruit is eaten whole or in fruit salads. Outstanding jams and jellies are also prepared. It can be tinned/bottled, frozen, dried and juiced. Of the various varieties the one acclimatised to and grown on the plain of Pieria is Hayward. Its large uniform fruits have an average weight of 90-100 g. The fine reddish green skin is covered in delicate hairs. The flesh is pale green, clear, juicy, fragrant, slightly sub-acid and of high vitamin C content. According to the nutritionists one fruit a day is enough to cover the human body's vitamin C requirement. Hayward is an early variety. Ripening commences at the end of October/beginning of November. It keeps in cold stores for up to nine months without losing its organoleptic characteristics and stands up to being transported and to the various handling operations.
4.3. **Geographical area:** The plant was first grown in Greece in 1973 on the Pierian plain following research into suitability to the area’s soil and weather conditions. Since then it has rapidly expanded to the present area of 18,000 ha in the prefecture. Average yield is 13 tonnes/ha. The 23,000 tonnes grown annually account for 60% of total Greek production. The geographical production zone is the Pierian plain, comprising in the north the municipalities of Eginio, Methoni and Pidna, in the south those of Dio Litokhorio and An. Olimpos and in the centre those of Korini, Katerini and Paralia.

The microclimate of the area created by the two mountain ranges Olimpos to the south-west and Pieria to the north-west and the adjacent sea (the area has a coastline of 60 km), together with sunshine and the fertile, well-drained, neutral pH soils guarantee ideal conditions for cultivating the plant to yield quality fruit of excellent organoleptic properties and a delicate exotic scent. Given the particular adaptability that the kiwi has displayed and the specific characteristics it has acquired in the area it has taken on the symbolic name ‘fruit of Olimpos’ by which it is now known on all the markets.

4.4. **Proof of origin:** The kiwi is a native of south-west China, where it is found today in its self-sown form. It was first known as the Chinese gooseberry and much later named kiwi after the well-known flightless bird of New Zealand, where it was grown for the first time on a commercial scale. In Greece it was grown for the first time in 1973 on the Pierian plain, where it has acclimatised and adapted, acquiring specific qualitative characteristics on account of which it is called ‘fruit of Olimpos’ and the ‘Olymp Kiwi’ logo has been approved. The entire production of the specified geographical zone goes to the Union of Agricultural Cooperatives of Pieria, which is a recognised producer group and keeps full records (area under kiwis, production, disposal) for its grower members. All kiwi plantations are registered (by grower member of the Union) and both the quantity and quality of production are checked. The kiwis are collected, stored, graded and packed at the Union’s coldstores/packing stations located in the municipality of Korini. Transport to foreign market is by refrigerated truck. The authorised officials of the Agriculture Department of the Prefectural Administration, which constitutes the inspection body, check production, packing and movement of the kiwis on the basis of the relevant ministerial decisions.

4.5. **Method of production:** From the end of October to the middle of December the kiwis are harvested when their content of sugars reaches 6.5-7.0 Brix. They are picked by hand with great care to avoid damage, placed in 20 kg plastic boxes and taken to UAC Pieria’s coldstores/packing stations, where after pre-chilling they are kept in cold chambers, depending on the storage period in either an ordinary or a controlled atmosphere.

After electronic weighing and grading by weight the kiwis are packed in one, two or multi-layer disposable cardboard boxes, each showing the number of fruits contained.

All the kiwis grown in the delimited geographical zone are handled by UAC Pieria on behalf of its producer members.

Transport to foreign markets is by refrigerated truck or for small quantities by air. On the internal market it is by ordinary truck.

About 70% of production goes to foreign markets, chiefly to Germany, the Netherlands, Austria and Russia. Smaller quantities go to Turkey, Saudi Arabia etc.

UAC Pieria has played a prominent role in promoting Greek kiwi fruit on foreign markets through continual improvements in grading/packaging and organisation of marketing, and also through continual guidance and inspection of grower members for the purpose of improving and guaranteeing the specific qualities of the product that have conferred on it its hallmarks of quality and reliability.
4.6. **Link:** The prevailing microclimate of the cultivation area is shaped by two mountain ranges, Olimpos to the south-west and Pieria to the north-west, and also by the vicinity of the sea (the area has a 60 km coastline). These factors ensure shelter from the wind and absence of frosts, particularly the early spring and late autumn frosts that create problems for proper plant development and fruit-bearing. These specific geographical features also ensure the necessary relative humidity and temperature fluctuations within the limits that are required to ensure (a) the cold necessary for interruption of dormancy, and (b) full development of the natural potential for flowering and fruit-bearing. The amount of sunshine in Pieria is another factor with a positive impact on development of the fruits and their chemical composition (acid/sugar balance) leading to excellence of organoleptic characteristics. The soil characteristics of the delimited geographical zone, such as lack of boron toxicity and of activated calcium but the necessary iron content, are also factors contributing to high fruit quality (solid flesh) and the ability to keep for up to nine months after cropping without deterioration of quality. The cultivation techniques used, based as they are on long experience and knowledge, also contribute to the formation of well shaped uniform fruit of good size.

These cultivation techniques are:

— good fertilisation achieved by selection of male plants and planting of an adequate number,
— positioning of beehives in order to ensure pollen transportation by bees,
— destruction of self-sown vegetation, which is used with other plant remains as green manure and neutralises soil alkalinity,
— pruning to shape the plants in pergola or semi-pergola form; this helps with illumination and ventilation of the fruits and the shading of them needed to avoid damage in high summer temperatures,
— thinning of the fruit; this helps retention and development of good uniform fruits,
— manuring with decomposed animal dung, grape pomace and other organic remains, this increases soil fertility and nutrient and moisture retention capacity,
— tackling disease along integrated or biological control lines; this does not lead to harmful residues in the fruit and helps maintain the environmental equilibrium.

4.7. **Inspection body:** Agricultural Directorate of the Prefectural Administration of Pieria.

4.8. **Labelling:** All packaging must carry the indication ‘Λικίνιο πιερίας (Aktinídio Pierias) — PGI’ — and the indications required under Articles 4(7) and 5 of PD 81/93.

4.9. **National requirements:** The general PDO and PGI production requirements of PD 81/93 apply.

**EC No:** G/EL/00129/00.05.16.

**Date of receipt of full application:** 26 January 2001.