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

(2005/C 240/05)

This publication confers the right to object to the application pursuant to Articles 7 and 12d of the above-mentioned Regulation. Any objection to this application must be submitted via the competent authority in a Member State, in a WTO member country or in a third country recognized in accordance with Article 12(3) 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.

SUMMARY

COUNCIL REGULATION (EEC) No 2081/92
‘CAROTA DELL’ALTOPIANO DEL FUCINO’
EC No: IT/00270/21.01.2003
PDO ( ) PGI (X)

This note is a summary produced for information. For full details, interested parties and in particular the producers of the products covered by the PDO and the PGI in question are invited to consult the full version of the specifications at national services or associations or at the competent services of the European Commission (1).

1. Responsible department in the Member State:
   Name: Ministero delle Politiche Agricole e Forestali
   Address: Via XX Settembre n. 20 — I-00187 Roma
   Tel.: (06) 481 99 68
   Fax: (06) 42 01 31 26
   E-mail: qtc3@politicheagricole.it

2. Group:
   2.1 Name: Consorzio di Tutela e valorizzazione degli ortaggi dell’altopiano del Fucino
   2.2 Address: P.zza Torlonia, 91 67051 Avezzano (AQ)
      Tel.: (39) 863 50 22 31
   2.3 Composition: producers/processors (x) other ( )

3. Type of product:
   Class 1.6 Fresh and processed fruits, vegetables and cereals — Carrot

4. Specification:
   (summary of requirements under Article 4(2))
   4.1 Name: ‘Carota dell’Altopiano del Fucino’

(1) European Commission, Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development, Agricultural Products Quality Policy Unit, B-1049 Brussels.
4.2 Description:

PGI ‘Carota dell’Altopiano del Fucino’ denotes carrots from the cultivar of the species ‘Daucus carota L.’, from the following varieties: MAESTRO (Vilmorin); PRESTO (Vilmorin); CONCERTO (Vilmorin); NAPOLI (Bejo); NANDOR (Clause); and DORDOGNE (SG).

The product should have the following characteristics:

— Shape: cylindrical with a rounded tip, no root hairs.

— Colour: intense orange, including the neck.

Content:

— saccharose >3 %;

— beta carotene >100 mg/kg;

— ascorbic acid >5 mg/kg;

— protein >1,2 %;

— fibre >1,2 %.

Physical characteristics: crunchy flesh, breaking cleanly.

For all varieties, the commercial grade should be Extra and Prima.

4.3 Geographical area:

The production area of ‘Carota dell’Altopiano del Fucino’ is the whole of the Altopiano del Fucino.

Its outer limit is defined by the Strada Provinciale Circonfucense and includes areas of land, subdivided by farm tracks and numbered plots, which are part of the following municipalities within the province of L’Aquila: Avezzano and surrounding villages, Celano and surrounding villages, Cerchio, Aielli, Collarmele, Pescina and surrounding villages, S. Benedetto dei Marsi, Gioia nei Marsi and surrounding villages, Lecce dei Marsi, Ortucchio, Trasacco, and Luco dei Marsi.

4.4 Proof of origin:

Field cultivation of carrots began in the Altopiano del Fucino in 1950. The considerable income generated by the crop caught the attention of the farmers who consequently introduced carrots into the classic crop rotation in use in the Altopiano del Fucino.

Together with the economic benefits, carrot cultivation has extended the length of the crop rotation cycle, significantly reducing problems such as the development of plant diseases or the phenomenon of soil fatigue which has caused so many problems for crops in Fucino. In this regard, it should be emphasised that the right crop rotation is now relied upon for controlling sugar beet and potato nematodes — again made possible thanks to the introduction of the carrot — unlike the past approach of using fumigant nematicides.

The success of this crop makes it the key crop within the Altopiano del Fucino vegetable sector, as can also be seen in its popularity and renown on both national and foreign markets. This renown leads many producers to use the name ‘Fucino’ to market products that come from other production areas. This means that there is a need to guarantee the origin of the product through procedures to ensure the traceability of the various phases of production and checks on the producers and land areas where the Fucino carrot is grown, which should be listed in special registers. These checks should be carried out by an inspection body accredited by the Ministry of Agricultural and Forestry Policies, which should also check that PGI ‘Carota dell’Altopiano del Fucino’ adheres to the provisions of the product specification.
4.5 Method of production:

The production techniques are the usual methods of carrot cultivation which can be broken down into the following steps:

Preparing the sowing bed by ploughing, milling to refine the surface, rolling, and fertilising without manure (to avoid browning the roots as a result of the organic matter decomposing during the growing cycle).

Sowing is entirely mechanical to ensure uniform distribution of the seeds and optimal crop density. The seed is planted in rows 35-40 cm apart, while within the row the seeds are planted in bands 5-7 cm wide, or alternatively in continuous double rows. The seed is planted at a depth of 0.5-1.5 cm.

Crop rotation must use a minimum four-year cycle.

Cultivation techniques are normally carried out mechanically.

Hoeing should take place at least once for pest control purposes and to reduce the compactness of the soil in order to ensure that the root can develop smoothly without constrictions or bending; and earthing up should take place at least once to avoid the neck turning green.

Irrigation should take place frequently with modest amounts of water which must not exceed 400 mc/ha per watering, using sprinklers. During the summer (July and August), irrigation, if necessary, must take place during the night or at the latest in the early morning.

Harvesting is carried out according to the most suitable degree of ripeness for the destination of the product and the type of packaging; it is done pursuant to the quality rules established by Community law and the characteristics set out in point 4.2.

When the product is intended for preservation, it should be harvested only when fully ripe and not before the period laid down for the cultivar, bearing in mind weather conditions, in order to ensure that the qualitative and organoleptic characteristics are preserved and maintained. During the summer (July and August), harvesting must be done in the early morning or late afternoon to avoid the product being exposed to the sun.

Once the carrots have been harvested, within four hours they must be transported to preparation centres where, before washing and packaging, they are chilled in order to ensure that their crunchiness, skin colour and flavour are maintained.

4.6 Link:

The wide availability of the product within the area in question has encouraged related activities of preparation and packaging of the product as well as the establishment of processing plants to make the carrots into cubes or juices. All of this has contributed to creating a system which combines the excellent soil and climatic conditions of the area with the high level of specialisation of workers within the sector, whether as farmers or sellers, and the wealth of processing facilities, all of which ensures that the area is renowned for its carrots.

The Altopiano del Fucino, an area particularly well-known for vegetable production, is in south-central Italy, in the region known as the ‘Regione dei Parchi’ [parks region], Abruzzo.

The area is entirely flat, at a height of 700 m above sea level, 16 000 hectares in area, and surrounded by mountains of particular environmental interest such as those in the Abruzzo National Park, the Velino-Sirente park and Mounts Ernici and Simbruini.
Its agricultural origins go back no further than the end of the 19th century when Prince Alessandro Torlonia completed drainage of what was considered the third main lake of Italy: Il Lago del Fucino (the lake of Fucino).

Given this, the Altopiano del Fucino can be defined as ‘a young land, very productive and uncontaminated’, which, thanks to the nature of the soil and a particularly favourable climate, gives its vegetables unique organoleptic and nutritional characteristics which are recognised and appreciated by European consumers.

The soil is sandy-loam with a high level of active lime; the pH is between subalkaline and alkaline, with high levels of organic matter that can be attributed to the abundant manuring carried out by Fucino farmers every other year.

The climate is influenced by the presence of the surrounding mountain chains, the altitude and the relative humidity produced by the dense network of canals which ensure both that water needs are met during the growing season and that excess water is collected in winter. Essentially, winters are harsh and rainy while in the summer the whole area is affected by the heat, principally in July and half of August; and, as a result of the altitude, the temperature in the area varies considerably between night and day.

Following the land reclamation, crop development began with the first crops of potatoes and sugar beet, after which other crops, including carrots, were established in the Altopiano del Fucino, not just in order to have a better crop rotation but also to expand the specialisation of the farmers through their own initiative.

In the carrot, Fucino has found its primary crop, thanks in part to the unique qualities that the land itself gives the product.

Precisely because of the very loose and unstructured nature of the soil itself, the carrots produced in Fucino are notable for the shape of the vegetable which is mainly cylindrical with a rounded tip, free of root hairs and with no deep scarring where the leaves emerge, with a smooth skin and the whole root has an intense orange colour. Further characteristics can be found in terms of nutrients: carrots from the Altopiano del Fucino have high, well-balanced ascorbic acid (5 mg/kg) and total sugar contents. The carbohydrate content is above average and is accompanied by a 1.2 % protein content, while the fibre content (1.8 %) makes the trace amounts (calcium, iron, phosphorus and potassium) more easily absorbed.

The vitamins in ‘Carota dell’Altopiano del Fucino’ are another typical element which makes the product readily distinguishable: thiamine, riboflavin and above all carotene (> 100 mg/kg) are present at high levels.

4.7 Inspection body:

Name: AGROQUALITA
Address: Via Montebello n. 8 — I-00185 Roma
Tel. (06) 47 82 24 63
Fax: (06) 47 82 24 39

4.8 Labelling:

The product should be marketed in suitable new packaging, made of wood, cardboard or plastic and identified by a suitable label bearing the following details:

— the words ‘CAROTA DELL’ALTOPIANO DEL FUCINO IGP INDICAZIONE GEOGRAFICA PROTETTA’ in lettering at least twice the size of any other information on the label;
— all details of the name, business name and address of the producing/packaging company and anything else required by the relevant legislation;
— no additional information beyond what is set out in this specification is permitted.

Products prepared using PGI ‘Carota dell’Altopiano del Fucino’ as a raw material, even after preparation and processing, may be marketed in packaging bearing reference to the PGI, without using the Community logo, provided that:

— PGI ‘Carota dell’Altopiano del Fucino’, certified as such, is the only type of carrot used;
— companies using PGI ‘Carota dell’Altopiano del Fucino’ are listed in a special register held and
updated by the body authorised by the Ministry of Agricultural and Forestry Policies, and
inspected by it purely in terms of the protected product.
Where PGI ‘Carota dell’Altopiano del Fucino’ is not used exclusively, it may only be referred to,
according to current legislation, as one of the ingredients of the product containing it or into which it
has been processed or made.

Logo
The upper part of the logo consists of the words ‘Carota dell’Altopiano del Fucino’ in green Pantone
P.C.S. (S 274-1 CVS), outlined in black, in the font Cooper blk hd bt, with an obvious variation in
height to represent high ground in the middle of the phrase (Altopiano) and lower ground at the end
(Fucino). Below are the words INDICAZIONE GEOGRAFICA PROTETTA in Arial rounded mt bold, in
white surrounded by Pantone reflex blue. To the left of the wording is the EC PGI logo.

4.9 National requirements: —