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

(2006/C 122/04)

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

SUMMARY

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006

Application for registration according to Article 5 and Article 17(2)

‘CONNEMARA HILL LAMB’ or ‘UAIN SLÉIBHÉ CHONAMARA’

EC No: IE/00366/03.09.2004

PDO ( ) PGI ( X )

This summary has been drawn up for information only. For full details, interested parties are invited to consult the full version of the product specification obtainable from the national authorities indicated in section 1 or from the European Commission (1).

1. Responsible department in the Member State:

   Name: Department of Agriculture and Food
   Food Division
   Agriculture House
   Address: Kildare Street
   Dublin 2
   Ireland
   Tel.: (353-1) 607 23 90
   Fax: (353-1) 607 20 38

2. Group:

   Name: Connemara Hill Lamb Ltd
   Address: Corr na Mona
   Co. Galway
   Ireland
   Composition: Producers/processors ( X ) Other ( )

3. Type of product:

   Class: meat and edible offal as referred to in Annex 1 of the Treaties of the European Communities.

4. Specification (summary of requirements under Article 4(2))

4.1 Name: ‘Connemara Hill Lamb’ or ‘Uain Sléibhe Chonamara’

4.2 Description: The product to be protected is Connemara hill lamb, which are bred, born and reared in the designated geographical region. The lambs are light in body weight and bone and the carcass is lean with a light cover, rose red in colour and has a solid deep texture.

4.3 Geographical area: The geographical area is that west of the Corrib Basin including the islands of Inishmaan, Inisheer and Inishmore and represents an area in the West of Ireland known internationally as Connemara. The landscape of this area is characterised by its mountains, bog and lakes. The lambs are reared in the mountainous terrain where they graze on mountain grass, heathers and herbs.

4.4 Proof of origin: References to consumption of Connemara hill lamb can be traced to the early nineteenth century, when the Black face stock were introduced from Scotland. During the immediate post-famine years 1850/1870 significant quantities of blackface sheep were imported from Scotland for grazing on hill land. The Congested Districts Board established in 1891 made further importations in order to improve the breed. The breed has since evolved into a distinctive strain and has adapted to survive the rugged conditions of Connemara. The black face breed is particularly suited to the terrain of the area given its ability to forage better than other breeds.

In order to ensure full traceability from farm to slaughter all lambs are affixed with a special ear tag and carcass swing tag. On site inspections are carried out on all farms to inspect and tag all lambs prior to slaughter.

4.5 Method of production: The meat is from lambs of the Black faced breed, born and raised in the designated geographical area. Lambs are born in the Spring generally from April onwards (later than other Irish lamb) and are suckled by the ewe throughout their lives. The Lambs are left free to graze on the hilly habitat and are generally slaughtered at 14 weeks. Some lambs are slaughtered at 10 weeks. The lamb is available in Irish shops from August to November. In the absence of an approved slaughterhouse in the designated geographical area, the lambs are transported to an approved slaughterhouse located in an adjoining county.

4.6 Link: The taste, flavour and colour of Connemara Hill lamb are directly linked to the local flora on which the lambs are grazed. The diet is mountain grass heather and herbs, common to the areas of production. The main constituents are the grasses Agrostis Spp. Festuca Spp. and Molina, the sedges Carex Spp. Scirpus cespitosus, Eriophorum angustifolium and Trichophyrum cespitosum. Other important plants in the diet are the heathers Calluna vulgaris, Erica tetralix and Erica cinerea and the plants Narthecium ossifragum and Potentilla erecta. The rugged terrain means that the lambs are more agile than their lowland counterparts hence carcass composition is smaller, weighing about 10 kg compared to 25 kg for lowland lambs.

4.7 Inspection body:
Name: Department of Agriculture and Food
Address: Agriculture House
         Kildare House
         Dublin 2
         Ireland
         Tel.: (353-1) 607 23 90
         Fax: (353-1) 607 20 38

4.8 Labelling: PGI

4.9 National requirements: —