

OTHER ACTS

COMMISSION

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

(2009/C 103/05)

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.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006

'REDYKOŁKA'

EC No: PL-PDO-005-0588-22.01.2007

PGI () PDO (X)

1. **Name:**

'Redykołka'

The name 'redykołka' fulfils the conditions set out in Article 2(2) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 and is a name customarily used to designate a cheese produced in the Podhale region. Etymologically, the name 'redykołka' is derived from 'redyk', a word which is traditionally used in the area defined in (4) to denote the ceremonial practice whereby sheep are taken up to mountain pastures, kept there and brought back down.

2. **Member State or third country:**

Poland

3. **Description of the agricultural product or foodstuff:**3.1. *Type of product:*

Class 1.3. — Cheese

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

'Redykołka' is a small cheese in the shape of a miniature animal, bird, heart or spindle. 'Redykołka' is a semi-hard, half-fat cheese. The smallest 'redykołka' weighs 30-60 g and comes in the shape of a spindle. When produced in other shapes, the cheese must weigh no more than 300 g.

The glistening straw colour of the rind (pale brown with a slight sheen) is imparted during the smoking process. Small amounts of another colour may be present on the rind, or the colour of the rind may be slightly faded. The rind is smooth and elastic, but may be slightly rough. It may display a slight unevenness and have cracks that do not penetrate the cheese itself. The cheese is elastic and slightly hard. It has a slightly salty taste and a pronounced smoked aroma. The addition of up to 40 % cow's milk does not affect the characteristic features of 'redykołka'.

The chemical composition of the cheese depends on the length of time for which it is smoked and varies according to the time of year: the water content must not exceed 44 %, the dry matter content must not be less than 56 %, and the fat content in the dry matter must not be less than 38 %.

3.3. Raw materials (for processed products only):

Milk:

Milk, the main ingredient of 'redykołka', comes from sheep of the Polish mountain sheep (Polska owca górska) breed. Milk from cows of the Polish red cow (Polska krowa czerwona) breed grazed in the specified geographical area may be used in the production of 'redykołka'. However, cow's milk may not account for more than 40 % of the total quantity of milk used in the production of 'redykołka'. 'Redykołka' is made from unpasteurised milk.

3.4. Feed (for products of animal origin only):

'Redykołka' is a seasonal product, made during the sheep-grazing period. During this period, the animals feed exclusively on the fresh vegetation of pastures in the specified geographical area. An observation-based analysis indicated that the plant species of the Podhale meadows, pastures and mountain pastures most commonly eaten by the sheep are as follows: snowcap (*Arabis alpina*), yellow thistle (*Cirsium erisithales*), arctic yellow violet (*Viola bilora*), alpine clematis (*Clematis alpina*), *Senecio subalpinus*, alpine snowbell (*Soldanella carpatica*), Austrian leopard's bane (*Doronicum austriacum*), wolfsbane (*Aconitum firmum*), saxifrage, alpine buttercup (*Ranunculus alpestris*), moss campion (*Silene acaulis*), cranberry (*Oxycoccus quadripetalus*), yellow saxifrage (*Saxifraga aizoides*), alpine blue sow thistle (*Cicerbita alpina*), net-leaved willow (*Salix reticulata*), *Saxifraga wahlenbergii*, alpine poppy (*Papaver burseri*), golden cinquefoil (*Potentilla aurea*) and narcissus-flowered anemone (*Anemone narcissifolia*). It should be noted that many of these species are medicinal plants found and used in folk medicine.

3.5. Specific steps in production that must take place in the identified geographical area:

To ensure that the product is of the highest quality, the entire 'redykołka' production cycle must take place in the specified geographical area. All stages of production take place in log huts located on the mountain-sides where the animals are grazing. The final quality and taste of 'redykołka' owes much to the specific skills of the shepherds and the passing down from one generation to the next of the knowledge that is necessary to maintain the product's traditional character and unique taste. The specific stages of production associated with the exceptional skills of the shepherds include:

- cold ripening (acidification) — the milk is kept at room temperature so as to increase its acidity;
- warm ripening (acidification) — involves mixing soured milk with fresh milk; soured milk is mixed with fresh milk in a copper kettle known as a 'kotlik' or 'kotliczek';
- addition of rennet and coagulation — rennet is added to the milk, which is then left until curds form; The coagulation process takes place in a traditional barrel known as a 'puciera';
- grinding of the curds — with the aid of traditional tools, e.g. a 'ferula' (type of wooden spatula with one or two wires in its centre);
- draining of the whey — up to 50 % of the whole;
- removal — pressing of the grains and removal of the cheese;
- pounding — the cheese mass is pounded by hand and a ball is formed, which is placed in a vessel containing whey;
- shaping — the cheese mass is formed with the aid of special moulds into the shape of a heart, bird, lamb, spindle, etc.;
- soaking in brine — for up to 24 hours;
- drying — the cheeses are dried for a period of 12-24 hours;

— smoking — maturing — smoking is carried out using cold smoke and lasts for 3-7 days; the products are placed in smoke chambers, specially designed wooden shelves known as 'komorniki', in the roof-space of the shepherd's hut, usually on the wall or by the hearth.

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

Not applicable

3.7. *Specific rules concerning labelling:*

Not applicable

4. **Concise definition of the geographical area:**

The area in Śląskie Voivodship includes:

the following municipality in Cieszyński District: Istebna;

the following municipalities in Żywiecki District: Milówka, Węgierska Górka, Rajcza, Ujszoły, Jeleśnia and Koszarawa.

The area in Małopolskie Voivodship includes:

the whole of Nowotarski District and the whole of Tatrzański District;

the following municipalities in Suski District: Zawoja and Bystra Sidzina;

the following municipalities in Limanowski District: Niedźwiedź and the part of Kamienica which is situated within the Gorczański National Park or to the south of the River Kamienica, and the following civil parishes in Mszana Dolna municipality: Olszówka, Raba Niżna, Łostówka, Łętowe and Lubomierz;

the following municipalities in Nowosądecki District: Piwniczna, Muszyna and Krynica.

The defined area coincides with the historically and ethnographically distinct region known as Podhale in the northern foothills of the Tatra Mountains.

5. **Link with the geographical area:**

5.1. *Specificity of the geographical area:*

Specificity of the area in which 'redykołka' is produced:

Natural factor:

The extensive transhumance of sheep, which in Podhale is a natural feature of the farming of the sheep that provide the raw material (milk) for the production of 'redykołka', is the result of the traditions of the shepherds' ancestors, who, as long ago as the middle ages, began to move their sheep to grazing land. This long history of sheep-rearing and pastoral farming in Podhale led to the development of a breed of sheep known as the Polish mountain sheep (Polski owca górską). The Polish mountain sheep is an improved type of the primitive 'cakiel' sheep, which occur in the eastern Carpathians and in the Balkans. This breed is closely linked to the history and traditions of Podhale and its people. It is superbly adapted to the climatic conditions and traditional systems of husbandry in mountainous areas.

Whilst cow's milk can be used in production, it may come only from cows of the Polish red cow breed, the oldest Polish breed of cattle. This breed had for centuries been associated with the Slavs and, until the end of the 18th century, was the most common breed of cattle found on Polish soil. The first herds of red cow were established in 1876 at Stróża in Limanowski District. The year 1895 saw the foundation of the Polish Union of Polish Red Cow Breeders, attached to the Kraków Agricultural Society. This meant the beginning of systematic husbandry and consequently led to the formation and improvement of the breed between 1884 and 1934. The cattle was recognised as the only indigenous breed of cattle reared on Polish soil.

The final taste and aroma of 'redykołka' owes much to the quality of the milk used in its production. The distinctive vegetation in the area where 'redykołka' is produced has a major bearing on the high quality of the milk and its characteristic taste. These are endemic species found only in Podhale. Together they form meadows, pastures and mountain pastures. During the 'redykołka' production period (May-September), the animals from which the milk is obtained feed exclusively on this vegetation.

The conditions prevailing in Podhale are distinctive and the flora has to adapt specifically to them. Factors of particular importance include a substantially reduced vegetation period, a low average annual temperature, significant variations in temperature in the vegetation period, stronger insolation (direct effect of the sun's rays on surfaces) than in the lowlands, high winds and mountain winds, a thick snow cover, avalanches, and the specific properties of soils occurring on calcareous and granite bedrock.

The areas where 'redykołka' is produced are amongst the most unspoilt in Poland. The 'redykołka' production area is situated amidst four national parks. To the north is the Gorczański National Park, to the south the Tatrzański National Park, to the west the Babiogórski National Park, and to the east the Magurski National Park. In addition, a fifth national park, the Pieniński National Park, is situated in the very heart of the 'redykołka' production area.

Human factor:

'Redykołka' is an ancient product of Wallachian shepherds who grazed their sheep in highland glades. The cheese came to Podhale along with the Wallachian culture, the way of organising grazing, the traditional shepherd's hut and the method of processing the milk. The first mention of cheesemaking in Podhale and neighbouring areas is to be found in the founding charter of Ochotnica village in the Gorce Mountains. Dawid Wołoch (David Valachi) was granted the right to found the village in 1416.

'Redykołka' owes its name to the fact that it was distributed for free when sheep were being brought back from the mountain pastures — an event known as 'redykanie się'. This name is also used to denote any gift made of the cheese that was offered, for instance, as a way of gaining someone's esteem or as a token of gratitude for a service rendered. 'Redykołka' is also unusual in that it had ceremonial uses: shaped as doves and cockerels, it was used to decorate wedding branches and the tops of harvest wreaths.

The fact that 'redykołka' is a cheese that is typical of Podhale is borne out by the numerous references to it found in old documents, books and other written reminders of the past in this and adjacent areas. The first precise description of how the cheese was made in log huts dates from 1748 and comes from the official instructions of the 'State of Ślemień'. In 1773, these instructions were rewritten and prescribed for use.

A detailed account of how the sheep were grazed and how the log huts used primarily for making cheese (including 'redykołka' and 'oscypek') were equipped is given by Maria Steczkowska (1858), who states that the remainders of cheese that were insufficient to make 'oscypek' were used to make 'redykołka' cheeses in the shape of animals and hearts. Like 'oscypek', the animal-shaped 'redykołka' was salted and then dried and smoked. This is also the first such detailed description of the vessels that were used by shepherds to make cheese in the Tatra Mountains. Local expertise relating to the making of sheep's milk cheese in Podhale (including 'redykołka' and 'oscypek') and the associated customs, traditions and ceremonies have not changed to this day. This is evidenced not only by the method of producing 'redykołka' now used, but also by numerous references found in literature, for instance in the eight-volume publication entitled 'Pasterstwo Tatr Polskich i Podhala' (1960), the book entitled 'Hodowla i Pasterstwo w Beskidzie Sądeckim' (1980) and many other academic ethnographical publications (including those of the Institute of the History of Material Culture of the Polish Academy of Sciences).

However, the best evidence of the product's popularity and its link with the region is the interest shown by tourists and the fact that buying 'redykołka' is a must, as it is one of the main souvenirs of a stay in Podhale.

5.2. Specificity of the product:

'Redykołka' is distinguished by a slightly salty taste, which is the result of soaking in brine and the use of milk from specific breeds of animals grazed in the defined area, and by an aromatic smoky aftertaste obtained as a result of the production method traditionally used. Its dense, firm texture and rich aromatic palette of flavours are what give 'redykołka' its distinctiveness.

Another distinguishing feature is its specific shape. 'Redykołka' comes in the shape of miniature animals, birds, hearts or spindles. Each cheese weighs 30-300 g.

The special historical use of 'redykołka' as a gift offered, for instance, as a way of gaining someone's esteem or as a token of gratitude for a service rendered is also one of its distinguishing features. According to tradition, the cheese figures are always made, sold and offered as gifts in pairs.

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 taste and smell of 'redykołka' are determined by the interaction between natural and human factors. 'Redykołka' is produced exclusively from milk obtained from breeds of animal that are adapted to the climatic conditions and traditional husbandry systems found in Podhale. The taste of 'redykołka' is determined by the fact that the animals feed on specific endemic vegetation occurring only in the area where the cheese is produced. This vegetation forms meadows, pastures and mountain pastures and it is on this vegetation alone that the sheep and cows feed during the production period. The final taste and smell of 'redykołka' also owe much to the specific skills of the shepherds as described in (3.5) and the passing down from one generation to the next of the knowledge, as described in (5.1), which is necessary to maintain the product's traditional character and unique taste.

The making of 'redykołka' was an integral part of sheep-grazing in Podhale. The cheese's unique shape, described in (3.2) and (5.2), stems from the fact that it performed a ceremonial function, as described in (5.1), and was offered as a gift, most often to children, by shepherds returning home after spending many months grazing their sheep. This is further proof that this product is typical of the Podhale region and an inseparable part of its culture.

Reference to publication of the specification:

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

<http://www.bip.minrol.gov.pl/strona/DesktopDefault.aspx?TabOrgId=1620&LangId=0>
