EUROPEAN 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

(2010/C 38/08)

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
‘OBWARZANEK KRAKOWSKI’
EC No: PL-PGI-005-0674
PGI ( X ) PDO ( )

1. Name:
‘Obwarzanek krakowski’

2. Member State or third country:
Poland

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 the product to which the name in (1) applies:
‘Obwarzanek krakowski’ is a ring-shaped baked product. It takes the form of an oval with a hole in the middle or, less frequently, a regular circle. Its surface is formed by strands of dough twisted into a spiral. The strand of an ‘obwarzanek krakowski’ has a round or oval cross-section.

The colour of an ‘obwarzanek krakowski’ ranges from light golden through dark golden to light brown, with a distinct sheen.

Dimensions of the product:

— diameter 12-17 cm,
— thickness of strand 2-4 cm,
— weight 80-120 g.

An ‘obwarzanek krakowski’ is firmish to the touch and the surface varies from smooth to slightly rough. The visible strands of the spiral on the crust are firmish and the crumb inside is pale, soft and slightly moist. The crisp crust and the crumb of ‘obwarzanek krakowski’ have a slightly sweetish taste, typical of bakery products that are first parboiled (steamed in hot water) and then baked. The taste of the ingredients sprinkled on the product’s surface is also perceptible.
An ‘obwarzanek krakowski’ is decorated by sprinkling it with various ingredients, including: salt, sesame seed, poppy seed, nigella seed, mixed herbs or mixed spices (paprika, caraway, pepper), cheese or onion. It may also be sprinkled with other ingredients. This is a traditional aspect of the product. Sprinkling with different herbs, spices, etc., does not affect the characteristic features of ‘obwarzanek krakowski’.

3.3. Raw materials:

Food-grade wheat flour is used to make ‘obwarzanek krakowski’; 30 % of the wheat flour may be replaced by rye flour.

The following is added to 100 kg of flour:

— fat: 2-3 kg,
— sugar: 2-4 kg,
— yeast: 1-2 kg,
— salt: 1-1.5 kg,
— water, to make up the dough: 40-48 l,
— very small amounts of honey may be added to the water used for parboiling, in accordance with the baker’s art.

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:

The following steps in production must take place in the identified geographical area:

— preparation of the yeast dough,
— shaping of the ‘obwarzanek krakowski’,
— parboiling,
— decoration,
— baking.

The dough for ‘obwarzanek krakowski’ is prepared using the single-stage method. Once suitably mixed, the dough is set aside for the initial rising. The duration of the initial rising depends on the environmental conditions, ranging from a few minutes in summer to an hour in winter. The dough is divided into small pieces, which are rolled out and cut into strips of the requisite length, thickness and weight. The baker twists two or three strips into a spiral and then forms a ring by twisting them around his hand and presses it against the table. The shaped ‘obwarzanek krakowski’ is placed on a board or mesh for initial rising (proving) and is then parboiled, i.e. the raw dough is immersed in water with a temperature of at least 90 °C. The ‘obwarzanek krakowski’ is boiled until it rises to the surface. It is then decorated and baked.
3.6. Specific rules concerning slicing, grating, packaging, etc.:

Only when it has cooled may an ‘obwarzanek krakowski’ be placed in packaging. If an ‘obwarzanek krakowski’ is placed in packaging before it has cooled, it quickly loses its crunchiness, becomes moister and acquires undesirable characteristics (becoming stringy and rubbery).

3.7. Specific rules concerning labelling:

‘Obwarzanki krakowskie’ may be sold unpackaged and unlabelled. Points of sale bear the inscription ‘obwarzanek krakowski’. If packaging is used, the ‘obwarzanek krakowski’ label must include indications in accordance with the rules in force.

4. Concise definition of the geographical area:

Małopolskie Province, within the administrative boundaries of the city of Kraków and the districts of Kraków and Wieliczka.

5. Link with the geographical area:

5.1. Specificity of the geographical area:

Kraków's archives and museums contain records and books that bear testimony to the rich, centuries-long tradition of baking in the city. The first documented references to bakers in Kraków date back to the 13th century. In the Kraków City Charter of 1257, Prince Bolesław Wstydliwy (Bolesław the Chaste) authorised the city elders to build bakers' stalls (referred to as stationes in the document), from which they were to derive rent in perpetuity. The Polish kings valued Kraków's bakers highly, as is reflected in the many privileges conferred on them, which included the right to build baker's stalls and to receive rent from them and the right to choose the mill at which their flour was ground.

In 1458 Kraków city council endorsed the articles of the bakers' guild. These articles included rules governing the quality of baked goods, the size of baking ovens and bakers' conduct. However, the most significant privilege was conferred on Kraków's bakers in 1496, when King Jan Olbracht (John Albert) granted them special rights and decreed that persons living outside the city were not allowed to bake white bread, including ‘obwarzanek krakowski’. This privilege was subsequently endorsed by all Polish kings up to Jan (John) III Sobieski (second half of the 17th century). In the Ziemia Krakowska (Land of Kraków), in what is now the district of Wieliczka, there is also a salt mine which supplied a raw material that was used for centuries by the bakers of Małopolska.

The bakers' guild was not just an association of craftsmen, for it also had religious, humanitarian and defence-related tasks. In the mid 16th century, Kraków's bakers were entrusted with the defence of one of the city's main gates, the Nowa Brama (New Gate), at the end of ulica Sienna. The city's bakers stored arms and ammunition inside this gate for use in the event of an attack.

The skills of local bakers, honed over hundreds of years of making this product, are a key factor in maintaining its characteristic features: the working and shaping of the dough by hand, which gives each ‘obwarzanek krakowski’ a slightly different shape, and the parboiling, which constitutes the initial stage of production.

5.2. Specificity of the product:

‘Obwarzanek krakowski’ has a unique crumb structure and consistency, obtained by parboiling the dough in hot water with a temperature of at least 90 °C prior to baking. ‘Obwarzanek krakowski’ is also distinguished by its characteristic ring shape, its spiralled surface and a visible sprinkling of ingredients. Another feature which distinguishes ‘obwarzanek krakowski’ from other bakery products is that it remains fresh for a short period of just several hours.
5.3. Specific quality, the reputation or other characteristic of the product:

The product's link with the region is based on the specific characteristics described in (5.2) and on its reputation as described below.

The reputation of ‘obwarzanek krakowski’ has been cultivated by bakers from Kraków and the surrounding areas, who have been making this exquisite and unique product for the people of Kraków for the last 600 years. The tradition of baking ‘obwarzanek krakowski’ is confined to this geographical area.

‘Obwarzanek krakowski’ is a traditional baked product which, initially, could be made only during Lent by bakers specially designated for that purpose by the Kraków bakers’ guild. According to the definition in the Słownik Staropolski (dictionary of old Polish), ‘an obwarzanek is a type of pastry in the form of a roll twisted into a ring, probably steamed before being baked.’ The Polish name ‘obwarzanek krakowski’ indeed derives from the way in which the product is made, i.e. by parboiling the dough in heated water.

The first references to obwarzanki being baked in Kraków and the surrounding areas appear in the accounts of the court of King Władysław Jagiełło and Queen Jadwiga. One entry in the accounts, for 2 March 1394, contains the following information: ‘for the Queen, for a ring of obrzanka, 1 grosz’.

The Kraków bakers’ guild issued a decree (laudum) in 1611 authorising the guild to regulate the sale of obwarzanki inside the city and conferring the right to choose the bakers who were to sell them. A radical change in terms of the right to bake obwarzanki took place in the 19th century. On 22 January 1802, a decree was signed which stipulated that any baker had the right to bake obwarzanki when it was his turn to do so. The bakers authorised to bake obwarzanki were selected by the drawing of lots. Lots drawn in 1843 applied until 1849, when the custom of drawing lots probably ended, there being no evidence that it happened after that date. This could mean that, over time, the ways described above were discontinued and any baker could make obwarzanki on any day of the year, as is still the case today.

‘Obwarzanek krakowski’ was sold from stalls which opened before 6 a.m. so that the people of Kraków could buy freshly baked goods — including ‘obwarzanki’ — early in the morning. The guild monitored the quality and freshness of the products, eight of its members being responsible for carrying out checks on stalls. Naturally, any transgressions were severely punished. Eventually, people started selling obwarzanki in other ways. As late as the 1950s, they were sold straight from wicker baskets.

Today, ‘obwarzanek krakowski’ is sold not just in shops and bakeries, but also from typical carts. There are between 170 and 180 such carts selling obwarzanki in Kraków today. The average daily production of ‘obwarzanek krakowski’ sold on the Kraków market on a normal day is almost 150 000.

The reputation of ‘obwarzanek krakowski’ is such that it features in campaigns to promote Kraków. As a well-known symbol of Kraków and Małopolska, it is often used in advertising aimed at locals and tourists alike — for example, in adverts in the local press and for airlines which fly to the city. In a competition held in 2004 to choose the best tourist souvenir from Kraków, second prize was won by an entry consisting of a fabric ‘obwarzanek krakowski’ with a poppy-seed effect and another featuring a dragon.

‘Obwarzanek krakowski’ itself has also been awarded numerous prizes. It won an award in the Nasze Kulinarne Dziedzictwo national culinary competition, and received the Perła 2003 prize at the 2003 Polagra Farm international fair in Poznań. ‘Obwarzanek krakowski’ was included, together with many other regional specialities from all over Poland, in a 2004 calendar forming part of a campaign to promote regional produce. There are also references to it in many tourist guides for Kraków and Małopolska and in numerous articles and writings on Kraków’s history and traditions.
'Obwarzanek krakowski' always features at the Święto Chleba bread festival, an event that is held regularly in Kraków. An image of 'obwarzanek krakowski' is also used as part of a campaign to promote Kraków's best restaurants. Recommended restaurants are awarded bronze statuettes with a symbolic 'obwarzanek krakowski' on a fork. Stickers depicting an 'obwarzanek krakowski' are displayed on the doors of recommended restaurants.

Reference to publication of the specification:
(Article 5(7) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006)

http://www.minrol.gov.pl/Default.aspx?TabOrgId=1620&LangId=0