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

(2011/C 189/13)

This publication confers the right to object to the application pursuant to Article 7 of Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 (1). Statements of objection must reach the Commission within six months of the date of this publication.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006

‘RHEINISCHES ZUCKERRÜBENKRAUT/RHEINISCHER ZUCKERRÜBENSIRUP/RHEINISCHES RÜBENKRAUT

EC No: DE-PGI-0005-0717-02.09.2008

PGI ( X ) PDO ( )

1. Name:
‘Rheinisches Zuckerrübenkraut/Rheinischer Zuckerrübensirup/Rheinisches Rübenkraut’

2. Member State or third country:
Germany

3. Description of the agricultural product or foodstuff:

3.1. Type of product:
Class 1.6 Fruit, vegetables and cereals, fresh or processed

3.2. Description of product to which the name in (1) applies:
The pure, natural, concentrated juice of freshly-harvested sugar beet with no vegetable fibre or any other additive.

— Appearance: dark-brown, highly viscous syrup
— Taste: sweet and malty
— Smell: sweet, with malt and caramel
— Final sugar content (tolerance of ± 3 %)
Sucrose: 33 %
Glucose: 17 %

Fructose: 16 %

- Brix degrees: at least 78 °Brix
- pH: from 4,4 to 5,0
- Water content: max. 22 %
- Iron: at least 10 mg/100 g
- Magnesium: at least 70 mg/100 g
- Potassium: at least 50 mg/100 g
- Folic acid: at least 90 micrograms/100 g

Sugar beet syrup is produced without any additives. The product is made during the beet harvesting period from late summer to spring. The traditional method of production based on modern food legislation is as follows:

- Reception of good quality: delivery of freshly harvested beets.
- Acceptance testing: determination of the sugar content to define the necessary operational parameters (temperature, duration of cooking process, etc.). Visual inspection for soil and foliage.
- Storage: short period of storage both on the farm and at the production site, coordination of harvesting and delivery.
- Treatment prior to further processing: pre-cleaning; removal of foliage, earth and stones; subsequent cleaning in the sugar beet washer.
- Processing: Processing takes place in the geographical area. The beets are processed whole or cut up. The mash is heated for several hours and boiled gently. Care must be taken to allow the mash sufficient time to rest. The length of time during which the beets are boiled and the temperature depend on the company’s tradition. The syrup is then extracted under high pressure to obtain the raw juice. Filter equipment is used to remove nearly all the solid particles from the raw juice extracted. The clear juice is sent on to the evaporation unit where the water is gently removed from it in a vacuum. The dry matter content of the final product is at least 78 °Brix. Prior to storage, the pH, colour, sucrose, fructose, glucose and dry substance of the final product are analysed in the processing plant. The final product is also regularly examined by an external laboratory. The sugar beet syrup obtained is stored in tanks from where it can be taken for packaging.

3.3. Raw materials (for processed products only):
Without exception, all of the sugar beet used as a raw material must come from the geographical area in question.

Traditionally, the sugar beet used to make sugar beet syrup comes solely from the beet producers in the region.

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

3.5. Specific steps in production that must take place in the identified geographical area:
The entire production process takes place within the geographical area.

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

3.7. Specific rules concerning labelling:
4. **Concise definition of the geographical area:**

The Rhineland. In the state of North Rhine-Westphalia this includes the government regions of Cologne (without the Oberbergisch district) and the following districts in the government region of Düsseldorf: Mettmann, Düsseldorf City, Rhine District of Neuss, Mönchengladbach City, Viersen, Krefeld City, Cleves District and Wesel District. In the State of Rhineland-Palatinate, it includes the rural districts of Ahrweiler and Mayen-Koblenz.

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

5.1. **Specificity of the geographical area:**

The centuries-old Rhineland tradition of syrup-making has resulted in the perfection of production process and taste. The relevant skills have been passed on from generation to generation. In the 14th and 15th centuries, sugar beet became firmly established as a farmed crop. In the Rhineland, the beets were one of the tithes which farmers had to pay to their feudal lords from the 15th century on. In the early 17th century, the Thirty Years’ War gave rise to a period of starvation; cultivating beets proved to be easier and more productive than growing cereals. In the Rhineland, among other places where the unrest had less of an effect, people could invest the time and effort required in cultivating these sweet, white beets.

Today, it is impossible to state when precisely the production of beet syrup began in the Rhineland, but it has probably been common since the 18th century. The centre of ‘Rübenkraut’ production is the Lower Rhine region. Around 1860, the district of Grevenbroich alone had some 63 registered presses (at the time, there were 309 syrup producers in the Prussian State). Initially, the beet syrup was made from mangelwurzels or carrots. In the 19th century, however, the ‘Lanker Rübe’, a type of mangelwurzel grown in the Lower Rhine region, became established. In the latter part of the century, sugar beets became the more popular raw material. Records from around 1870 belonging to the chamber of commerce in Cologne show that between 6 000 and 10 000 Zehntner (= 300 and 500 tonnes) of beet syrup was produced every year.

Furthermore, beet syrup appears as an important, traditional ingredient in a range of typically Rhenish recipes, e.g. for the marinated beef dish ‘Rheinischer Sauerbraten’ and ‘Aachener Printen’ gingerbread. The long tradition of sugar beet syrup production in the Rhineland is also very apparent in the local language: people from the Rhineland call it ‘Rübenkraut’ (in olden times ‘Rüöwenkrut’ or ‘Röbenkraut’). Even outside the Rhineland, this term is still used and understood. Before it was known that they could be used to produce sugar, mangelwurzels were used as vegetables. The name ‘Rübenkraut’ was given to the syrup made from mangelwurzels, drawing on the word ‘Apfelkraut’ which was the name given to a syrup made from apples.

Figure 2 in a publication by Block entitled *Rübensirup — Seine Herstellung, Beurteilung und Verwendung* (‘Beet syrup — its production, assessment and use’), Leipzig 1920, shows that there was a concentration of beet syrup factories (blacked-in circles) in the Rhineland. Sugar factories were widely spread throughout the German Empire, but were few and far between in the Rhineland. However, the Rhineland made up for this with its unrivalled concentration of beet juice factories. Even today, beet juice is still produced in large quantities in the Rhineland.

5.2. **Specificity of the product:**

The careful production method, firmly rooted in the region through tradition, guarantees that the finished product retains valuable minerals such as magnesium and iron. The product also contains potassium and folic acid. It is made without any additives.

— As a result of its incomparable, markedly sweet and malty taste which, like its sweet, malty and caramelly smell, is the result of the careful production method, it is eminently suitable for use not only as a spread but also as a taste-inducing additive in cooking and baking.

For a long time now, the product has enjoyed great renown and a very good reputation, particularly in the Rhineland but also beyond its borders. The renown and reputation enjoyed by the product stem from its long history in the geographical area.
5.3. Causal link between the geographical area and a specific quality, the reputation or other characteristic of the product:

The excellent reputation enjoyed by the product stems from its geographical origin.

‘Rübenkraut’ was invented in the Rhineland and has been produced there ever since. It has always been made with sugar beet from the Rhineland. The fact that the beets originate from the production area is one key reason why the product enjoys such a good reputation. It is this local sourcing of the sole raw material (sugar beet) which is inextricably linked to the product's authenticity.

Today the beet syrup is still made in almost exactly the same way as in bygone centuries. Only beets from the geographical area were processed. That is also why there is such a concentration of beet juice factories in the Rhineland (see map). Large quantities of sugar beet are still grown in the Rhineland — most are used for sugar production, but a significant quantity all the same is processed to make ‘Rübenkraut’.

Traditionally, the sugar beet used to make sugar beet syrup comes solely from the beet producers in the region. Sugar beet is cultivated on the basis of a contractual arrangement between processors and farmers, thus facilitating comprehensive farming advice. Cooperation between producers and processors is now streamlined, transparent and accountable. A sales guarantee ensures that beet growers have the basic security they need to plan for the future. The chemical quality of the sugar beets is checked routinely by means of identical analytical procedures.

Reference to publication of the specification:

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

Markenblatt Vol. 5 of 1 February 2008, Part 7a-aa, p. 26285

http://register.dpma.de/DPMARegister/geo/detail.pdfdownload/83