OTHER ACTS

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Publication of an application pursuant to Article 50(2)(a) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs (2013/C 317/07)

This publication confers the right to oppose the application pursuant to Article 51 of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council (1).

SINGLE DOCUMENT

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006

on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin for agricultural products and foodstuffs (2)

‘ALMENDRA DE MALLORCA’/‘ALMENDRA MALLORQUINA’/‘AMETLLA DE MALLORCA’/ ‘AMETLLA MALLORQUINA’


PGI ( x ) PDO ( )

1. Name

‘Almendra de Mallorca’/‘Almendra Mallorquina’/‘Ametlla de Mallorca’/‘Ametlla Mallorquina’

2. Member State or Third Country

Spain

3. Description of the agricultural product or foodstuff

3.1. Type of product

Class 1.6 Fruit, vegetables, cereals, fresh or processed

3.2. Description of product to which the name in point 1 applies

‘Almendra de Mallorca’/‘Almendra Mallorquina’/‘Ametlla de Mallorca’/‘Ametlla Mallorquina’ is the fruit of the almond tree (Prunus amygdalus) intended for human consumption, which may be raw or roasted, with or without the skin.

The almonds must be whole, healthy, clean and dry, and measure at least 12 mm across the transverse axis at the widest point. There must be no sign of fungal, parasite or insect damage, no rancidity or any foreign odour or taste.

The almonds may be sold raw or roasted. In both cases, they may be peeled or unpeeled.

Chemical and organoleptic characteristics:

1. Raw unpeeled or peeled: almonds without the woody endocarp.

   — Chemical characteristics:
     - moisture: ≤ 6.5 %,
     - fat content: ≥ 55 % in dry matter,
     - oleic and linoleic acid content: ≥ 88 % of total fat.

   — Organoleptic characteristics: the raw unpeeled almonds are white or ivory in colour, with a mat appearance, both inside and outside. The texture is firm, with little stickiness and an oily feel. The taste is slightly sweet, neither sour nor bitter. The aroma is intense and nutty. The unpeeled almonds retain their rough, brown skin.

2. Roasted: almonds without the woody endocarp which are then roasted.

   — Chemical characteristics:
     - moisture: < 2 %,
     - fat content: ≥ 55 % in dry matter,
     - oleic and linoleic acid content: ≥ 88 % of total fat.

   — Organoleptic characteristics: the peeled roasted almonds are cream to light brown in colour, with a shiny appearance and oily feel. Hard, friable, crunchy texture. Slightly sweet taste, not at all sour or astringent, with a trace of bitterness from the roasting. Intense, roasted and caramelised aroma. The unpeeled almonds retain their rough, brown skin, which is friable and comes off easily.

3.3. Raw materials (for processed products only)

3.4. Feed (for products of animal origin only)

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

   Almonds covered by the protected geographical indication must be grown, stored, hulled, peeled and roasted on the island of Mallorca.

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

   Packaging at the place of origin is the last stage in the process and is essential in order to preserve the product and guarantee its quality characteristics.

   Isolation from the environment is essential in order to guarantee the quality of the almonds, as an increase in water content would alter their chemical composition and affect their organoleptic characteristics. The only way to preserve their quality is by isolating them in suitable, well-sealed packaging which protects them from humidity. The reason for packaging at source is therefore to preserve their organoleptic characteristics over a period of time.

   Almonds covered by the protected geographical indication are marketed in homogeneous batches and in packaging holding up to a maximum of 25 kg.
The almonds must be packaged within the geographical production area. These operations must be carried out within the defined geographical area in order to:

1. preserve the product’s typical characteristics and safeguard quality:

   There is a very long tradition of almond production and consumption on the island of Mallorca. Packaging in the defined geographical area is crucial to preserving the almonds’ specific characteristics and their quality. This allows producers and the protected geographical indication inspection body to implement and monitor the rules on transport, processing and packaging of the almonds. Drawing on their experience they can adopt the practices that will best ensure that the final product is of the requisite quality. In other words, the producers and handlers in the defined geographical area have the know-how acquired from experience to avoid operations which could impair the quality of ‘Almendra de Mallorca’ and, in particular, to ensure that there are no bitter almonds, rancidity, mould or broken fruit.

   The PGI almonds are distinguished from other almonds by their organoleptic characteristics. Mallorca is an island so if the almonds were transported elsewhere in bulk it would be by sea and the journey would be long. The almonds could be affected by humidity and temperature, which could alter their texture, taste and aroma, making them go soft and/or rancid and thereby impairing their final quality;

2. guarantee traceability and the origin of the product:

   The control and certification system guarantees the origin and traceability of the product provided that it is prepared, handled and packaged on the island, but not if these operations are performed outside the area of production.

   Almonds can get mixed together with other almonds (from elsewhere), so if handling and packaging outside the defined geographical area were permitted, it would no longer be possible to guarantee the origin of ‘Almendra de Mallorca’.

3.7. Specific rules concerning labelling

   The following must appear on the label of each pack of PGI almonds:

   1. the name of the protected geographical indication;

   2. the words ‘Indicación Geográfica Protegida’ and the PGI logo; and

   3. a label bearing an alphanumeric code (continuous numbering).

4. Concise definition of the geographical area

   The almonds must be grown, stored, husked, peeled, roasted and packaged on the island of Mallorca in the Autonomous Community of the Balearic Islands, Spain.

5. Link with the geographical area

5.1. Specificity of the geographical area

   On the island of Mallorca the almonds are grown on chalky soil, of medium to hard consistency, containing a large amount of coarse matter and very poor in organic material. The pH tends to be alkaline and the soil has a high calcium carbonate content and is made up of horizontal strata between which a large quantity of fine clays accumulate, which are excellent for the development of the almond trees’ root system. Other specific characteristics are the medium levels of rainfall and long hours of sunshine.

   Regarding the producers’ contribution, it should be noted that one of the features of almond growing on Mallorca is that the tradition of seed propagation has been maintained for longer than in the rest of Spain, and indigenous varieties were used for the first grafts. This has helped to maintain varietal
diversity, with most of the varieties grown in Mallorca being different from those grown elsewhere in Spain. Traditionally, Mallorcan farmers have always selected the varieties which produce the most unctuous and aromatic almonds and are best adapted to the island’s soil and climate.

Almond growing in Mallorca goes back to Roman times and it is possible that the first trees were planted by the Romans. In the 18th century, the almond groves expanded considerably and in the 19th century the phylloxera attack on vines led to crop conversion and large-scale planting of almond trees. Today, the almond trees in bloom are a typical feature of the island’s winter landscape.

5.2. Specificity of the product

‘Almendra de Mallorca’ is distinguished by a high fat content (> 55 %), of which oleic and linoleic acid account for 88 % or more. These fatty acids have a low melting point and liquefy when the almonds are chewed. Together, these factors give the product its characteristic unctuousness and intense aroma.

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 link between ‘Almendra de Mallorca’, ‘Almendra Mallorquina’, ‘Ametlla de Mallorca’ and ‘Ametlla Mallorquina’ and the geographical area derives from its reputation. A reputation that has been acquired over the centuries due to its organoleptic characteristics and economic and gastronomic importance.

This reputation is confirmed by fact that the almonds are highly prized by Mallorcan consumers: a consumer survey carried out in 2010 by the Instituto de Calidad Agroalimentaria de las Islas Baleares showed that 52.4 % of almond consumers believed Mallorcan almonds were of higher quality, and in 93.3 % of cases the reason for this was that they had more flavour.

The importance and reputation of ‘Almendra de Mallorca’ is also confirmed in numerous writings and publications. Examples include: Crónica de las Islas Baleares by Fernando Fulgosio (1870), El almendro y su cultivo en el mediodía de España e Islas Baleares (1907) by Pedro Estelrich and Historia económica de España, siglos X-XX by Francisco Comín, Mauro Hernández and Enrique Llopis. In his book Die Balearen (1869), Archduke Ludwig Salvator notes the importance of ‘Almendra de Mallorca’ to the island’s economy. On 25 June 1892, issue No 5 of El Agricultor Balear, a magazine on the theory and practice of farming and ancillary sciences, reported that: ‘The varieties of almond shown by Gabriel Fuster at the Barcelona Universal Exposition came from all corners of Mallorca and made such an impression at the fair that the jury awarded them a gold medal’. In No 20 of the Panorama Balear series (1953) entitled Economia Balear, Antoni Colom wrote that almonds were Mallorca’s most reliable source of income. In 1941, 1 698 219 kg of almonds were sold in Spain, of which 1 140 616 kg were Mallorcan almonds. According to F. Saura-Calixto (1979), in the 1970s ‘Almendra de Mallorca’ accounted for 50 % of national almond production.

There are also numerous writings and publications confirming the reputation of the Catalan name ‘Ametlla de Mallorca’/‘Ametlla Mallorquina’. The first, dated 6 January 1593, is in the Llucmajor Municipal Archive (Revista de la Cámara Agrícola Balear, Year III, No 11, 1901). ‘Ametlla de Mallorca’ is also found a number of times in the Llibret de Versos by Teodoro Llorente Olivares (1884), as quoted in Mossen Alcover and Francesc de Borja Mol’s Catalan-Valenciano-Balear dictionary (1930). From Joan Miralles and Catalina Cantallops’ 1989 edition of recipes by the Mallorcan friar Jaume Martí i Oliver, it is evident that in the 17th century ‘Ametlla de Mallorca’ was already an important ingredient in Mallorcan cuisine. In Aliments de les Balears, a book published by the Government of the Balearic Islands in 1993, it is also noted that ‘Ametlla Mallorquina’ was widely cultivated in the 18th century. In the study entitled ‘Caracterización, valoración nutricional y estudio de la importancia para la salud de algunos alimentos tradicionales de la zona 5B de la Comunidad Autónoma de las Islas Baleares’ carried...
out by the University of the Balearic Islands (1994), 'Ametlla Mallorquina' is described as a traditional Mallorcan product. Of particular significance is a quote from Les Illes a la taula, published by the Government of the Balearic Islands in 2001, which notes that 'Ametlla Mallorquina' has a higher fat and sugar content than Californian almonds, which gives it more flavour.

Other writings and publications mention the culinary uses of 'Almendra de Mallorca', showing that the product has had a major influence on the island's food culture and been part of its culinary tradition for centuries. There are countless culinary references to 'Almendra de Mallorca', both raw and roasted. For example, the recipes of brother Jaume Martí y Oliver, where almonds feature as an ingredient in 17th century Mallorcan cuisine. The connection between 'Almendra de Mallorca' and fine cuisine is evidenced by countless publications, for example: Libro de Recetas de Can Esteva (1862) by Antoni Esteva Oliver, Nuestra Cocina by Luis Ripoll and Repostería Balear by Catalina Juan del Corral (1987). In Die Balearen (1869), Archduke Ludwig Salvator mentions a number of popular dishes containing Mallorcan almonds, raw or roasted. Mateo Jaume de Ca'n Joan de S'Aigo’s collection of recipes (1884-1885) entitled Libro de Jelats includes the most traditional Mallorcan ice cream: almond ice cream.

The excellent reputation of 'Almendra de Mallorca' is also due to its organoleptic attributes, which derive from its chemical composition. Notable features are its high fat content and its fatty acid profile, with oleic and linoleic acids accounting for more than 88 % of the fat content. So the fat content is high and the fact that the fatty acids (88 %) have a low melting point of less than 15 °C means that they liquefy when the almonds are chewed. Together, these factors give 'Almendra de Mallorca' the characteristic unctuousness and intense aroma which are the basis for its reputation.

These distinctive physical, chemical and organoleptic characteristics derive in particular from the soil and climate in the geographical area of production. The limestone soils with a low organic matter content, the medium levels of rainfall and long hours of sunshine produce a small yield per hectare but the fruit has a high average fat content (59 %), which is higher than that of almonds from other regions. This fact was confirmed by a study carried out by the University of the Balearic Islands in 2010.

Publication reference of the specification
(Article 5(7) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 (1))

http://www.caib.es/sacmicrofront/contenido.do?mkey=M63&lang=CA&cont=46322

(1) See footnote 2.