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

(2007/C 85/02)

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 from the date of this publication.

SUMMARY

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006

‘KARLOVARSKÉ OPLATKY’

EC No: CZ/PGI/005/0381/20.10.2004

PDO ( ) PGI ( X )

This summary sets out the main elements of the product specification for information purposes.

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   Composition: producers/processors ( X ) Other ( )

3. type of product:

   Class 2.4: Biscuits — wafers

4. Specification:

   (summary of requirements under Article 4(2) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006)

4.1. Name: ‘Karlovarské oplatky’

4.2. Description: Karlovarské oplatky are produced according to a traditional recipe in the form of flat rounds of about 19 cm in diameter. They are composed of two thin wafer sheets bearing a characteristic relief depicting, in a 30 mm-wide strip around the outer edge, a branch which is in leaf, below which is the circular inscription ‘Karlovarské oplatky’, which is at least 20 mm wide. In the middle of the wafer is a symbol of the spa town of Karlovy Vary — either a mineral water fountain or a chamois, which, according to legend, is associated with the founding of Karlovy Vary. Among the raw materials used in their production, Karlovy Vary medicinal thermal spring water plays a significant role in determining their taste and in moistening the wafer sheets. The wafer sheets are assembled into a single wafer by baking after being sprinkled with a sugar-and-hazelnut mixture or, depending on the variety, a mixture of a different flavour, most often almond, cocoa, vanilla or cinnamon. The wafers are crisp, light, thin and round, and bear a relief on their surface. They are also have a distinctive flavour and odour.

The basic raw materials for Karlovarské oplatky are wheat flour, Karlovy Vary medicinal thermal spring water, vegetable fat, sugar, milk, egg mix, starch, baking powder, butter and, depending on the type of sprinkling mixture used, hazelnuts, almonds, cocoa powder, vanilla or cinnamon.

Karlovy Vary medicinal thermal spring water, which is used in the production of Karlovarské oplatky, has specific properties that are characteristic of the defined area. It is the properties of Karlovy Vary medicinal thermal spring water that give the wafer its distinctive characteristics, in particular its crispness and specific odour and taste. Karlovy Vary medicinal thermal spring water is a natural bicarbonate-sulphate-chloride type water which seeps to the surface through a tectonic fracture from a depth of more than 800 m at a temperature of 73 °C and contains lithium, sodium, potassium, rubidium, caesium, copper, beryllium, magnesium, calcium, strontium, zinc, cadmium, aluminium, tin, lead, arsenic, antimony, selenium, manganese, iron, cobalt, nickel, fluorides, chlorides, bromides, sulphates, bicarbonates, carbonates and silicic acid. It has been used for centuries in Karlovy Vary, the biggest Czech spa, to treat chronic stomach ulcers, dyskineses of bile excretory ducts, including postcholecystectomy syndrome, chronic disorders of the pancreas and liver, and bladder calculus and gout. Karlovarské oplatky are easily digestible and have a low calorific value, and this is due to their composition and, in particular, the use of Karlovy Vary medicinal thermal spring water.

Karlovarské oplatky are produced by the piece. They are packaged in boxes of five pieces (125 g), six pieces (150 g) or eight pieces (200 g).

4.3. Geographical area: The area covered by the spa town of Karlovy Vary.

4.4. Proof of origin: Production conforms to the food production rules in force, and the HACCP system is used during the production process. Producers keep registers of suppliers of raw materials and purchasers of finished products. Each product is accompanied by information on the producer. Compliance with the specification is monitored by the local office of competent State authority, namely the Plzeň Area Inspectorate of the Czech Agriculture and Food Inspection Authority (Státní zemědělská a potravinářská inspekce).

4.5. Method of production: Karlovarské oplatky are composed of two thin round sheets of wafer having a diameter of about 19 cm and bearing a distinctive relief. The batter is prepared by mixing the ingredients listed above (see 4.2) with fresh Karlovy Vary thermal spring water, and the vegetable fat must first be heated so that it melts. The well-mixed liquid, slightly yellowish batter, which does not increase in volume as it contains no leavening agent (in contrast to other baked products), is left to stand at a temperature of 20–26 °C for about 60 minutes before being poured into the reservoir of a rotary baking oven. The wafer sheets are baked by piping thin batter onto rotary baking trays (the equipment normally used for baking wafers) at a temperature of 220 °C, where the traditional production process results in a wafer thickness of up to 2 mm. The wafers sheets produced in this manner are placed for at least 48 hours in a moistening chamber, where Karlovy Vary medicinal thermal spring water is again used, this time to produce the moisture to which they are exposed. The wafer sheets must be specially arranged and weighted down in the moistening chamber so that they are moistened correctly and do not become deformed. The temperature in the moistening chamber must reach 40 °C, with 90 % humidity. At the end of the production process, the wafer sheets are placed on special rotary baking trays (of the type normally used for combining wafer sheets, which differ from the rotary ovens used to produce the wafer sheets in that they do not apply any relief) at a temperature of 180 °C, and two wafer sheets are assembled into a single wafer by baking after being sprinkled with sugar-and-hazelnut mixture, or another flavour of mixture, depending on the variety (see 4.2). The sprinkling mixture is prepared by crushing and mixing the individual ingredients into a fine powder, which is then applied by hand to the bottom sheet of wafer in such a way as to obtain an even layer of no more than 1 mm, covered with the other sheet of wafer and baked through. In order to maintain the product’s quality and specific properties, it is essential that at least the mixing of the batter, and the baking, resting and the assembly of the wafers take place in the defined area.
4.6. **Link:** The specific characteristics of Karlovarské oplatky are imparted by the use of Karlovy Vary thermal spring water and its specific properties, obtained from springs in the defined geographical area, and by the traditional recipe (see 4.2).

The first historical references to the production of Karlovarské oplatky in the defined geographical area date from the mid-18th century. These take the form of the oldest preserved wafer-making irons, which are now in the Karlovy Vary museum, and a written reference dating from 1788, published in a book entitled Karlsbad, Beschrieben zur Bequemlichkeit der hohen Gäste. Karlovarské oplatky were originally home-baked, the first known wafer bakery (albeit a small one that was part of a hotel kitchen) was apparently at the Hotel U zlatého štítu, operated around 1810 by Anna Grasmuck, wife of Count Josef von Bolza. Nevertheless, it is likely that until the middle of the 19th century demand for Karlovarské oplatky was covered almost exclusively by home-baked produce.

Bakeries specialising in the production of Karlovarské oplatky did not begin to appear until the second half of the 19th century. What is probably the most famous such bakery, Bayer, whose products were supplied to Kaiser Wilhelm I of Germany and won a number of awards at international exhibitions, was established in 1867. In 1904 there were already 22 bakeries producing Karlovarské oplatky in the defined geographical area. At that time, they were producing some four million wafers a year.

The production and sales of Karlovarské oplatky increased until the pre-war period, i.e. until 1939. At that time, Karlovarské oplatky were being produced by 26 specialised producers in the defined geographical area, i.e. in the spa town of Karlovy Vary. After the Second World War, production continued in about half of the firms under the direction of 'national administrators'. Following nationalisation in 1948, Karlovarské oplatky were produced until 1989 in the Karlovy Vary factory of the national enterprise Orion.

After the reintroduction of a market economy, the tradition of producing Karlovarské oplatky in the defined geographical area was carried on by members of the Karlovarské oplatky Producers' Association.

The production of Karlovarské oplatky in Karlovy Vary has been handed down for more than two centuries. Thanks to the single-minded and patient work of local producers, this popular confection has become a speciality of the town of Karlovy Vary.

Karlovarské oplatky achieved their renown and recognition in the last century and the century before that. They were awarded a gold medal at the 1900 Paris World Exposition. In recent times, they were, as a typical Czech product, one of the best-selling products at the Czech pavilion at the EXPO 2000 Universal World Fair in Hanover, as confirmed by the Commissioner-General for the Czech Republic.

On 1 February 1974, the designation of origin Karlovarské oplatky was registered in the Czech register of designations of origin under entry No 72.

4.7. **Inspection body:**

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4.8. **Labelling:** ‘Karlovarské oplatky’

The product designation must appear as the chief feature on the front of the product and/or its packaging.