

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

(2014/C 122/05)

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⁾.

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006

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

РОЗОВО МАСЛО' (BULGARSKO ROZOVO MASLO)

EC No BG-PGI-0005-01050 – 26.10.2012

PGI (X) PDO ()

1. Name

'Българско розово масло' (Bulgarsko rozovo maslo)

2. Member State or Third Country

Bulgaria

3. Description of the agricultural product or foodstuff

3.1. Type of product

Class 3.2: Essential oils

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

'Bulgarsko rozovo maslo' is an essential oil obtained by means of the steam distillation of flowers of the Damask rose (*Rosa damascena* Mill.).

External appearance: Oily transparent liquid

Colour: Yellow or yellowish green

Smell: Characteristic aroma of roses

Physico-chemical indicators: These are determined by means of gas chromatography. The representative and typical constituents that have been identified are present in the following proportions, and this is what determines the oil's chromatographic profile:

Constituents	Content (%)
ETHANOL	up to 3,0
LINALOL	between 1,0 and 3,0
PHENYLETHYL ALCOHOL	up to 3,0
CITRONELLOL	between 24,0 and 35,0
NEROL	between 5,0 and 12,0
GERANIOL	between 13,0 and 22,0
GERANYL ACETATE	up to 1,5
EUGENOL	up to 2,5
METHYLEUGENOL	up to 2,0
FARNESOL	at least 1,4

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 343, 14.12.2012, p. 1.

⁽²⁾ OJ L 93, 31.3.2006, p. 12. Replaced by Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012.

Constituents	Content (%)
HYDROCARBONS:	
C ₁₇ (heptadecane)	between 1,0 and 2,5
C ₁₉ (nonadecane) (*)	between 8,0 and 15,0
C ₁₉ (nonadecene) (**)	between 2,0 and 5,0
C ₂₁ (heneicosane)	between 3,0 and 5,5
C ₂₃ (tricosane)	between 0,5 and 1,5

(*) a saturated hydrocarbon with the chemical formula $\text{CH}_3(\text{CH}_2)_{17}\text{CH}_3$
(**) a non-saturated hydrocarbon (with one or more double carbon bonds) with the chemical formula $\text{CH}_3(\text{CH}_2)_{16}\text{CH} = \text{CH}_2$

3.3. Raw materials (for processed products only)

(a) Damask rose (*Rosa damascena* Mill.)

Fresh rose blossom comprising the petals and sepals of roses of the species *Rosa damascena* Mill., with shoots, leaves and buds removed, and without any mechanical impurities (e.g. mud, stones).

(b) Water

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

Picking, transporting and storage of rose blossom:

The picking of rose blossom usually begins in May, starting in fields at elevations of 300-400 m above sea-level and continuing for about 20-25 days, when the rose blossoms have attained the required maturity and have 14-40 pinkish red petals and a pleasant and characteristic fragrance. The picking of rose blossom begins at 5-6 a.m. and continues until 11-12 noon. The quality of 'Bulgarsko rozovo maslo' is guaranteed by compliance with the requirement that the rose blossoms be processed not later than 10-15 hours after they have been picked, so as to preserve the raw material's freshness and quality.

The blossom is transported to the distilleries immediately after picking, and distilling is carried out round the clock. The rose blossom is sorted, some for immediate processing and some for storage for no more than 15 hours (when the weather is cool and the temperature of the blossom is no more than 20° C) prior to distillation, depending on the time when it was picked.

Processing of the rose blossom – processing stages:

Distillation: The rose blossom is placed in the still in a volume equal to 100 kg per cubic metre and is mixed with water in a ratio of 1:4 to 1:5; this mixture is heated and is transformed by the steam and water into a boiling paste, which is stirred using an automatic device. The essential oils extracted by the steam are cooled and conveyed into receiving flasks, in which they are collected. About 3 500 kg of rose blossom is needed to obtain 1 kg of rose oil.

Cohobation (concentration) of the distilled liquid: is carried out in a continuously operating cohobation column in which the initial distillate undergoes multiple redistillation.

Separation, dehydration and filtration of the rose oil: the essential oil is separated in Florentine vessels, after which any mechanical impurities and water are removed by heating it to 30 °C and filtration.

Blending: Commercial batches are prepared by combining (blending) the rose oil produced in one installation (companies' own blends) or by blending oil produced in various installations.

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

Storage: On separate protected premises, including in bank vaults, at a temperature of 15 ± 5 °C, out of direct sunlight and away from heat sources, in sealed heat-resistant glass vessels with a capacity of up to 5 000 g fitted with special stoppers preventing direct contact with air, or in lacquer-coated aluminium tanks.

Transport and packaging: In lacquer-coated aluminium tanks or in traditional cylindrical vessels (*konkumi*) whose necks are closed by means of corks and a welded metal plate on top), or in glass jars and vials. The traditional vessels are wrapped in white cloth with traditional accessories, namely a tricolour ribbon and string and a guarantee certificate tied around their necks. Packagings differ and vary in weight from 0,5 g to 5 000 g. The traditional vessels or tanks are transported in standard wooden cases, boxes certified for the carriage of hazardous goods, or ordinary strong corrugated cardboard boxes, subject to a weight limit of 10 kg net.

3.7. *Specific rules concerning labelling*

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

The geographical region where 'Bulgarsko rozovo maslo' is produced includes the following municipalities:

— in Plovdiv Province: Brezovo, Kaloyanovo, Karlovo, Sopot, Stamboliyski, Saedinenie and Hisarya,

— in Stara Zagora Province: Bratya Daskalovi, Gurkovo, Kazanlak, Maglizh, Nikolaevo, Pavel Banya and Stara Zagora,

— in Pazardzhik Province: Belovo, Bratsigovo, Pazardzhik, Panagyurishte, Peshtera and Strelcha,

— in Sofia Province: Ihtiman, Koprivshitsa and Mirkovo

5. **Link with the geographical area**

5.1. *Specificity of the geographical area*

Natural and climatic factors

The Damask rose is traditionally grown in the Valley of Roses (Rozovata Dolina) in Central Bulgaria at elevations between 370 and 625 m. The region is characterised by light, sandy brown forest soils which do not retain water, and climatic conditions favourable for growing roses. Thanks to the mild winters and an average annual temperature of 10,6 °C, the blossoms bud in February. The high humidity levels in May and June are optimal for slow and even blooming during the harvesting period.

Historical and human factors

The production of 'Bulgarsko rozovo maslo' is a traditional occupation of the population of the Rozovata Dolina. Over its more than 300-year history the local population has accumulated specialist knowledge of high-quality seed development and rose cultivation and brought technological innovation to the industry. The harvest takes place over a 20 to 30-day period and requires special skills: between several hours before daybreak and the early morning only blossoms with at least one open petal are picked with the sepals, without damaging the stem or the branches. Closed buds are left on the stem for later harvesting. Only experienced distillers are qualified to judge when the blossom is ready to be put in the stills, determine the ratio of blossom to water and decide the optimal distillation temperature. These skills are handed down from generation to generation and serve to improve the stills in which 'Bulgarsko rozovo maslo' is made, ensuring a consistently high quality of the end product.

5.2. *Specificity of the product*

The specific and distinctive characteristics of 'Bulgarsko rozovo maslo' are its rich aroma, its pale, yellowish-green colour, its very good fixative qualities, its long-lingering aroma, and its balanced composition of volatile substances and hydrocarbons.

The chemical characteristics of 'Bulgarsko rozovo maslo' are closely linked to the region's geographical traits and set it apart from rose oils produced in other parts of the world. These are: a 24-35 % citronellol content (compared with 39-49 % for producers elsewhere in the world); a ratio of citronellol to geraniol of 1,1:2,5 (compared with 2,3:4,8 for producers elsewhere in the world); A distinguishing characteristic of 'Bulgarsko rozovo maslo' is the presence of a great many typical components such as farnesol and geranyl acetate, and a low methyleugenol content.

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 specific qualities of 'Bulgarsko rozovo maslo' result from the combined action of factors linked to the geographical area. Climatic conditions influencing the even blooming, the yield and the blossom's oil content are the mild temperatures (15–25 °C), the high atmospheric humidity (over 60 %), the limited variation between day-time and night-time temperatures, and the sufficient degree of soil moisture. These conditions ensure that the roses bloom evenly and fully and accumulate large quantities of high-quality rose oil. To extract as much of the valuable constituents as possible, the technique used to produce 'Bulgarsko rozovo maslo' requires the rose blossom to be processed round the clock, immediately after harvesting; for this reason the distilleries are located in close proximity to the rose fields.

Production of 'Bulgarsko rozovo maslo', and its development, started in the 17th century and has been described by Dr Kosyo Zarev in his book *Bulgarskoto rozoproizvodstvo i traditsionnata kultura* (Rose production and traditional cultivation in Bulgaria), published in 2008. In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, 'Bulgarsko rozovo maslo' captured markets around the world. Bulgaria became the main supplier to Europe's perfume industry. 'Bulgarsko rozovo maslo' used to be widely applied in medicine as a valuable drug, and in cooking as aromatic seasoning.

Soon after the fledgling Bulgarian Principality was created in 1878 the first laws were enacted regulating the quality and purity of 'Bulgarsko rozovo maslo'. A book entitled *Parva konferentsia varhu Rozovata industrija* ('The first conference on the rose industry'), published in 1906., explains: 'After the ministerial decree banning the import of geraniums was issued in 1889, the price of "Bulgarsko rozovo maslo" immediately soared to unimaginable heights.'

Official reports to the Bulgarian Foreign Ministry from its consulates and legations in New York (USA), Vichy (France) and North Perth (Australia) and testimony from 1939-45 point to a strong interest in 'Bulgarsko rozovo maslo', which continued even during World War II. A letter of 19 December 1939 from the Royal Bulgarian Consulate to the Ministry, still written in old Bulgarian spelling, reports that 'Mr William A. Hoffman, a chemical engineer currently based in New York, has informed us that that he wishes and is able to set up a regular trade in "Bulgarsko rozovo maslo" on very favourable terms for both parties'. In a letter dated 20 January 1941, an economic adviser to the Ministry, Mr K. Dobrev, informed the Royal Legation in Vichy of 'conditions under which "Bulgarsko rozovo maslo" could be sold in occupied France'. A letter dated 24 February 1944 informed the Ministry that 'the price of "Bulgarsko rozovo maslo" now stands at 5 000 Swiss Francs per kilogramme.' The East-West Trading Company of Australia wrote on 5 October 1945 that 'moreover we would be very interested in "Bulgarsko rozovo maslo" or in representing its manufacturers in Australia'.

'Bulgarsko rozovo maslo' has built up and maintained its international popularity and worldwide reputation by winning numerous awards at international exhibitions and fairs from the 1880s to the present day. In a chapter entitled 'Awards won by Bulgarian rose oil' in his book *Bulgarskoto rozoproizvodstvo i traditsionnata kultura* (Rose production and traditional cultivation in Bulgaria), Dr Kosyo Zarev writes: 'The high-quality of Bulgarian rose oil has won dozens of medals and awards at many exhibitions, shows and trade fairs'. Zarev goes on to mention that manufacturing and trading companies for 'Bulgarsko rozovo maslo' won gold, silver and bronze medals in the late 19th and early 20th centuries at fairs in Vienna (1873), Philadelphia (1876), Chicago (1895), Grasse (1902), Paris, Antwerp (1894), Amsterdam, Liège, Milan and London. The book also mentions the awards 'Bulgarsko rozovo maslo' has won in Bulgaria itself, namely the Plovdiv Fair and the 1968 Third International Essential Oils Conference.

Festivities marking the tricentenary of Bulgaria's rose oil industry were held in 1964, and the Bulgarian Chamber of Commerce and Bulgarian Rose Directorate awarded gold medals and awards to various organisations that had contributed to the industry's development. The traditional Rose Festival has been held every year since 1903, with recreations of rose picking and distilling as some of its regular features.

Before the Second World War, 'Bulgarsko rozovo maslo' met 70-90 % of world demand for rose oil. Currently Bulgaria produces 1,5 to 2 tonnes annually, which is mainly exported. It now meets 40-50 % of global demand, according to a report by the Institute for Roses and Essential Oil Crops in Kazanlak issued for the jubilee scientific session of 2 July 2007.

In 1994 'Bulgarsko rozovo maslo' was entered in the Bulgarian State Patents Register as a protected designation of origin under No 052-01.

Reference to publication of the specification

(Article 5(7) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006) ⁽³⁾

<http://www.mzh.government.bg/MZH/bg/ShortLinks/ZashiteniNaimenovania/Zaiavlenie.aspx>

⁽³⁾ See footnote 2.