



C/2024/2110

11.3.2024

Publication of an application for registration of a name 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

(C/2024/2110)

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⁾ within three months from the date of this publication.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

'ISTARSKI MED / ISTRSKI MED'

EU No: PDO-HR+SI-2833 – 14.3.2022

PDO (X) PGI ()

1. Name(s) [of PDO or PGI]

'Istarski med / Istrski med'

2. Member States or Third Country

Republic of Croatia and Republic of Slovenia

3. Description of the agricultural product or foodstuff

3.1. Type of product

Class 1.4. Other products of animal origin (eggs, honey, various dairy products except butter, etc.).

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

'Istarski med' / 'Istrski med' is a honey produced by *Apis mellifera* bees from the nectar of melliferous plants or from secretions of living parts of plants or excretions of plant-sucking insects on the living parts of plants, which the bees collect, transform by combining with specific substances of their own, deposit, dehydrate, store and leave in honeycombs to ripen and mature.

Physico-chemical characteristics:

- Water content $\leq 18,6$ %,
- Diastase activity ≥ 10 , except for black locust honey, which is ≥ 3 , on the Schade scale
- HMF $\leq 15,0$ mg/kg

Pollen characteristics:

The pollen spectrum of 'Istarski med' / 'Istrski med' must reflect the vegetation of the area defined in point 4. Depending on the type of honey, pollen from nectar plant species of the following families accounts for a large proportion of the spectrum: *Fabaceae*, *Sapindaceae*, *Rhamnaceae*, *Cornaceae*, *Brassicaceae*, *Loranthaceae*, *Malvaceae*, *Liliaceae*, *Lamiaceae*, *Fagaceae*, *Rosaceae*, *Apiaceae*, *Salicaceae*, *Adoxaceae*, *Ericaceae*, *Asteraceae*, *Oleaceae*, *Araliaceae*, *Ranunculaceae*, *Asphodelaceae*, *Anacardiaceae*. Small amounts of pollen from nectar plant species of the following families may also be present: *Aquifoliaceae*, *Boraginaceae*, *Amaryllidaceae*, *Asparagaceae*, *Scrophulariaceae*, *Urticaceae*, *Campanulaceae*, *Fumariaceae* and others.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 343, 14.12.2012, p. 1, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2012/1151/oj>.

Pollen from non-nectar plant species of the following families may also be present in 'Istarski med' / 'Istrski med': *Quercus* spp., *Fraxinus* spp., *Helianthemum* spp., *Papaver* spp., *Plantago* spp., *Betula* spp., *Alnus* spp., *Carex* spp., *Pinus* spp., *Cistus* spp., Poaceae and Pinaceae, *Fragaria vesca*, *Cupressus sempervirens*, *Olea europaea*, *Filipendula ulmaria*, *Vitis vinifera*, *Corylus avellana*, and others in lower proportions.

Physico-chemical characteristics:

Type of honey	Electrical conductivity
Black locust honey	≤ 0,25 mS/cm
Sage honey	0,20–0,55 mS/cm
Chestnut honey	≥ 0,8 mS/cm
Blossom honey	≤ 0,8 mS/cm
Deciduous honeydew honey	≥ 0,8 mS/cm
Winter savory honey	≤ 0,8 mS/cm
Linden honey	0,5–1,1 mS/cm

Melissopalynological characteristics:

	Description
Black locust honey	It must contain black locust (<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i> L.) pollen, and accompanying pollen from the following plants may appear: Rosaceae, Fabaceae, <i>Cornus sanguinea</i> , <i>Prunus</i> spp., Poaceae, <i>Salix</i> spp., <i>Fragaria vesca</i> , <i>Quercus</i> spp., <i>Fraxinus</i> spp., <i>Lotus</i> spp., <i>Ligustrum vulgare</i> , <i>Helianthemum</i> spp. Isolated pollen from the following plants may appear: <i>Cornus mas</i> , <i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i> , Apiaceae, <i>Loranthus europaeus</i> , <i>Acer</i> spp., <i>Pinus</i> spp., <i>Plantago</i> spp., <i>Filipendula ulmaria</i> , <i>Castanea sativa</i> , Lamiaceae, Brassicaceae, <i>Asparagus</i> spp., <i>Tilia</i> spp., <i>Taraxacum officinale</i> , <i>Phacelia tanacetifolia</i> , <i>Paliurus spina christi</i> , <i>Olea europea</i> , Asteraceae (the genus <i>Solidago</i>).
Sage honey	It must contain at least 15 % sage (<i>Salvia officinalis</i> L.) pollen. Accompanying pollen from the following plants may appear: Rosaceae, <i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i> , <i>Quercus</i> spp., <i>Prunus</i> spp., <i>Paliurus spina christi</i> , <i>Olea europea</i> , <i>Ligustrum vulgare</i> . Isolated pollen from the following plants may appear: Poaceae, <i>Pistacia</i> spp., Lamiaceae, <i>Filipendula ulmaria</i> , <i>Cornus sanguinea</i> ,
Chestnut honey	It must contain at least 85 % sweet chestnut (<i>Castanea sativa</i> Mill.) pollen. Isolated pollen from the following plants may appear: <i>Paliurus spina christi</i> , Fabaceae, Rosaceae, <i>Pistacia</i> spp., <i>Prunus</i> spp., <i>Salix</i> spp.
Blossom honey	It may contain variable proportions of pollen from the following plants: Fabaceae, Rosaceae, <i>Quercus</i> spp., <i>Prunus</i> spp., Poaceae, <i>Paliurus spina christi</i> , <i>Acer</i> spp., fungal spores, <i>Salix</i> spp., Apiaceae, <i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i> , <i>Fraxinus</i> spp., <i>Fragaria vesca</i> , <i>Cornus sanguinea</i> , <i>Lotus</i> spp., Lamiaceae, <i>Castanea sativa</i> , <i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i>

Deciduous honeydew honey	The ratio of the number of honeydew elements (fungal spores, parts of hyphae, green algae) to the pollen grains of nectar plant species must be at least 1.5, with variable proportions of pollen from the following plants: Fabaceae, <i>Castanea sativa</i> , Rosaceae, <i>Salix</i> spp., <i>Paliurus spina christi</i> , <i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i> , <i>Cornus sanguinea</i> , <i>Prunus</i> spp., <i>Lotus</i> spp., Poaceae, <i>Quercus</i> spp., <i>Olea europea</i> , <i>Fraxinus</i> spp., <i>Filipendula ulmaria</i> , <i>Fragaria vesca</i> , Asteraceae (the genus <i>Solidago</i>), Apiaceae, <i>Tilia</i> spp., <i>Taraxacum officinale</i> , <i>Pinus</i> spp., <i>Loranthus europaeus</i> , Liliaceae, <i>Ligustrum vulgare</i> , Lamiaceae, <i>Helianthemum</i> spp., <i>Cornus mas</i> , Brassicaceae, Asteraceae (the genus <i>Taraxacum</i>), <i>Acer</i> spp.
Winter savory honey	It must contain at least 20 % winter savory (<i>Satureja montana</i> L.) pollen. Accompanying pollen from the following plants may appear: <i>Hedera helix</i> , <i>Satureja montana</i> , Fabaceae, <i>Tilia</i> spp., Rosaceae. Isolated pollen from the following plants may appear: <i>Castanea sativa</i> , <i>Echium vulgare</i> , <i>Filipendula ulmaria</i> , Liliaceae, Poaceae, Asteraceae (the genus <i>Solidago</i>), Asteraceae (the genus <i>Taraxacum</i>), <i>Centaurea jacea</i> , <i>Fragaria vesca</i> .
Linden honey	It must contain at least 25 % linden (<i>Tilia</i> sp.) pollen. Accompanying pollen from the following plants may appear: Rosaceae, <i>Quercus</i> spp., Poaceae, <i>Paliurus spina christi</i> , Fabaceae, <i>Castanea sativa</i> , <i>Fraxinus</i> spp., Asteraceae (the genus <i>Solidago</i>). Isolated pollen from the following plants may appear: <i>Vitis vinifera</i> , <i>Trifolium</i> spp., <i>Sambucus nigra</i> , <i>Ranunculus</i> spp., <i>Phacelia tanacetifolia</i> , Liliaceae, <i>Helichrysum italicum</i> , <i>Helianthus annuus</i> , <i>Centaurea</i> spp., <i>Centaurea jacea</i> , <i>Carex</i> spp., Asteraceae, Apiaceae.

Organoleptic characteristics:

	Colour	Odour	Taste
Black locust honey	bright yellow to yellow, almost colourless	mild, of virgin honeycomb, fresh wax and black locust flower	sweet to very sweet, short-lived
Sage honey	reddish-brown, orangey-red, yellowish-red, amber, with a greenish tinge	of wood, pleasant	slightly tingling, lasting, sweet, slightly bitter
Chestnut honey	reddish-brown	moderately intense to intense, of chestnut flower	intense, bitter to very bitter, long-lasting moderately sweet to sweet
Blossom honey	yellow to dark amber	pleasant, flowery, of stewed fruit, meadow flowers, wax and sugar may be pungent	sweet to very sweet, slightly sour to sour, lasting
Deciduous honeydew honey	bright brown to dark reddish-brown	of wood and caramel, intense	slightly tingling, of wood or caramel, moderately sweet
Winter savory honey	amber reddish	of dried fruit	sweet, lasting and slightly sour
Linden honey	yellow to amber	pronounced, refreshing, of linden flower, menthol, lemon peel and wood	moderately sweet, slightly sour, slightly to moderately bitter, refreshing, lasting

3.3. *Feed (for products of animal origin only) and raw materials (for processed products only)*

—

3.4. *Specific steps in production that must take place in the identified geographical area*

All steps in production, from the pasturing of the bees to extraction, must take place within the geographical area.

3.5. *Specific rules concerning slicing, grating, packaging, etc. of the product the registered name refers to*

The packaging of 'Istarski med' / 'Istrski med' occurs exclusively within the geographical area mentioned in point 4, essentially to ensure the product's traceability and hence its originality and specific characteristics. This helps minimise the possibility of adulteration of the product from mixing with similar products, which is more likely if packaging occurs outside the defined geographical area.

3.6. *Specific rules concerning labelling of the product the registered name refers to*

When placing the product on the market in pre-packaged form, the name 'Istarski med' or 'Istrski med' must be indicated in lettering larger than any other name on the pre-packaging. The labelling must also include a stamp bearing a progressive identification number and the common symbol (logo).

All users of the 'Istarski med' / 'Istrski med' protected designation of origin who place the product on the market in accordance with this specification have the right to use the stamp, under the same conditions.

The common symbol is a drop of honey coloured in alternating grey and black horizontal stripes, set against a yellow hexagon that depicts a stylised honeycomb. Beneath the hexagon is written, in capital letters, 'ISTARSKI MED' in the Croatian variant (Figure 1) and 'ISTRSKI MED' in the Slovenian variant (Figure 2).

Figure 1



Figure 2



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

The production area of 'Istarski med' / 'Istrski med' in Croatia is the Istrian peninsula and its islands in Istria County, followed by the municipalities of Opatija, Lovran, Mošćenička Draga and Matulji, the islands of Cres and Lošinj and their smaller islands of Unije, Ilovik, Susak and Vele Srakane, and a number of uninhabited islets. In Slovenia, the production area comprises the region of Slovenian Istria, which consists of the municipalities of Koper, Izola, Piran and Ankaran.

In Slovenia, the boundaries of the production area coincide with the northern boundary of the municipalities of Ankaran and Koper, which stretches from the border crossing of Lazaret/Lazzaretto on the Slovenian-Italian border to the boundary between the municipalities of Koper and Sežana next to the Dolina Glinščice/Val Rosandra nature park. The geographical area continues along the boundary between the municipalities of Koper and Sežana south of the village of Ocizla and north of the village of Črnotiče, before descending to Slavnik nature park and passing along its north-eastern edge until it reaches the border with Croatia.

5. **Link with the geographical area**

5.1. *Specificity of the geographical area*

Istria is characterised by a rich and diverse flora thanks to a number of favourable circumstances the area enjoys. The first of these is Istria's geographical location, followed by its climate, relief, petrographic basis and soil.

The geographical area also enjoys specific climatic conditions; the climate is very heterogeneous, mainly because, as a peninsula, Istria is surrounded on three sides by the sea, but also because it is located on the northern edge of the Adriatic Sea, at the crossroads between the Mediterranean and the continental part of Eurasia. Depending on the latitude and the characteristics of the relief, Istria is subdivided into three climatic zones. The central and southern coastal part is characterised by a Mediterranean climate, while the northern part and the part further inland has a moderately warm, humid climate, with hot summers. In the northern, continental part, a sub-Mediterranean climate prevails.

The different types of 'Istarski med' / 'Istrski med' vary according to the plant communities, which vary in turn according to the interaction of climate, soil and relief. Geographically, Istria is located on the dividing line between the Mediterranean Sea and the Dinaric and Alpine mountain ranges, so in terms of vegetation it is characterised by the flora of those regions. There are therefore several vegetation areas on the Istrian peninsula, and this diverse vegetation is an important basis for the production of the different types of 'Istarski med' / 'Istrski med'. A narrow edge along the sea forms an area of evergreen forests of holm oak and scrub, a plant world characteristic of the Mediterranean region. The deciduous forests of downy oak and Oriental hornbeam are the most widespread form of forest vegetation in Istria, spread over most of the Istrian mainland, from the belt of evergreen vegetation to which they extend, to the central parts of Istria. This type of vegetation is dominated by downy oak or common oak, which, along with holm oak, is a significant source of honeydew. Chestnut trees can be found on the slopes of Učka, above Lovran, and in western Istria (Bujština), mainly in the forests of Oriental hornbeam and downy oak, on account of the deep acidic soils formed on top of the former red soils. These sweet chestnut stands provide sufficient amounts of nectar, placing the defined area into a category of Croatian regions that is still well preserved, where it is possible to produce chestnut honey that is exceptionally unifloral. There is a widespread community of medicinal sage and feather grass mainly in south-eastern parts of Istria, which are used as pasture plants, providing significant amounts of nectar and ensuring the production of the most prized type of honey characteristic of the Mediterranean climate: sage honey. At the same time, this area is the northernmost point at which medicinal sage is widespread in its native form. The area of downy oak and moor grass is the most diverse part of Istria in terms of vegetation. Most of the black locust stands are located in the central and northern part, but some extend further into the Mediterranean climate zone, where they combine with the Mediterranean flora to provide nectar resources. This, along with the main plant species, affects the specificity of the black locust honey.

In a description of the flora of the Cres-Lošinj archipelago, Wallnöfer (2008) states that of the 1 130 taxa recorded, 253 were reported for Cres alone, and 273 for Lošinj alone. In the northern, sub-Mediterranean, part of the island of Cres, the most significant communities of rocky vegetation are the pastures of medicinal sage, and the community of fescue and koeleria. The area of Osorščice counts some 700 species of plant, accounting for two thirds of the total flora of Lošinj.

Miloš Furlan (2007) says of the characteristics of bee pastures in Slovenian Istria that 'the area has almost all the typical seasonal pastures, from early-spring to the main black-locust (acacia) pastures and sweet-chestnut and autumn pastures on the autumn vegetation, followed by the appearance of honeydew on trees, and the possibility of collecting sweet substances on various ripe fruits, such as figs, grapes and the like.'

5.2. Specificity of the product

The specificity of 'Istarski med' / 'Istrski med' derives from the natural resources on which its production is based. As a rare food product, honey, due to its specificity (the presence of pollen grains), provides a good illustration of the area in which it is produced. Lying on the border of two biogeographical regions – Mediterranean and continental – Istria is an exceptional region when it comes to flora.

Large proportions of the following plant species are found in black locust honey: *Fraxinus*, plants of the Rhamnaceae family, *Salix*, *Loranthus europaeus*, *Cotinus coggyria*, *Prunus* f., *Vicia*, *Trifolium pratense* gr., *Coronilla/Hippocrepis*, *Chamaerops* and *Filipendula*, whereas various studies indicate that the characteristic proportion of black locust pollen ranges from 7 % to 60 %, so when determining origin, attention is paid to identifying specific physical or chemical characteristics.

Further confirmation of the origin of the samples of black locust honey was provided by the very low electrical conductivity values found (0,11–0,18 mS/cm), as those values are typical for black locust honey.

A complete absence of crystallisation of honey – a property that is usually associated with the presence of rapeseed nectar – was also observed. Given the confirmed absence of rapeseed pollen grains, we can conclude that this is a specific characteristic of black locust honey from the Istrian peninsula.

Chestnut honey is known to have a high quantity of pollen, which always accounts for more than 90 % in samples from Istria. In addition, the pollen spectrum of chestnut honey from Istria differs from those produced in neighbouring countries such as in the Alpine region of Italy, where the pollen of plant species of mountain vegetation such as plants of the *Ericaceae* and *Tilia* family dominate.

In samples of blossom honey, pollen found in significant proportions was from *Castanea* and *Prunus* f. and in lower proportions from *Rubus* f., *Clematis*, *Castanea*, *Brassica* f., *Umbelliferae*/Apiaceae, plants of the *Rhamnaceae* family, *Trifolium repens* gr., *Vicia*, *Melilotus* and *Coronilla/Hippocrepis*. The specificity of the pollen spectrum is further supported by the presence of pollen from the following plant species typically found in the region: *Ailanthus*, *Loranthus*, *Asparagus acutifolius*, *Aesculus* and *Cotinus coggyria*.

Apart from nectar types of honey, Istria's beekeepers also produce deciduous honeydew honey with specific characteristics. Analyses of honey samples have shown that the ratio of honeydew elements to pollen grains from nectar plant species ranged from 2,03 to as much as 29,3, with a median value of 8,2, which is far greater than the values required for the classification of honeydew honey (> 3). Similarly, melissopalynological analyses have confirmed a characteristic pollen spectrum in which pollen of non-nectar plant species such as *Fraxinus*, *Quercus*, *Plantago* and *Gramineae/Poaceae* are also present. In addition, the characteristic pollen spectrum of nectar plant species comprises plants of the *Rhamnaceae* family and *Prunus* f., which were present in 100 % of the samples, followed by *Castanea*, *Rubus* f., *Compositae* T, *Brassica* f., *Asparagus acutifolius* and *Clematis*, while *Cotinus coggyria* and *Aesculus* were found in slightly lower proportions.

The specificity of sage honey from Istria is reflected in its botanical origin and the greater presence of pollen from *Robinia pseudoacacia*, *Rosaceae*, *Ligustrum vulgare*, *Fabaceae*, *Ericaceae*, *Acer* spp., *Lotus* spp. and *Salix* spp. It differs from sage honey from the northern Adriatic, where most of the pollen found is from *Rhamnaceae*, *Acer* spp., *Castanea sativa*, *Myosotis* spp., *Prunus* spp. and *Rubus* spp., while the pollen spectrum in Dalmatia is characterised by the presence of pollen from *Paliurus spina christi*, *Erica arborea*, *Trifolium pratense*, *Melilotus* spp., *Centaurea jacea* and *Apiaceae*.

On the basis of the pollen spectrum found in samples of winter savory honey which were analysed, a large proportion of the pollen was from *Hedera helix*, *Fabaceae*, *Tilia* spp., *Rosaceae*, *Castanea sativa*, *Echium vulgare* and *Liliaceae*. This differs significantly from honey samples from Spain, where pollen from *Diploaxis* spp., *Onobrychis vicifolia*, *Centaurea* spp., *Lavandula latifolia*, *Thymus* spp. and *Apiaceae* predominates.

Analyses of samples of linden honey have shown that a large proportion of the pollen is from *Rosaceae*, *Paliurus spina christi*, *Fabaceae*, *Castanea sativa*, *Asteraceae* (the genus *Solidago*), *Liliaceae*, *Centaurea* spp. and *Asteraceae*. By comparing the plant species identified, it is obvious that they differ from those found in linden honey from Italy, where most of the pollen found was from *Rubus* spp., *Trifolium repens*, *Robinia pseudoacacia*, *Ailanthus altissima*, *Amorpha* spp. and *Acer* spp., whereas the pollen spectrum of linden honey from Romania is characterised by the presence of pollen from *Brassica napus*, *Helianthus annuus*, *Melilotus* spp. and *Solidago* spp.

These scientific studies and analyses identifying a combination of pollen from continental and Mediterranean plant species indicate that 'Istarski med' / 'Istrski med' differs from honey produced in other regions. The proportions of pollen of various plant species also contribute to the specific physico-chemical and organoleptic characteristics (colour, taste, odour) of 'Istarski med' / 'Istrski med' compared with the same types of honey from other geographical areas. 'Istarski med' / 'Istrski med' is also characterised by its freshness (maximum HMF value of 15,0 % mg/kg) and a water content of up to 18,6 %. To preserve these properties, 'Istarski med' / 'Istrski med' does not undergo intensive heat treatment, ensuring that its properties derived from the specific flora of the production area are preserved.

5.3. *Causal link between the specificity of the geographical area and the specificity of the product*

Istria is a unique agro-ecological area that is very varied in terms of relief, soil, geomorphology and climate. The interaction of these factors results in a typical floristic composition that forms the basis for the production of a variety of types of honey. The variety and richness of this floristic composition directly affect the specificity of 'Istarski med' / 'Istrski med', which is reflected in its specific tastes and odours. The combination of the proportions of pollen found in certain types of honey gives them specific organoleptic characteristics (colour, odour and taste) that differ from samples of the same type of honey from other geographical areas. Over time, Istria's beekeepers have contributed to the specific properties of the honey by becoming familiar with the botanical composition and climatic characteristics of the various micro-areas, enabling them to follow more accurately the phases in the life cycle of certain honey-producing plants. By carefully observing nature and climate, Istria's beekeepers can accurately determine where and when to place their beehives, or when to begin extracting the honey, so as to achieve the typical character and high degree of purity of the nectar. These practices contribute to the highly unifloral character of the honey. The specificity of the pedo-climatic conditions of the production area, beekeepers' many years of experience, and the tradition of production dating back to the beginning of the last century and passed down from generation to generation, ultimately make 'Istarski med' / 'Istrski med' a recognisable product among consumers.

Reference to publication of the specification

https://poljoprivreda.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/dokumenti/hrana/proizvodi_u_postupku_zastite-zoi-zozp-zts/Specifikacija%20Istarski%20med%2026-4-2023.doc

https://www.gov.si/assets/ministrstva/MKGP/PODROCJA/HRANA/SHEME-KAKOVOSTI/CERTIFICIRANI-PROIZVAJALCI-IZBRANA-KAKOVOST/CERTIFICIRANI-PROIZVAJALCI-ZASCITENIH-KMETIJSKIH-PRIDELKOV/Istrski_med_Is-tarski_med.pdf