



C/2026/2141

15.4.2026

Publication of an application for registration of a name pursuant to Article 50(2), point (a), of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs

(C/2026/2141)

Following this publication, the authorities of a Member State or of a third country, or a natural or legal person having a legitimate interest and established or resident in a third country, may lodge, in accordance with Article 17 of Regulation (EU) 2024/1143 of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽¹⁾ an opposition with the Commission within three months from the date of this publication.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

‘Pernil Cerretà’

EU No: PGI-ES-2835 – 19.4.2022

PDO () PGI (X)

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

‘Pernil Cerretà’

2. Member State or Third Country

Spain

3. Description of the agricultural product or foodstuff

3.1. Type of product

Class 1.2. Meat products (cooked, salted, smoked, etc.)

Combined Nomenclature code

16 – PREPARATIONS OF MEAT, OF FISH, OF CRUSTACEANS, MOLLUSCS OR OTHER AQUATIC INVERTEBRATES, OR OF INSECTS

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

‘Pernil Cerretà’ is a cured and matured meat product consisting of a hind-leg ham from a ‘white’ (non-Iberian) breed of pig, trimmed into a rounded shape and cured for at least 7 months (boneless ham) or 9 months (bone-in ham). The hams are never smoked and are characterised by the use of pepper and a high-temperature dry-curing and maturing process.

Sensory characteristics

External appearance: uniform, homogeneous conformation, without defects that impair the hams’ appearance. Folds are visible as a result of the dry-curing process. The layer of fat cover is yellowish or golden in colour as a result of surface oxidation processes. A thin layer of mould and/or yeast, fat, oil, crystallised salt or spices may be present on the outside of the hams.

Colour and appearance after slicing: the colour is uniform. The lean meat ranges from pinkish red to purplish red, reflecting the red colour conferred by the pigment nitrosomyoglobin where nitrite is used in the salting process, and by zinc protoporphyrin IX in hams made without the use of nitrite. The hams have a small amount of intramuscular fat marbling and a layer of glossy off-white fat, tinged with pink.

⁽¹⁾ Regulation (EU) 2024/1143 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 April 2024 on geographical indications for wine, spirit drinks and agricultural products, as well as traditional specialties guaranteed and optional quality terms for agricultural products, amending Regulations (EU) No 1308/2013, (EU) 2019/787 and (EU) 2019/1753 and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 (OJ L, 2024/1143, 23.4.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1143/oj>).

Taste: saltiness, mild in intensity, together with a hint of spiciness, umami and bitterness.

Smell: the high-temperature dry-curing and maturing process gives positive sensory notes of cured meat. There are also peppery notes, but no smokiness or sourness and no anomalous aromas or smells.

The surface fat may have some rancid notes.

Texture: the texture of the lean meat is uniform, with little fibrousness and little or no doughiness. Any crust formation on the rind is not significant in amount.

Physical-chemical parameters

The following parameters and required levels for final quality approval have been established:

- Water activity < 0,92
- Salt content ≤ 15 % on dry basis, or in the case of reduced-salt ham, ≤ 10 % on dry basis
- Minimum weight loss after minimum curing time: Bone-in ham: ≥ 35 %. Boneless ham: ≤ 38 %.

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

No specific conditions are indicated.

The main raw material is a hind-leg ham (or part of a hind-leg ham) from a 'white' (non-Iberian) breed of pig meeting the following requirements:

- The fat layer – measured perpendicular to the skin surface at gluteus medius level (at the thinnest point in the hip area) – must be more than 0,8 cm thick
- The minimum ham weight before salting must be:
 - ≥ 5,5 kg for boneless hams;
 - ≥ 9 kg for bone-in hams.
- The hams must come from abattoirs whose slaughtering process has been certified as compliant with a set of animal welfare requirements through an independent, scientifically assured, EU-accredited certification process.
- The fresh hams used to make 'Pernil Cerretà' must come from castrated males or non-breeding females that are purebred 'white' (non-Iberian) pigs or crosses or hybrids of 'white' breeds.
- The diet fed to the pigs must never impair the organoleptic characteristics of the end product (over-oxidation, over-soft fat, or anomalous smells or flavours that can be attributed to the pigs' diet).
- The temperature at the centre of the cut prior to salting must be ≤ 3 °C.

The other ingredients used to make 'Pernil Cerretà' are sea salt and pepper – either the natural spice (dosage of 0,5-5 grams per kilogram) and/or in extract form (in an amount equivalent to the natural pepper dose). The optional use of nitrate, nitrite and ascorbate is permitted, as is the use of spices (paprika, garlic, juniper, bay leaf, rosemary or extracts of those spices) to flavour the hams in accordance with good production practice (maximum total dose of 2 %).

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

The entire production process, from the moment the raw material is delivered until the hams are fully cured, takes place in the geographical area defined for this PGI.

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

'Pernil Cerretà' hams may be sold whole or, provided that the batch cut or sliced can be traced back to a PGI ham, in slices or cut into other formats.

To guarantee quality, ensure traceability and make it possible to check processes and conduct audits, the boning of the hams at the end of the curing process, as well as slicing, cutting into other formats and packaging, must be carried out within the PGI geographical area and may only be performed by the ham-makers accredited to make 'Pernil Cerretà'. This also lowers the risk of fraud or of the product's original sensory characteristics becoming impaired, and means that 'Pernil Cerretà' producers can ensure that these processes are carried out by staff who are familiar with the product and its quality.

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

The name of the protected geographical indication, 'Pernil Cerretà', and the PGI's own logo must be prominently displayed on the labelling, together with an identification number approved by the PGI management body.

The PGI's own logo is as follows:



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

For historical reasons, the defined area for this PGI is a specific section of Catalonia comprising the districts of Alt Urgell, Alta Ribagorça, Anoia, Berguedà, Bages, Cerdanya, Garrigues, Garrotxa, Gironès, Noguera, Osona, Pallars Sobirà, Pallars Jussà, Pla de l'Estany, Pla d'Urgell, Ripollès, Segarra, Segrià, Selva, Solsonès, Urgell, Vall d'Aran, Vallès Oriental and Vallès Occidental. The coastal municipalities of those districts (Blanes, Lloret de Mar and Tossa de Mar) are excluded.

5. **Link with the geographical area**

The link between 'Pernil Cerretà' PGI and the defined geographical area is predominantly based on the product's specific characteristics, its inherent human factors – the know-how passed down from generation to generation – and its regional reputation. Pernil Cerretà is distinguished from other hams by a combination of three aspects: the use of pepper and, optionally, other spices; its increased weight loss after curing; and the fact that, during curing, higher temperatures are reached than for most European hams, rising as high as 42 °C.

During the 20th century, the traditional know-how, developed in the production area by small local producers, was transferred to the local meat processing industry, where technological and scientific progress was also incorporated into production but without abandoning the basic traditions. The ham-makers' traditional know-how is crucial for the following:

- (i) correctly preparing the raw material and the casings / mesh bags so that they can be dry-cured under the temperature conditions for 'Pernil Cerretà' – which are higher than for most hams – without cracking, tearing or oxidation occurring within the product.
- (ii) properly treating each ham with curing salt and pepper, on the basis of experience, to ensure that the entire cut receives the right amount of seasoning to allow the product to continue to dry-cure without the need for smoking or the addition of sugars and to obtain a balanced taste and aroma across the different parts of the ham. Sea salt is a key ingredient of 'Pernil Cerretà' for selecting the appropriate microbiota and for modulating enzyme activity during maturation. In addition, the use of pepper not only imparts distinctive aromatic hints to both the lean meat and the fat, distinguishing this ham from others, but also provides micronutrients that affect the establishment of the product's microbiota, as well as providing compounds with antimicrobial and antioxidant properties. This helps to balance the taste and aroma and to obtain the specific characteristics of 'Pernil Cerretà'.

- (iii) determining, on the basis of experience, the right moment to grease the hams, or whether additional greasing is required according to the product's characteristics and the environmental conditions, and determining the most appropriate fat/oil/pepper mixture to be applied to the different parts of each cut in the right quantity and form so that it dries uniformly, so as to create mature notes of lean meat and fat associated with the process of dry-curing at high temperatures – a spicy and slightly sharp aroma that adds complexity to both the lean meat and the fat – and so as to avoid problems in relation to the taste, aroma, texture and appearance when it is cut. The application of pepper and other spices at the opportune moment gives the whole cuts an appearance that distinguishes them from other hams.
- (iv) monitoring the appearance, texture and smell of the hams throughout the curing process in order to optimise, according to the experience and know-how acquired, the duration of each stage, using the natural environmental conditions – where conducive – and incorporating high-temperature dry-curing, which encourages the activity of proteolytic enzymes inside the ham. This monitoring should ensure that the variations in surface water activity experienced by the product encourage the subcutaneous surface fat to 'sweat'. This, together with the added pepper, the establishment of appropriate surface microbiota, the oxidation processes and the Maillard reaction, help to generate the aromatic substances characteristic of 'Pernil Cerretà'.

'Pernil Cerretà' has a reputation that can be traced back to antiquity, and which is evidenced by the hams' presence in specialised shops and local restaurants. It was also awarded the food quality label 'Girona Excel·lent 2023' by the Girona Provincial Council and was selected, alongside other well-known Spanish hams with PDO, PGI and TSG distinction, to be presented and tasted at the 'Meet dry-cured ham tradition' event taking place as part of the 71st International Congress of Meat Science and Technology. Pernil Cerretà has also been the subject of scientific studies. Examples include the study presented to the 37th International Workshop on Statistical Modelling entitled Mixed nonlinear modelling in food engineering: determination of the salting time of boneless dry-cured Cerretan hams by Espuña, X., Acosta, L., Sánchez-Espigares, J. A. & Tort-Martorell, X., and the paper by Espuña Soler, F. X. (2021), Disseny experimental i models avançats pel control i precisió del procés de salat del pernil cerretà [Experimental design and advanced models for the control and precision of the Pernil Cerretà salting process] (master's thesis, Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya). The local press highlights 'Pernil Cerretà' and distinguishes it from other hams on account of its being a spicy, drier and more aromatic product, with a characteristic appearance linked to the addition of pepper and other spices (Diari Segre: https://www.segre.com/ca/noticies-empresa/250509/empreses-catalanes-impulsen-reconeixement-pernil-cerreta-com-nova-igp_816632.html).

References to 'Pernil Cerretà' date back to antiquity, and in Roman times *pernac cerretanae* ('ham from Ceretania [modern-day Cerdanya]') was a popular product from what was then Hispania, which appeared in Diocletian's Edict on Maximum Prices (*Edictum De Pretiis Rerum Venalium*). The product is referred to in works by authors such as Strabo and Martial. By the Middle Ages (10th-12th centuries), pork had become a local dietary staple. The tradition of slaughtering the pigs became an annual event on the farming calendar, strengthening the importance of pork in Catalan rural life. As details of royal court expenditure under Peter IV of Aragon ('the Ceremonious') in the mid-14th century show, the King would ask for the famous and esteemed Pernils Cerretans to be brought directly from the Pyrenees.

By the mid-19th century, a trade route ran from the Pyrenees to the coast, characterised by the sale of all kinds of goods from the mountains, 'Pernil Cerretà' among them. While 'Pernil Cerretà' is most prominently found in the Pyrenees and Pre-Pyrenees, there are also historical references to it from the Garrotxa, Osona and Bages areas, along the river Segre (with the 'Urgells') and Berguedà, as far as Cardona and Pla de Lleida. The area known as Ceretania, and in particular its most noteworthy products, is described in contemporary accounts by travellers and geographers. One example is Pascual Madoz, whose *Diccionario geográfico-estadístico histórico de España* [Geographic-Statistical Dictionary of Spanish History] defines 'Cerretania/Ceretania' as 'a region of ancient Spain which spanned the glens of the eastern Pyrenees between the river Fluvià and the river Noguera Ribagorçana'. While the historical prestige of the pernil cerretà – literally 'Ceretanian leg of pork' – is well known, the name used to refer to it has evolved over time. Written and oral accounts from the geographical area refer to a standard type of ham – the 'local' type – made following common guidelines, with 14 of the 16 ham-makers surveyed reporting the use of pepper. The name 'Pernil Cerretà' can be traced back to the product's most remote origins – the first written references to the hams – and denotes one of the traditional ham-making methods used in part of Catalonia. Nowadays the name clearly sets the product apart from hams made in other areas and makes an important contribution to enriching the area's cultural and culinary heritage.

Reference to publication of the product specification

http://agricultura.gencat.cat/web/.content/al_alimentacio/al02_qualitat_alimentaria/normativa-dop-igp/plecs-tramit/pliego-condiciones-igp-pernil-cerreta-decisio-favorable-es.pdf
