

Publication of an application for registration pursuant to Article 6(2) of Council Regulation (EEC) No 2081/92 on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin

(2002/C 168/07)

This publication confers the right to object to the application pursuant to Article 7 of the abovementioned Regulation. Any objection to this application must be submitted via the competent authority in the Member State concerned within a time limit of six months from the date of this publication. The arguments for publication are set out below, in particular under 4.6, and are considered to justify the application within the meaning of Regulation (EEC) No 2081/92.

COUNCIL REGULATION (EEC) No 2081/92

APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION: ARTICLE 5

PDO () PGI (x)

National application No: 80/89

1. Responsible department in the Member State

Name: Direcção-Geral do Desenvolvimento Rural

Address: Av. Defensores de Chaves, n.º 6, P-1049-063 Lisboa

Tel. (351) 213 18 43 00

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2. Applicant group

2.1. Name: Natur-al-Carnes — Agrupamento de Produtores Pecuários do Norte Alentejo, SA

2.2. Address: Parque de Leilões de Gado de Portalegre, Estrada Nacional 246, P-7300 Portalegre

2.3. Composition: producer/processor (x) other ().

3. Type of product: Class 1.1 — Fresh meat and offal.

4. Specification

(Summary of requirements under Article 4(2)):

4.1. **Name:** Borrego do Nordeste Alentejano.

4.2. **Description:** Carcases weigh between 9 and 13 kg or between 13,1 and 15 kg, the meat is tender and has small deposits of intramuscular fat. The fat deposits on and in the carcase and in the cavities are white in colour and firm. The meat has a smooth texture and is very juicy, as well as having a unique flavour.

Carcases weighing between 9 and 13 kg are classified in categories B or C according to the grading scale for carcasses of light lambs under Council Regulation (EC) No 1278/94. Carcases weighing between 13,1 and 15 kg are classified in categories U, R or O according to the EUROP grading scale for carcasses of ovine animals under Council Regulations (EEC) No 461/93 and (EC) No 1278/94. The carcasses belong, depending on the degree of fatness, to classes 2, 3 or 4 of the EUROP scale.

4.3. **Geographical area:** The geographical production area in which lambs of north-east Alentejo are born, reared and slaughtered comprises the communes of Alter do Chão, Arronches, Avis, Campo Maior, Castelo de Vide, Crato, Elvas, Fronteira, Gavião, Marvão, Monforte, Nisa, Ponte de Sor, Portalegre and Sousel, in the district of Portalegre.

- 4.4. **Proof of origin:** Only those carcasses are covered by the geographical indication which come from animals born and bred on livestock farms located in the geographical production area, which have duly updated registration and identification systems for breeding animals, meet the rules governing the feeding and health of animals and are subject to the control and certification rules laid down in the document: 'Regras de Controlo e Certificação do Borrego do Nordeste Alentejano' (rules governing the inspection and certification of male lambs from north-east Alentejo).
- 4.5. **Method of production:** The carcasses and offal are obtained as a result of the slaughter and dressing of male lambs, the offspring of ewes of the Merino Branco regional breed, whether pure bred or cross bred with other breeds (known as 'melhoradoras' (improvers)), which are born and reared according to traditional methods and slaughtered between 90 and 120 days old. The animals are slaughtered in slaughterhouses recognised by the European Community which form part of the national slaughter network, are located in the geographical production area and are specifically approved by the operating producer grouping. Stunning prior to slaughter is compulsory. The animals are slaughtered in batches, on the basis of an uninterrupted chain system, each batch consisting of lambs belonging to one approved producer. Slaughter always takes place in the presence of a technician employed by the certifying body, or a representative, duly authorised for that purpose, in order to ensure that the **production rules** are properly applied and complied with. After slaughter and immediately following the post mortem inspection, the carcasses are chilled to a temperature of 4 °C or below (± 1 °C) and the offal to 3 °C. An internal temperature of 7 °C is reached in less than 12 hours, a relative humidity around 85-90 % being maintained until dispatch, in accordance with the legislation in force.
- 4.6. **Link:** The production of meat from lambs reared in north-east Alentejo is intimately linked to the plantations of cork-oak, holm oak and oak, as well as to the natural and improved grazing lands, self-sown vegetation and the drought-persistent characteristics that are associated with these oak groves. The existence of a specific ecosystem together with the know-how of the local population, particularly as regards flock herding and management, have produced a particular type of lamb with features that are distinctive and peculiar to the region in which it is raised. Extensive grazing is practised, and the use of forage resources with highly distinctive characteristics has made it possible for lamb to be produced along traditional lines over many decades. In fact, sheep farming has been practised here since time immemorial and is closely linked to the Merino Branco breed. On account of its palatability and texture, lamb has always featured prominently in the diet of the local people and is used in the preparation of a large variety of traditional dishes.
- 4.7. **Inspection body:**
- Name: AADP — Associação de Agricultores do Distrito de Portalegre
- Address: Parque dos Leilões de Gado de Portalegre, Estrada Nacional 246, Apartado 269, P-7300 Portalegre.
- 4.8. **Labelling:** The following words must appear on the label: 'Borrego do Nordeste Alentejano — Indicação Geográfica', as well as the certification mark, duly numbered, indicating the name of the product and the certifying body. Models of the label and certification mark are shown in the specification.
- 4.9. **National requirements:** All those which stem from the national and Community legislation in force.

EC No: G/PT/00143/2000.07.26.

Date of receipt of the full application: 23 July 2001.
