

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 249/14)

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 of the date of this publication.

SUMMARY

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006

'JIHOČESKÁ ZLATÁ NIVA'

EC No: CZ/PGI/005/0406/20.10.2004

PDO () PGI (X)

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

1. *Responsible department in the Member State:*

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2. *Group:*

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Production site: MADETA a.s., závod Český Krumlov, Česká republika
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Composition: Producers/processors (X) Others ()

This application is for a derogation from Article 5(1) of Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006, as there is only one producer in the region. The requirements laid down in Article 2 of Commission Regulation (EC) No 1898/2006 are met.

3. *Type of product:*

Class 1.3: Cheese

4. *Specification:*

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

4.1 Name: 'Jihočeská Zlatá Niva'

⁽¹⁾ OJL 93, 31.3.2006, p. 12.

- 4.2 Description: The basic raw material used in production of this natural cheese containing mould is dairy processed cow's milk. The cheese is made exclusively from milk from the designated area.

External appearance: The cheese is wheel-shaped with a diameter of 180-200 mm and a height of approximately 10 cm (weight approximately 2,8 kg); marks of treatment by washing or scraping on the rind, bluish-green mould growing throughout the cheese and a partly waxy finish on the surface of the cheese are not signs of flaws. The surface of the cheese can be creamy to light brownish in colour.

Internal appearance: The inside of the cheese is creamy white to buttery in colour with regular green to bluish-green marbling of mould growth in the cheese and recognisable pierce marks.

Consistency of the cheese: Milder than 'Jihočeská Niva' with a 50 % fat content in dry matter, pasty, evenly aged; presence of foreign mould not permitted.

Taste, aroma: Salty, pungent, aromatic, sharp finish, characteristic of cultured *Penicillium roqueforti* mould.

Form in which the product is marketed: The cheese is marketed only in the shape of a wheel weighing approximately 2,8 kg.

Physical/chemical requirements:

— Dry matter content: 52 %

— Allowable negative divergence in dry matter content: - 1

— Positive divergences in dry matter content are not a flaw

— Fat content in dry matter: 60 %

— Allowable range of values for fat content in dry matter: 60 % to < 65 %

— Salt content: 2,5-6 %

Microbiological properties: The cheese contains cultured *Penicillium roqueforti* mould PY or PV, CB or PR1 (up to PR4). In addition, in terms of microbiological requirements, the cheese meets the standard criteria for food safety and production process hygiene.

Packaging: The package is clean and intact, covers the entire surface and is accurately marked.

- 4.3 Geographical area: The geographical area is the South Bohemia region whose borders are demarcated by Act No 36/1960 Coll. on the Territorial Division of the State, as last amended.

- 4.4 Proof of origin: In addition to the standard tests, each cistern of milk supplied is also checked to make sure that it contains no residual inhibitors. Individual batches are marked throughout the entire aging and packaging process. Each batch is laboratory tested throughout the process, starting from the milk right through until the cheese is ready for distribution. (i.e. inter-operational and check-out controls). Records are properly kept about all the tests that take place.

A central register of milk suppliers and purchasers of end-products is kept.

All raw materials entering the production process must correspond to the specification from the relevant producer (supplier); these specifications are kept up to date. The raw material suppliers are required to provide the producer with a declaration on the absence of genetically modified organisms and a declaration on the allergens present.

The packaging used is specified as suitable for contact with food.

Production of *Jihočeská Zlatá Niva* blue cheese is regulated by the HACCP system and is subject to the control system laid down in the Guides to Good Hygiene and Manufacturing Practice; records are kept on all tests carried out (laboratory logs, technical records, electronic LAB system records and test records).

The final product must comply with the relevant hygiene regulations.

All production activities and compliance with specifications are under the permanent supervision of the control authority, which is the *Krajská veterinární správa* (regional veterinary administration) for the South Bohemia region.

In addition to other data, information about the producer, i.e. the name and address of the company, is indicated on the package.

- 4.5 Method of production: Dairy processed milk with a fat content of 5,35 % is filled into the cheese-making machine and commonly used cultures, which ensure good acidification of the cheese over the entire production and aging processes, are added. The characteristic taste of *Jihočeská Zlatá Niva* is imparted by cultured *Penicillium roqueforti* mould (see Section 4.2) which has been used for decades (the culture stock is generally available for use in the food industry). After the rennet has been added and milk curdled, the resulting grains of cheese are put into wheel-shaped forms. Whey is drained off and the micro-flora culture developed at a restricted temperature. The cheese is salted in two phases: first in a saltwater brine and then by rubbing with large-grain salt. In the past, aging took place only in natural aging cellars that were hollowed out of limestone rock. In 2005, due to the increase in production of this blue cheese, air-conditioned aging cellars equipped with temperature and humidity controls were built. The cheese ages in the cellars for at least six weeks. The surface of the ripened cheese is washed or scraped, and then the cheese is packed in aluminium foil. The packaging must be intact, clean and properly marked.

In view of the biotechnological nature of the product, the blue cheese must be packed directly at the production facility. This is also necessary to maintain product quality, hygiene and cleanliness, to prevent the cheese from being confused with cheese from a different region and, last but not least, to allow better traceability of the product.

- 4.6 Link: Blue cheeses have been produced at the Český Krumlov plant using the same production method since 1951. Production of blue cheeses with 60 % fat content in dry matter started in Český Krumlov a few years later than production of blue cheeses with 50 % fat content. The cheese is named after the meadows and pastures of Šumava, where the main ingredient comes from — cow's milk delivered to the Český Krumlov plant from South Bohemia, particularly from the foothills of Šumava. The milk is from one of the least polluted regions. The pastures are located in the protected areas of Novohradské Hory, Blanský les and Šumava, and the area's unique flora has a positive influence on the taste of the milk.

These pastures offer a wide variety of flora specific to the region. Short-stalked plants (nard, fescue, etc.) with high varietal diversity are characteristic alongside certain rare varieties typical of the area. One special endemic plant is *Phyteuma nigrum*. Other special features include *Gentiana pannonica*, *Ligusticum mutellina*, *Arnica montana*, *Gentianella praecox* subsp. *Bohemica*, certain types of terrestrial orchids, etc.

This varied, rugged terrain is characterised by its very clean environment, particularly the Český Krumlov region and foothills of Šumava (Unesco Biosphere Reserve declared in 1990). As proof that the South Bohemian natural environment is highly valuable, a large number of officially protected landscapes have been declared, two of which are protected by Unesco.

Of course, local people's experience with producing this blue cheese, handed down from generation to generation, has also had a major influence on the quality and properties of *Jihočeská Zlatá Niva*.

Jihočeská Zlatá Niva blue cheese is very highly appreciated on the Czech market both by the general public and by dairy industry specialists. *Jihočeská Zlatá Niva* has ranked among the top cheeses with mould at nationwide cheese exhibitions (judged by a panel of specialists):

- 2003 — 2nd place,
- 2004 — 2nd place,
- 2006 — 2nd place,
- 2007 — 3rd place.

Jihočeská Zlatá Niva is also highly rated by laymen.

Blue cheeses are (generally) popular among consumers. Production and sale of *Jihočeská Zlatá Niva* are lower than sales of *Jihočeská Niva*, but have held steady since 2004 (according to the producer's records):

- 2003 — 126 680 kg sold,
- 2004 — 115 703 kg sold,
- 2005 — 117 314 kg sold,
- 2006 — 112 400 kg sold.

4.7 Inspection body:

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4.8 Labelling: —
