OTHER ACTS

COMMISSION

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

(2009/C 260/10)

This publication confers the right to object to the application pursuant to Article 7 of Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006. Statements of objection must reach the Commission within six months from the date of this publication.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006

'MIÓD KURPIOWSKI'

EC No: PL-PGI-0005-0607-30.05.2007

PGI (X) PDO ( )

1. **Name:**

'Miód kurpiowski'

2. **Member State or third country:**

Poland

3. **Description of the agricultural product or foodstuff:**

3.1. *Type of product:*

Class 1.4. Other products of animal origin, honey

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

Microscopic characteristics:

'Miód kurpiowski' is a nectar honey, with the possible inclusion of honeydew. It is a polyfloral honey; pollen from any one plant species must not account for more than 30 % of the total, and pollen from crop plants may not exceed 10 % of the total.

Organoleptic characteristics:

'Miód kurpiowski' is a liquid or crystallised nectar honey, with the possible inclusion of honeydew. Its consistency is thick, liquid and viscous. It forms medium- and fine-grained crystals, and its colour ranges from pale yellow, through straw-coloured to brown with greenish highlights. The greenish highlights indicate the proportion of honeydew in the honey. The honey has an intense aroma, with a distinctive spicy fragrance and a delicate, slightly sweet taste.

Physico-chemical characteristics:

Physico-chemical characteristics of 'miód kurpiowski'

— simple sugar (glucose and fructose) content — not less than 60 g/100 g

— sucrose content — not more than 5 g/100 g

— diastase activity (Schade scale) — not less than 8

— free acids — not more than 50 meq/kg

— electrical conductivity — not less than 0,8 mS/cm,

— water-insoluble content — not more than 0,1 g/100 g

— water content — not more than 18,5 %

— HMF (5-hydroxymethylfurfural) content — not more than 10 mg/kg.

'Miód kurpiowski' is produced exclusively by bees of the following races: the European dark bee (*Apis mellifera mellifera*), the Carniolan honeybee (*Apis mellifera carnica*) and the Caucasian honeybee (*Apis mellifera caucasica*) and bees resulting from the interbreeding of these races.

3.3. *Raw materials (for processed products only):*

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3.4. *Feed (for products of animal origin only):*

The feeding of bees is not permitted during the period in which 'miód kurpiowski' is harvested. The bees may be fed after the honey has been extracted, before winter, in quantities necessary to build up reserves to ensure that the colony can survive the winter. Colonies may be fed beet-sugar syrup or glucose-fructose syrups. Beet sugar and glucose-fructose syrups may originate outside the geographical area in which 'miód kurpiowski' is obtained. This does not affect the quality of the honey. The winter reserves must not find their way into 'miód kurpiowski'.

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

All stages in the production of 'miód kurpiowski', from the positioning of the apiaries to the final packaging of the honey, must take place in the defined geographical area. 'Miód kurpiowski' is cold-spun in a honey extractor using centrifugal force. After being clarified in tanks, the honey is decanted into various kinds of retail packaging. The honey must be decanted into retail packaging before the first crystallisation takes place.

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

The packaging of 'miód kurpiowski' must take place in the area identified in 4. This requirement was introduced to ensure that the product is of an appropriate quality and for the purposes of monitoring and checking its origin. The requirement for packaging to take place in the area is aimed at minimising the risk of 'miód kurpiowski' being mixed with other types of honey and of other honeys being sold under this protected name.

3.7. *Specific rules concerning labelling:*

All beekeepers and entities engaged in the buying-in and further processing of honey under the protected name are required to use one type of label. Labels will be distributed through the Kurpiowsko-Mazowiecki Związek Pszczelarzy (Kurpiowsko-Mazovian Beekeepers' Association) in Ostrołęka. The association forwards detailed rules on the distribution of the labels to the inspection body. The single-label system is intended to guarantee the appropriate quality and facilitate product traceability. These rules may not in any way discriminate against producers who do not belong to the association.

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

'Miód kurpiowski' is harvested in the area known in a historical and ethnographical context as Kurpie.

This comprises the following area of Mazowieckie Voivodship:

the municipalities of Chorzele, Jednorożec and Przasnysz in Przasnysz District;

the municipalities of Krasnosielc, Płoniawy-Bramura, Sypniewo, Młynarze, Różan, Rzewnie and Maków in Maków District;

the municipalities of Obryte and Zatory in Pułtus District;

the municipalities of Długosiodło, Brańszczyk and Rząśnik in Wyszków District;

the municipalities of Brok, Ostrów, Wąsewo and Małkinia in Ostrów District;

the municipalities of Goworowo, Czerwin, Rzekuń, Olszewo-Borki, Lelis, Troszyn, Baranowo, Kadzidło, Czarnia, Myszyniec and Łyse in Ostrołęka District.

It also comprises the following area of Podlaskie Voivodship:

the municipality of Turośl in Kolno District;

the municipalities of Nowogród and Zbójna in Łomża District.

5. **Link with the geographical area:**

5.1. *Specificity of the geographical area:*

'Miód kurpiowski' comes from the area known as Kurpie. This area is divided into Kurpie Zielone (Green Kurpie) and Kurpie Białe (White Kurpie). Kurpie Zielone consists of the lands along the right bank of the river Narew and the area around its tributaries, the Pisa, Skwa, Omulew and Rozoga, as far as the left bank of the river Orzyc. Kurpie Białe consists of the lands between the right bank of the lower course of the river Bug and its tributaries, the Tuchełka and the Brok, and the left bank of the lower course of the river Narew and its tributaries, the Wymakracz and the Orz. Kurpie Zielone abounds in rivers and lakes, which is conducive to plant life — hence its name. Kurpie Białe is drier. Its name is derived from its podzolic (white) soils.

Natural factors:

Kurpie is characterised by a very low level of urbanisation. There are no large or medium-sized industrial plants and there are no large-scale commercial farms. Not a single town in the Kurpie region has over 100 000 inhabitants. Thanks in part to its exceptional natural assets, the area has been classed as one of the 'Green Lungs of Europe'. The exceptional nature of the region is also shown by the number of Natura 2000 sites: Dolina Dolnego Bugu (site code PLB 140001), Puszcza Biała (site code PLB 140007) and Dolina Omulwi i Płodownicy (site code PLB 140005). The region also includes the Nadbużański Landscape Park, and a large number of nature reserves, such as 'Czarnia' forest reserve, 'Surowe', 'Czarny Kąt', 'Kaniston', 'Łokieć', 'Tabory', 'Minos', 'Serafin', 'Karaska', 'Podgórze' and 'Olsy Płoszycie'. The Puszcza Biała site also contains the following nature conservation areas: 'Dąbrowa', 'Nagoszewo', 'Brzostowo', 'Ochudno', 'Czuraj', 'Popławy', 'Bartnia', 'Wielgolas' and 'Stawinoga'.

As much as 29 % of the area identified at 4 is covered by forest, whilst other land uses — towns, villages, roads and industry — account for only 1 %. Meadow and scrubland account for 45 % of the area and farmed land 35 %. These habitats do not cover large areas, but form a patchwork (like a mosaic), which means that there is no dominant pollen type in 'miód kurpiowski'. The area is characterised by poor quality soils (classes V and VI). Class IV soils occur only in the river valleys.

This area also has the lowest average atmospheric precipitation in Poland (not exceeding 500 mm per year).

Human factors:

The area defined at 4 is characterised by great diversity, extensive methods of land use and very low precipitation. This means that the nectar yield of nectar-bearing plants is low, and this, in turn, means that the honey has to be obtained over long periods. In the Kurpie region, it is the beekeeper, rather than the bees, that as a rule has to seek out the nectar, and he positions his hives in good honey-producing locations. 'Miód kurpiowski' has been obtained by the traditional method, from grassland and forests, continuously since the 16th century. Grasslands (meadows, pastures and fallow land) are the source of the spring nectar honeys obtained in May and June. Coniferous (spruce and pine) forests are the main source of the summer honeydew and nectar honeys obtained in July and August. Traditionally, the first harvest of honey, produced from spring nectar, takes place in the first half of June. The second harvest of honey, produced from summer nectar, which concludes the honey-collecting season, takes place in the second half of July.

The skills of the local beekeepers are reflected in the selection of sites for apiaries and, in particular, the keeping of apiaries in areas where the nectar yield is low or very low. The times of collecting and (cold) spinning honey and the method of keeping and decanting the honey are determined by centuries-old tradition. Appropriate parameters for 'miód kurpiowski', especially those aimed at making sure that it remains of the highest quality, are possible only if very great care is taken in the process of obtaining the honey and if beekeepers comply with the characteristic restrictions that apply to its production. The temperature of the honey must not exceed 30 °C at any stage of production. The filtering (to remove pollen), creaming or pasteurisation and artificial heating of the honey are not permitted. The use of chemicals or other bee repellents, whether in solid, liquid or gaseous form, is forbidden during the process of harvesting the honey. The production of 'miód kurpiowski' therefore requires beekeepers to possess great skill and a knowledge of the processes at play in the natural environment. Another feature of beekeeping in Kurpie is the small number of beekeepers — the result of environmental conditions which make it difficult to keep hives. The number of beekeepers working in the area is estimated at no more than 400, with the total number of colonies not exceeding 8 000.

5.2. *Specificity of the product:*

'Miód kurpiowski' is obtained from the nectar of a number of plant species which flower in succession. The specificity of the product is determined chiefly by two parameters:

1. Pollen composition — the pollen of any one plant species must not account for more than 30 % of the total, and pollen from crop plants may not exceed 10 % of the total.

2. The HMF (5-hydroxymethylfurfural) content must not exceed 10 mg/kg.

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 exceptional properties of 'miód kurpiowski' are due to the specific qualities described at 5.2 and its reputation. Key to the quality of the final product are the very substantial restrictions that apply to its production, e.g. the fact that a temperature of 30 °C must not be exceeded at any stage of production means that all the natural enzymes, essential compounds and other constituents typical of honey are present in the final product. The above mentioned temperature restriction and the requirement that the honey be decanted into retail packaging before the first crystallisation takes place help ensure that the HMF content does not exceed 10 mg/kg. The varied pollen composition of 'miód kurpiowski' (in which there is no dominant pollen type) is due to the wealth of diverse plant habitats in the Kurpie region. The product began to earn a good reputation in Kurpie Zielone and Kurpie Białe in the 15th century. Beekeeping in the region dates back to that era. There are many well-documented references to 'miód kurpiowski' over the years — from the royal edict on forest beekeeping (regale bartne) of 1401, through the forest beekeeping law of 1559, by which the conversion from customary to beekeeping law was secured, right up to the present day. Kurpie's links with beekeeping are also reflected in a number of customs related to bees and honey.

In the 20th century, in order to celebrate the status of 'miód kurpiowski' as a product inextricably linked with the local forests, the idea of holding a festival in honour of the honey was revived. The first festival after a long break was held in September 1976. It is the biggest event in the region. It is estimated that between 20 000 and 35 000 people attended the Kurpiowskie Miodobranie (Kurpie Honey Harvest) festival every year between 2002 and 2006. Another indication of the popularity of the festival is that, in the course of a single day in 2005, over 60 beekeepers displayed their wares and approximately 12 tonnes of honey was sold. Both the time and the venue of the festivities keep up Kurpie traditions that go back to the 16th century.

Kurpie's rich beekeeping traditions and the reputation of 'miód kurpiowski' also feature in a great number of publications, for instance 'Zwyczaje Doroczne Kurpiowskiej Puszczy Zielonej', 2005, by Bernard Kielak, and 'Bartnictwo Kurpiowskiej Puszczy Zielonej', published in Łomża in 2004.

The product's reputation can also be gauged from numerous articles and documents indicating that it has become part of the culture and identity of the people who live here. Information on the product and related events is published in the national, regional and local press, e.g. an article entitled 'miód folklor i konfitura', which appeared in the Gazeta Współczesna in 2004, and an article entitled 'Jak to na Kurpiach miód w puszczy podbierają', which appeared in the Zielony Sztandar weekly.

The honey's reputation is confirmed by TV films and documentaries about 'miód kurpiowski', such as 'Puszcza Zielona' (TVP 1) in 1985, 'Bursztyn i Miód w tradycji kurpiowskiej' (TVP 1) in 1997, and 'Kurpiowskie Miodobranie' (TVP 3), which was broadcast in 2002.

The reputation of 'miód kurpiowski' and its role in the region are also evidenced by the fact that the Polish Tourist Organisation in 2004 awarded its Best Tourism Product prize to the Kurpiowskie Miodobranie. 'Miód kurpiowski' was also awarded a 'Perła 2007' prize in the 'Nasze Kulinarne Dziedzictwo' (Our Culinary Heritage) competition.

Kurpie is proud of the quality of the honey produced there. The reputation now enjoyed by 'miód kurpiowski' could not have been earned without the climatic conditions that prevail in the area. They contribute to the unique properties of 'miód kurpiowski' and to its quality and reputation.

Reference to publication of the specification:

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

http://www.bip.minrol.gov.pl/strona/DesktopDefault.aspx?TabOrgId=1620&LangId=0