

## OTHER ACTS

## EUROPEAN 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**

(2012/C 136/10)

This publication confers the right to object to the application pursuant to Article 7 of Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 <sup>(1)</sup>. Statements of objection must reach the Commission within six months from the date of this publication.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

**COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006****'KITKAN VIISAS'****EC No: FI-PDO-0005-0872-01.04.2011****PGI ( ) PDO ( X )****1. Name:**

'Kitkan viisas'

**2. Member State or Third Country:**

Finland

**3. Description of the agricultural product or foodstuff:****3.1. Nature of product:**

Class 1.7. Fresh fish, molluscs, and crustaceans and products derived therefrom

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

The name Kitkan viisas is used for vendace (*Coregonus albula*) caught in the lakes of the Koillismaa highlands. The main characteristics of Kitkan viisas are the following:

- Kitkan viisas are smaller in size than many other vendace stocks. Depending on annual fluctuations in growth conditions, their average size after one growth period is between 7 and 9 cm. Due to their small size, the backbone of the vendace does not harden, but instead remains soft. The small size of the fish is due to the low levels of nutrients in the waterways and the briefness of the growth period.
- Kitkan viisas reach maturity at around 15 months of age, when the fish are approximately 8 cm long and weigh 4-5 grams. The fish have a dark colour; their backs are almost black, their sides are bright silver and their fins are light-coloured. Vendace can be distinguished from whitefish, bleak and other fish fry of the same size by their lower jaw, which is significantly longer than their upper jaw. Vendace roe is small in size: a litre of roe contains approximately 500 000 fish eggs. The spawning season is in autumn, after which the fish eggs spend the winter in a state of rest, developing into fish fry over a few weeks during the spring.

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 93, 31.3.2006, p. 12.

- In winter, the intestines of Kitkan viisas empty completely because of the enforced fast during the long winter, which is why it does not need to be cleaned.

Kitkan viisas is sold fresh and frozen.

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

Not relevant

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

The vendace feed on plankton and insect larvae. The vendace get all the nutrition they need from the natural freshwater of the defined geographical area.

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

The fish must be caught in the defined geographical area. To guarantee quality, preliminary processing must also take place in the same defined geographical area. Preliminary processing involves cleaning and freezing the fish, which here means the following:

When the fish is cleaned, at least the guts and gills of the vendace are removed. If desired, the head and tail and other parts of the fish may also be removed. However, the original form of the vendace must remain recognisable.

When frozen, the temperature of the fish is reduced to at least – 18 degrees Celsius.

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

Not relevant

3.7. *Specific rules concerning labelling:*

Not relevant

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

The geographical area consists of the river basins of the Koutajoki and Kemjoki highland catchment areas, located in the municipalities of Kuusamo and Posio, which run into the White Sea, not including lakes located on the Russian border area.

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

5.1. *Specificity of the geographical area:*

Kitkan viisas vendace live in the river basin of the Koillismaa highlands. The area is located near the Arctic Circle of the northern hemisphere, where the lakes are covered by ice from October to May. On average, the Koillismaa highlands are 240 metres above sea level. The waterways of the area are low in nutrients and clear, with near-neutral acidity levels.

The fluctuations in the height and current of the waterways are extremely small, which is why there are no currents in the lake basin at any time of the year. The oxygenation conditions of the water also remain good during the winter period. These environmental conditions mean that vendace remain in the water basins where they are born and do not migrate into lower bodies of water.

Because Kitkan viisas are so small, special fishing technology is needed to catch it. Seine nets are the traditional and most common method used by local fishermen to catch vendace. During the spawning season, nets are also used to catch vendace, and in summer, traps. Trawlers are not used to catch Kitkan viisas.

5.2. *Specificity of the product:*

The Arctic conditions and the low nutrient levels of the waterways mean that Kitkan viisas are significantly smaller than several other species of freshwater vendace. Due to their small size, the backbone of Kitkan viisas does not harden, but instead remains soft. The enforced fast during the long winter means that the intestines of the vendace empty entirely, which is why it can be consumed in winter without being cleaned.

- 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):*

Kitkan viisas are recognised by their distinctive appearance, which is a result of the Arctic conditions of the Koillismaa highlands and the low nutrient levels of its waterways. The traditional fishing methods used in the area and the use of uncleaned vendace in winter are specifically due to the characteristics of the geographical area. The fact that Kitkan viisas do not migrate to lower waterways is due to environmental conditions in the waterways of the geographical area.

**Reference to publication of the specification:**

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

[http://www.mmm.fi/attachments/elintarvikkeet/laatujaturvallisuus/eunnimisuojajarjestelma/newfolder/5uhGhUymv/Kitkan\\_viisas\\_hakemus\\_lopullinen28102011.doc](http://www.mmm.fi/attachments/elintarvikkeet/laatujaturvallisuus/eunnimisuojajarjestelma/newfolder/5uhGhUymv/Kitkan_viisas_hakemus_lopullinen28102011.doc)

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