OTHER ACTS

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Publication of an amendment 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 186/09)

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

AMENDMENT APPLICATION

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006

AMENDMENT APPLICATION ACCORDING TO ARTICLE 9

'ΚΟΠΑΝΙΣΤΗ' (KOPANISTI)

EC No: EL-PDO-0117-0450-09.03.2011

PGI ( ) PDO (X)

1. **Heading in the product specification affected by the amendment:**

— ☐ Name of product

— ☐ Description of product

— ☐ Geographical area

— ☐ Proof of origin

— ☒ Method of production

— ☐ Link

— ☒ Labelling

— ☐ National requirements

— ☐ Other (to be specified)

2. **Type of amendment(s):**

— ☐ Amendment to single document or summary sheet

— ☒ Amendment to specification of registered PDO or PGI for which neither the single document nor the summary sheet have been published

— ☐ Amendment to specification that requires no amendment to the published single document (Article 9(3) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006)

[1] OJ L 93, 31.3.2006, p. 12.

— ☐ Temporary amendment to specification resulting from imposition of obligatory sanitary or phytosanitary measures by public authorities (Article 9(4) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006)

3. **Amendment(s):**

3.1. *Method of production:*

The method for producing 'Kopanisti', as it is currently produced in organised cheese dairies, has been improved and differs slightly from the method used for domestic cheese-making so as to facilitate production, improve quality, use the raw materials available on each island and reduce costs.

The applicant group, as a producer of 'Kopanisti' in its cheese dairy, requests that the method of production of 'Kopanisti' be amended as follows:

(a) after being broken up, the cheese curd should be placed for draining into sacks that can be made of fabric but also of other suitable materials. Then it should be squeezed so as to remove the liquid. The fabric sacks are not easy to use and it is laborious and time-consuming to clean them for re-use. The synthetic sacks made of food-grade material are a recent technological development;

(b) alternatively, it should be possible, at the stage when the drained curds are mixed with salt, to add fresh butter up to a proportion of 15 % to improve the texture, flavour and aroma of the 'Kopanisti', a practice which is widespread in domestic cheese-making within the production area. The butter is made from the cream obtained after skimming the milk produced in the area of the Cyclades, which is used in the production of other cheeses in the area. The milk is produced from the same dairy animals that are kept under the same conditions and fed the same diet within the identified area of the Cyclades islands.

Consumers consider that good 'Kopanisti' should have a creamy texture, a tangy to slightly spicy/peppery flavour and a pleasant aroma. The fresh butter is ideal for conferring these three characteristics on 'Kopanisti' and for significantly improving its quality: it increases its fat content, enhances its creaminess, tempers its spicy/peppery taste and improves its aroma.

3.2. *Labelling:*

In the interest of full consumer information, the type or types of milk used to make 'Kopanisti' and any addition of butter are added to the compulsory indications.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006

'ΚΟΠΑΝΙΣΤΗ' (KOPANISTI)

EC No: EL-PDO-0117-0450-09.03.2011

PGI ( ) PDO (X)

1. **Name:**

'Κοπανιστή' (Kopanisti)

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

Greece

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

3.1. *Type of product:*

Class 1.3. Cheeses

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

'Kopanisti' is a salty cheese with a creamy texture and a tangy flavour that is produced traditionally from cow's milk, sheep's milk or goat's milk or from a mixture of those milks.

The main characteristics of 'Kopanisti' are:

— maximum moisture content: 56 %,

— minimum fat content (dry matter): 43 %,

— consistency: soft cheese with a creamy texture,

— skin: none,

— texture: soft, creamy,

— colour: yellowish to tan.

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

The quality of 'Kopanisti' is determined directly by the type of milk from which it is made. The richer it is in solid constituents, the better the 'Kopanisti' will be. The breeds of animals traditionally reared in the area of the Cyclades Prefecture and the climatic and geographical specificities of the area contribute to the production of milk of this quality.

The specifications that the milk must meet in order to be able to be used to produce 'Kopanisti' are as follows:

— it must originate in the geographical region of the Cyclades Prefecture,

— it must be cow's milk, sheep's milk or goat's milk or a mixture of those milks,

— it must come from sheep, goat and cow breeds that are reared traditionally, are adapted to the area and are fed a diet that is generally based on the area's flora,

— it must be full fat milk,

— it must come from milkings conducted at least 10 days after the birthing,

— the milk used for cheese-making must not be concentrated or contain added powder milk or concentrated milk, milk proteins, caseinates, colouring, preservatives or antibiotic substances,

— fresh butter may be added up to a proportion of 15 % of the drained cheese curd which becomes 'Kopanisti' after ripening. The butter is made from the cream obtained after skimming the milk produced in the area of the Cyclades Prefecture, which is used in the production of other cheeses.

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

The animals' diet is based mainly on grazing on pastures with a low pasture capacity but a particularly rich flora, unique for the number of its endemic vegetation species.

Because of their geographical position and climatic conditions, the islands of the Cyclades have clear-cut seasons: a rainy season (from October to April) and a dry season (from May to September).

From May to September, the vegetation of the pastures dries up completely. During this period, the animals feed mainly on the dried local native vegetation of the pastures and on cereal or legume (vetches, clover, lucerne, etc.) fodder from fields within the defined area. However, the fodder which is produced within the defined area is not sufficient and from May to September (reduced milk production) the animals' diet is supplemented by fodder produced outside the area up to a proportion of 40 % of their diet. Such fodder includes starchy cereal grains, roughage and hay.

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

All the stages of milk production, milk processing and ripening of the final product are carried out in the defined geographical area.

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

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3.7. *Specific rules concerning labelling:*

The packaging containing 'Kopanisti' must display the following indications:

— 'Κοπανιστή' (Kopanisti),

— protected designation of origin (PDO),

— cheese,

— where applicable, the type or types of milk used to make the product and where appropriate, the indication: 'with added butter',

— where raw (non-pasteurised) milk is used, indication of the special marking provided for under national and EU legislation (Chapter IV of Section IX of Annex II to Regulation (EC) No 853/2004),

— the name and location of the producer — packager,

— the contents weight,

— the date of production,

— control data as follows,

— the first two letters of the designation of origin: KO,

— the serial number of the packing material (e.g. KO1650-20/12/94).

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

The geographical area where 'Kopanisti' is produced is defined by the administrative boundaries of the Regional Unit of the Cyclades in Greece, which is made up of 24 inhabited islands and over 100 uninhabited islands and rocky islets and is located in the southern Aegean Sea.

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

5.1. *Specificity of the geographical area:*

(a) Soil

The areas in which 'Kopanisti' is produced are the complex of islands of the Cyclades, made up of more than 124 inhabited and uninhabited islands and rocky islets, totalling 2 768 square kilometres.

The rocks that make up the structure of the Cyclades are of explosive, volcanic origin and metamorphic. Pastures cover over 55 % of the total surface area of the Cyclades Prefecture.

(b) Climate

The Cyclades region, where annual isotherms range from 18 °C to 19 °C, has a temperate to maritime climate, with a low level of annual rainfall. It is mostly a relatively dry region and one of the windiest in Greece. Summers are cool due to the etesian winds.

The average annual relative humidity, the average annual temperature, the number of days of rain and the hours of sunshine per year in various areas of the Cyclades Prefecture where 'Kopanisti' is produced are as follows:

Meteorological station	Average annual relative humidity (%)	Average annual temperature (°C)	Days of rain	Hours of sunshine
Syros	65	18,5	79,6	2 894,7
Paros	76	18,4	63,1	2 840,7
Naxos	71	18,4	82,0	2 622,5

(Ministry of Defence, 1978)

(c) Flora

The following are typical of the flora of the Cyclades:

— endemic species: *Fritillaria tuntasia* (Kythnos), *Campanula sartorii* (Andros), *Mysorus heldreichii* (Dilos), *Symphytum naxicola* (Naxos), *Helichrysum amorgianum* (Amorgos) (Voliotis, 1987),

— phrygana (scrub): *Quercus coccifera, Sarcopoterium spinosum, Genista acanthoclada, Anthyllis hermanniae, Euphorbia acanthothamnos, Thymelaea hirsuta, Hypericum empetrifolium, Cistus incanus, Cistus salvifolius, Satureja thymbra, Thymus capitus, Globularia alypum,* etc.,

— woody scrub vegetation: *Laurus nobilis, Cercis siliquastrum, Calicotome villosa, Spartium junceum, Cotinus coggygria, Erica arborea, Myrtus communis, Erica manipuliflora, Asparagus acutifolius,* etc.,

— coastal flora:

— rocky beaches and salt meadows: *Arthrocnemum fruticosum, Salsola kali, Matthiola tricuspidata, Cakile maratima, Eryngium maritinum, Eryngium creticum, Crithmum maritimum, Inula crithmoides,* etc.,

— sandy beaches: *Pinus pinea, Polygonum maritimum, Glaucium flavum, Malcolmia flexuosa, Cakile maritima, Medicago marina, Euphorbia peplis, Tamarix* spp., *Eryngium maritimum, Eryngium creticum, Echinophora spinosa, Cionura erecta, Calystegia soldanella, Xanthium strumarium, Pancratium maritimum,* etc. (Polunin, 1980).

Types and breeds of animals which produce the milk and the cream used to prepare 'Kopanisti' cheese

The specific geophysical and climatic conditions of Greece were the determining factors for the development of goat and sheep rearing. Its main features are the prevalence of the system of extensive rearing, small-scale holdings and the development of breeds of sheep and goats with a strong constitution, the ability to adapt to the difficult conditions prevalent in Greece and low milk production. Adaptation to the physical conditions and the use of pastures with a great variety of vegetation, unique for the number of their endemic vegetation species, result in the production of milk that has a particularly rich chemical composition and excellent organoleptic properties. The quality of the milk, combined with the experience of the cheese-makers, makes for a series of fine cheeses, one of the best-known of which is 'Kopanisti'.

Most of the sheep reared in Greece, and especially in the Cyclades, share a common genetic background but their characteristics differ depending on the particular conditions of the area in which they are reared. The animals are small in size and well-suited to the difficult geophysical and climatic conditions of Greece; they produce small quantities of milk (80-120 kg a year), but that milk is of excellent quality. This is due primarily to the way the animals are reared and to the diversity of the flora of the Greek countryside. Most of the sheep in Greece belong to the Zackel breed (*Ovis Aries L.*). In addition to native sheep breeds, there are also foreign breeds and crosses of these breeds with the native sheep, but their milk has a weaker composition (Hatziminaoglou & Co., 1985).

As regards goats, most of the population (approximately 80 %) is made up of local breeds and approximately 14 % are improved animals that have been cross-bred with various foreign breeds, while the remaining 6 % or so belong to the Zaanen breed. Indigenous goats present a variance as regards their colouring and have characteristics of unimproved animals, such as a small stature, a low level of multiple births, low milk production and a strong constitution. Annual milk production ranges from 50 kg to 100 kg of milk for animals in mountain areas and from 120 kg to 150 kg for animals in lowland areas. In mountainous, semi-mountainous and island areas, goat farming is nearly exclusively based on free grazing. In lowland areas, where the improved or foreign breeds are kept, domestic or semi-domestic rearing prevails (Hatziminaoglou & Co., 1985).

As regards cows, there is a predominance of the Holstein-Friesian breed, the Swiss breed and the native Kea breed in the Cyclades Prefecture (Agriculture Department of the Cyclades, 1993).

5.2. *Specificity of the product:*

The main characteristic of 'Kopanisti' is its high salt content, its sharp, spicy/peppery flavour, its creamy texture and its rich aroma.

Its sharp, spicy/peppery flavour is due to rapid and extensive proteolysis and lipolysis during the ripening process. The cheese ripens in a unique way. The drained and salted cheese mass, whether or not enriched with fresh raw butter, is placed in wide-necked containers and transferred to a cool place with a high relative humidity, where it is left with no further intervention until an abundant microbial growth appears on its surface. When this happens, the cheese mass is kneaded so that the microbial growth is spread evenly throughout the cheese. Once this is done, the cheese is replaced in the wide-necked containers. The process is repeated two to four times during the ripening period, which usually lasts from 30 to 40 days.

In order to speed up and control to some extent the ripening of 'Kopanisti', the freshly drained and acid cheese mass is often mixed with good quality old 'Kopanisti', called locally 'mother Kopanisti', up to a proportion of 10 % of its mass.

The abundant microbial growth that is obtained from the manipulations carried out during the ripening stage provides the cheese with microbial enzymes that cause rapid and extensive proteolysis and lipolysis, which give rise to the speedy ripening, the tangy flavour and the rich aroma of 'Kopanisti'.

'Kopanisti's' creamy texture is the result of both the action of the enzymes of the microbial flora that develops during the ripening stage and the increased moisture content of the cheese, owing to which it is classed as a soft cheese. Its texture is even creamier if fresh butter is added during the production process. Moreover, this practice, namely mixing fresh butter into the cheese curd, was and is normal practice in domestic 'Kopanisti' production, at least on Tinos.

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 key elements of the physical link between the quality and characteristics of 'Kopanisti' and the geographical environment can be summed up as follows:

— the rich taste of 'Kopanisti' is linked to the particularly rich chemical composition of the milk used, which is produced by local breeds of animals that yield small quantities of milk (80-120 kg a year), have a strong constitution and are well-suited to the difficult geophysical and climatic conditions of the Cyclades (low levels of rainfall, long hours of sunshine, strong winds, etc.),

— the distinctive aroma of 'Kopanisti' is due, among other things, to the existence of a wealth of endemic and aromatic plants in the natural pastures of the defined area, which the livestock farmers use to feed the animals in the light of their experience,

— its sharp, spicy/peppery flavour is due to rapid and extensive proteolysis and lipolysis caused by abundant microbial growth during the ripening process,

— the product's consistent quality is maintained by mixing the fresh cheese curd with good quality old 'Kopanisti', up to a proportion of 10 % of its mass,

— the method for producing 'Kopanisti' has been developed over the years through the producers' long standing experience and makes the most of both the raw materials and the climatic conditions of the islands of the Cyclades. Draining the cheese curd until the appropriate humidity is achieved and then mixing the drained curd with salt until it is spread uniformly and the cheese mass is homogeneous play a significant role, creating the conditions for directed microbial growth. The abundant microbial material that develops without further intervention on the surface of the cheese is spread uniformly throughout the cheese mass owing to the various manipulations that take place during ripening. This provides the cheese curd with microbial enzymes that cause rapid and extensive proteolysis and lipolysis and contribute to the speedy ripening, the tangy flavour, the creamy texture and the rich aroma of 'Kopanisti'.

'Kopanisti' is a widely known traditional cheese that was created and developed in Greece and in particular on the islands of the Cyclades Prefecture. It has been produced in the Cyclades continuously for a great many years.

References to the development of cheese-making in Greece date back to ancient times. For the ancient Greeks, milk was considered a sacred food because Zeus fed on the milk of the goat Amalthea. According to Greek mythology, the art of cheese-making was a valuable gift bestowed on mortals by the gods of Olympus. Tyro, daughter of Salmoneas and Alkidiki '… gave her name to the Greek word for cheese ("tyri") because of her whiteness and the softness of her body …' (Diodorus Siculus). In the Odyssey (I, 218-250), Homer refers to the preparation of cheese by the Cyclops Poliphemus (Sideris, 1982).

In his book 'A voyage to Tinos, one of the islands of the Archipelago' published in French in 1809 in Paris and re-issued in 1998 by the association 'Friends of Krokos of Tinos', in its Greek translation, Markakis Zalonis, a doctor and a philosopher from Tinos, writes in the chapter 'The products of Tinos': '… Tinos produces … They produce soft cheeses, very little oil …' and below, in the chapter on 'The diet of the inhabitants of Tinos': '… the foods that make up the three main meals of the inhabitants of Tinos are mainly meat preparations. To this they add eggs, fresh cheese, soft cheese that is stronger and more tangy than aged Roquefort or Géromé, and a salty cheese from the Peloponnese …'. Clearly, at this point, M. Zalonis refers to 'Kopanisti' of Tinos, and he finds it stronger and more tangy than aged Roquefort cheese!

At the Olympics of 1859 and 1870, there is a reference to the prizes distributed to the various products exhibited. In the cheese products category, there is a reference to the award of a prize to 'Kopanisti' from Syros.

Liambeis (1899), referring to the method for producing 'Kopanisti', wrote: '… the cheese has a sharp and peppery flavour, and because of these characteristics it is considered a delectable dish … it is sold for quite a high price as a luxury item'.

Extensive descriptions of 'Kopanisti' are also given by Dimitriadis (1900), Tzouliadis (1936) and Zigouris (1952, 1956).

Lastly, B. K. Veinoglou and E. Anifantakis describe 'Kopanisti' in the chapter entitled 'Specific cheese-making' of their university manual 'Dairy Technology — Second Volume', Karamberopoulos Editors (1980). They note that '… the best-known types of Kopanisti are Kopanisti from Mykonos and Kopanisti from Tinos …'.

Reference to publication of the specification:

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

http://www.minagric.gr/greek/data/Προδιαγραφές%20Κοπανιστή%20ΠΟΠ.pdf