

OTHER ACTS

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Publication of an application pursuant to Article 50(2)(a) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs

(2015/C 47/05)

This publication confers the right to oppose the application pursuant to Article 51 of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽¹⁾.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

'JAMBON DE LACAUNE'

EC No: FR-PGI-0005-01208-3.3.2014

PDO () PGI (X)

1. Name

'Jambon de Lacaune'

2. Member State or Third Country

France

3. Description of the agricultural product or foodstuff**3.1. Type of product**

Class 1.2 Meat products (cooked, salted, smoked, etc.)

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

'Jambon de Lacaune' is a dry-cured ham with a round, broad and regular shape that tapers towards the foot.

A thin creamy-white layer of fat may cover the lean part. The rind is of an amber colour with a few darker tones. In places, the surface may be covered with salt crystals.

A slice of 'Jambon de Lacaune' possesses regular proportions and shape. The lean meat has a uniform colour, from an intense to a dark red, and may be lightly marbled. The fat cover is firm and white and about 1 to 2 cm thick, with a few notes of pink.

The texture of 'Jambon de Lacaune' is supple, soft and tender. The salty flavour, referred to as the 'hint of salt', due to salting with dry sea salt, is present but mild. The aroma and flavour characteristics of 'Jambon de Lacaune' are typical of dried and matured meats. Its aromas are well-balanced. The flavouring preparation, which consists mainly of pepper, sugars and saltpetre, is delicate and does not supplant the 'natural' flavour of the dried ham. 'Jambon de Lacaune' is never smoked.

The total level of sugars in 'Jambon de Lacaune' is 1 % or less, and the NaNO₃ or saltpetre (E252) content is 250 mg/kg or less.

The total production time varies depending on the weight of the fresh ham.

Minimum weight of fresh ham after trimming	Minimum duration of drying/maturation (from salting to removal from the drying room)
9 kg	7 months
10 kg	9 months
11 kg	12 months

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 343, 14.12.2012, p. 1.

'Jambon de Lacaune' is presented for sale in the following formats:

- whole unboned ham (i.e. 'bone-in'),
- whole boned ham,
- half, quarter or sliced ham.

3.3. *Feed (for products of animal origin only) and raw materials (for processed products only)*

The pigs (those weighing more than 25 kg) are fattened on a diet containing at least 60 % cereals, cereal-based products and legume seeds. The maximum linoleic acid content in feed is set at 1,9 % of dry matter.

The fresh hams must possess the following characteristics:

- they must be fresh (it is prohibited to use frozen ham),
- a minimum weight of 9 kg,
- round cut, without the ventral part of the belly, trimming of the rind on the inner side not extending far towards the shank, bone of the chump partly removed, with the trotter detached at the joint or cut off below the knuckle. Trimming must not extend farther than 6 cm beyond the top of the femur,
- fat that is white and firm and covers the meat to a thickness of 10 mm or more (including rind), measured in line with the top of the femur,
- colour of lean meat corresponding to a score of 2, 3, 4 or 5 on the Japanese scale.

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

The stages from the beginning of production of the hams (salting) to the end of maturation take place in the geographical area.

3.5. *Specific rules concerning slicing, grating, packaging, etc. of the product the registered name refers to*

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3.6. *Specific rules concerning labelling of the product the registered name refers to*

Labelling of the product must contain the following information:

- the 'Jambon de Lacaune' PGI,
- the 'Lacaune' logo bearing an identifier consisting of an underlined capital 'M' resembling mountains, beneath which the name 'LACAUNE' is inscribed in capital letters,
- Minimum duration of drying/maturation: 7, 9 or 12 months.

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

The geographical area consists of the following 11 municipalities in the department of Tarn: Barre, Berlats, Escroux, Espérausses, Gijounet, Lacaune, Moulin Mage, Murat-sur-Vèbre, Nages, Senaux and Viane.

5. **Link with the geographical area**

Specificity of the geographical area

Natural factors

The geographical area in which 'Jambon de Lacaune' is produced constitutes a homogeneous unit within the mountains of Lacaune. It forms an east-west facing basin that makes up the catchment area of the Gijou River. It is bounded in the south by the main watershed, from the Montgrand to Montalet, which reaches a height of more than 1 200 m, and in the north by a secondary watershed from Roquecézière to the peak of Le Merdélou, which lies at an altitude of roughly 1 000 m and passes through Sié Pass. These two physical barriers create a topographical basin within which the contrasting climatic influences of the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea alternate. In addition, the geographical area is also subject to an alpine climate as a result of its altitude.

Under this threefold influence, the area's climate is characterised by:

- abundant precipitation spread evenly throughout the year,
- a relatively low average temperature and small fluctuations in temperature,
- a regular alternation in the nature of the wind (direction and humidity), accompanied by a significant variability in temperature and humidity, even in the space of a single day.

Human factors

The historical production of 'Jambon de Lacaune' has its origins in the profession of 'mazelier', which was well-established in Lacaune in the Middle Ages. In the Occitan language, it designated someone who sacrificed cows, sheep and pigs. In about the 15th century, with the advent of professional specialisation, this term came to designate a person who transformed pigmeat, i.e. the equivalent of the pork butcher of today.

Today the know-how of the pork butchers and meat curers is expressed through the various stages in the preparation of 'Jambon de Lacaune'.

To produce 'Jambon de Lacaune', meat curers select fresh hams that weigh at least 9 kg and have at least 10 mm of fat cover, characteristics that are necessary for lengthy curing.

Meat curers perform salting exclusively using sea salt, which has crystals of an irregular shape, permitting them to become firmly attached to the ham and also penetrate rapidly and effectively to the interior of the meat, thereby facilitating the uniform curing of the ham.

The know-how also comes into play in selecting the proportions of the flavouring preparation, which consists mainly of pepper, with saltpetre as the only additive, in order to obtain a mild aromatic intensity.

At each stage (salting, maturation, heat curing (if necessary), drying, coating and ripening), the meat curer optimises the duration of the stages or the conditions for temperature and humidity depending on the condition of his hams.

In the drying room, they are also subject to daily monitoring in order to oversee the appearance and aroma of the hams, to manage the drying conditions (the temperature and humidity of the air) and thereby to avoid accidents in drying ('poisse' (stickiness), crusting, the development of mould or disagreeable odours, etc.). Regardless of the drying technique used, and whether the drying rooms are natural or ventilated, the operator must adapt to variations in temperature and the humidity of ambient air, which are to be measured daily. The positioning of hams of different ages and also the degree to which drying rooms are filled are also taken into consideration.

Specificity of the product

'Jambon de Lacaune' is characterised by a lean section that has a uniform colour ranging from an intense to a dark red and may be lightly marbled, possessing a fat cover that is firm and white with a few touches of pink.

As concerns taste, 'Jambon de Lacaune' is differentiated by its mild aromatic intensity that permits the taste of dry-cured meat and the moderately salty taste referred to as the 'hint of salt' to come to the fore.

Causation

The causal link of 'Jambon de Lacaune' is based on the existence of ancestral, traditional and shared know-how that influences the quality of the product and confers upon it a solid reputation.

The 'Jambon de Lacaune' geographical area, which is characterised by geographical and climatic conditions favourable to the drying of ham, has seen the development of a vast number of meat curing enterprises in the area, which possess know-how that goes back several generations. The painstaking selection of fresh ham guarantees, by the end of maturation, a characteristically firm and white fat layer with a few hints of pink.

The ancient customs tied to historic exchanges with the salt-producing lowlands are still hinted at today by the use of salting with sea salt which, thanks to its properties, guarantees uniform and effective drying and gives the flavour that is characteristic of 'Jambon de Lacaune', the 'hint of salt'.

The proportions of the flavouring preparation, which is characterised by the predominance of pepper and the use of saltpetre as the sole additive, helps achieve the characteristic 'Jambon de Lacaune' taste, i.e. dry-cured meat with a mild aromatic intensity.

The minimum of seven months' maturation, as well as management of the drying parameters based on the know-how of the meat curers of the geographical area, enable 'Jambon de Lacaune' to obtain its full maturity, and guarantee a homogeneous colour ranging from intense to dark red in the lean meat, as well as maintaining the white to gently pinkish colour of the fat.

The reputation of 'Jambon de Lacaune' was already established at the beginning of the 20th century, when M. Cousin, in his 'Voyages gastronomiques au pays de France', praised the cured meats of the Hôtel Central de Lacaune. '(...) an excellent collection of cured meat of the region, consisting of ham and sausage that are very deserving of attention (...)'.

The French tourist guide Gault Millau of 1970 did not neglect to mention Lacaune, which has 'hams of great repute'. 'Jambon de Lacaune' was also described in the inventory of the culinary heritage of France, under the title 'Midi-Pyrénées – produits du terroir et recettes traditionnelles' of 1996, but also in technical works such as 'Le jambon sec et les petites salaisons' (1997).

In March 1989 the magazine LSA classed 'Jambon de Lacaune' among the 'dried hams of superior quality', produced by 'enterprises that seek to be commercially successful while preserving the traditional ancestral production methods'.

A reputation and awareness study carried out in 2011 showed that 77 % of people surveyed in the Midi-Pyrénées and Languedoc-Roussillon regions are familiar with the dry-cured ham, salami and sausage of the Lacaune geographical area, thereby confirming the renown of 'Jambon de Lacaune' and its perception as a local and traditional product.

The meat curers of the geographical area have also regularly won awards at the Concours général agricole de Paris. Since 2010, five 'Jambons de Lacaune' have received the following awards: three have been awarded a bronze medal, one a silver medal, and one a gold medal.

Reference to publication of the specification

(Second subparagraph of Article 6(1) of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 668/2014 ⁽¹⁾)

<https://www.inao.gouv.fr/fichier/CDCJambondeLacauneV1.pdf>

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 179, 19.6.2014, p. 36.