

## 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 189/04)

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 <sup>(1)</sup>.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

**'LATVIJAS LIELIE PELĒKIE ZIRŅI'****EC No: LV-PDO-0005-01194 — 04.02.2014****PDO (X) PGI ( )****1. Name**

'Latvijas lielie pelēkie zirņi'

**2. Member State or Third Country**

Latvia

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

Class 1.6. Fruit, vegetables and cereals, fresh or processed

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

The PDO 'Latvijas lielie pelēkie zirņi' refers to the dried seeds of the local 'Retrija' cultivar of the *maculatum* variety of field pea (*Pisum sativum* L.).

This dried legume product has the following morphological characteristics:

Appearance: large, very coarse, brown with a marbled pattern that gives it a greyish colouration, and possessing a black hilum.

Average weight: mass of 1 000 peas: 360-380 g

mass per storage volume: 780 g/l

Chemical characteristics of 'Latvijas lielie pelēkie zirņi' (in %):

- moisture content: no more than 14 %
- crude protein: 0-34 % (with a lysine content of up to 11,4 %)
- fats: 1,5-2 %
- carbohydrates: 50-57 %
- crude fibre: up to 6,5 %
- ash: no more than 2 %

'Latvijas lielie pelēkie zirņi' are eaten without removing the testa (or seed coat) of the product, because it cannot be separated from the rest of the seed; this means that the product does not disintegrate when boiled, as the testa holds fast to the rest of the pea.

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 343, 14.12.2012, p. 1.

The boiled pea has the following organoleptic characteristics:

- soft, floury consistency;
- a mild yet specific flavour which comes from the skin.

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

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

All steps in production - cultivation, drying and sorting - take place in the area concerned.

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*

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

The geographical area in which the product with this PDO is produced covers nearly all of Latvia, except for the following regions: the coast of the Baltic Sea and Gulf of Riga up to 5 km inland in the municipality of Nīca, the municipalities of Liepāja and Pāvilosta, the coastal areas of the municipalities of Ventspils and Dundaga, and the municipalities of Roja, Engure, Jūrmala, Riga, Carnikava, Ādaži, Saulkrasti and Salacgrīva.

5. **Link with the geographical area**

The main factors influencing the quality of 'Latvijas lielie pelēkie zirņi' are the local climatic conditions, soil characteristics and historical and human factors.

*Specificity of the geographical area*

The area in which 'Latvijas lielie pelēkie zirņi' are cultivated is located in the temperate zone. Latvia's climate is influenced by the proximity of the sea and masses of air coming in from the Atlantic Ocean, so its climate is predominantly mild and humid, with four distinct seasons. Skies are often overcast (for an average of 160-180 days a year) whereas there is sunshine for an average of 1 790 hours a year. The greatest number of sunny days, 28-30 on average, is experienced from May to August, when the sun shines for 8-10 hours a day. Average precipitation fluctuates between 574 and 691 mm a year. The predominantly mild and humid climate creates all the preconditions for optimum growth, flowering and crop formation, so it is precisely in that geographical area that the key qualities and characteristics of the legumes are best expressed.

The moderately and well-conditioned soils of the defined geographical area, which are of a calcareous loamy granulometric texture with an optimum soil pH of around 7, are essential for optimum growth of 'Latvijas lielie pelēkie zirņi'.

*Specificity of the product*

Dried 'Latvijas lielie pelēkie zirņi' are distinguished from other peas by their especially large, coarse seeds (a mass of 1 000 seeds weighs 360-380 g). Although there are few seeds per pod, this is compensated for by their good culinary qualities, such as a relatively short boiling time (around 10 minutes less than other peas). Characteristics of the boiled pea: soft, floury consistency and a mild yet specific flavour which comes from the skin.

'Latvijas lielie pelēkie zirņi' are eaten without removing the testa (or seed coat) of the product, because it cannot be separated from the rest of the seed; this means that the product does not disintegrate when boiled, as the testa holds fast to the rest of the pea.

*Causal link between the geographical area and the quality or characteristics of the product*

'Latvijas lielie pelēkie zirņi' is a product that has developed only under the influence of specific natural conditions and as a result of the skills of local producers.

1. Environmental factors that ensure the product has higher quality characteristics (seeds are coarse and of a floury consistency):
  - climate – differences in humidity and temperature at various stages of plant growth are of key importance for obtaining such large seeds.

'Latvijas lielie pelēkie zirņi' have a long growing season, lasting from 80 to 115 days. The product grows and develops fairly slowly at the beginning of the growing season, but then flowers and ripens quite quickly. Therefore Latvia's climatic conditions are suitable for obtaining a high-quality yield (coarse seeds, floury consistency, quick boiling time). It is very important at the time of flowering, and especially when pods are forming (in the second half of June and first half of July), that the weather be sufficiently humid, as this has a decisive influence on the size of the seeds and thickness of the coat. Excessive humidity during this period will delay the seeds ripening, whereas dry conditions result in tiny peas with a thicker coat. In either case the result is a longer boiling time and a deterioration in the cultivar's taste characteristics, so the peas need to be sown early - as early as last ten days of April, but no later than the first ten days of May;

— optimum soil pH is 7.

'Latvijas lielie pelēkie zirņi' are more demanding with regard to the growing environment than other pea varieties. They are suited to moderately and well-conditioned soils of a calcareous loamy granulometric texture, but smaller yields can still be obtained from poorly conditioned soil, loamy sands and boggy mineral soils. The optimum soil pH for 'Latvijas lielie pelēkie zirņi' is around 7, which is more than for other, less demanding pea varieties.

2. Historical and human factors: cultivation and selection of 'Latvijas lielie pelēkie zirņi' in the defined geographical area over generations have produced a high-quality variety which is perfectly adapted to local conditions and which has become a firm gastronomic favourite.

There is a long tradition of cultivating grey peas in Latvia. This type of pea has been grown in Latvia since as early as the 18th century. Articles were published at the beginning of the 20th century on the specifics of cultivating 'grey' peas. The selective breeding of peas in Latvia began in 1925 at Stende State Cereals Breeding Institute, but has been pursued at Priekuļi State Plant Breeding Institute since 1945, which demonstrates that they can be grown throughout Latvia. Selective breeding of 'Latvijas lielie pelēkie zirņi' was begun by ordinary people on the basis of large brown Vidzeme peas. By using the material thus selected and improving it through targeted selection, i.e. by selecting against the bitterness of the seeds of the wild varieties and obtaining boiled seeds with a good taste and appearance, Priekuļi State Plant Breeding Institute in Priekuļi, Priekuļi civil parish, Priekuļi municipality, created the 'Retrija' variety of 'Latvijas lielie pelēkie zirņi', the only one to have such large seeds.

Crop cultivation and harvesting techniques developed over several years are of key importance for ensuring both an increase in the total yield and a high-quality product. These include, for example, preparing the soil, choosing the right ratio for mixed planting, and choosing the right time to harvest. 'Latvijas lielie pelēkie zirņi' are grown only in mixed plantings, with cereal plants (oats, barley or spring wheat) serving as a support. The ratio of the various crops in the mixed plantings must be as follows: The ratio of 'Latvijas lielie pelēkie zirņi' to cereals is either 1:2 or 1:1.

Threshing the product with a combine requires attention and skill, because ripe 'Latvijas lielie pelēkie zirņi' split in half very easily. Once the product has been harvested, it is carefully dried in drying machines.

Latvians have been pea eaters for centuries. Peas, barley and beans long constituted diet staples, and they remained important up until the introduction of the potato in the 19th century. Nowadays 'pelēkie zirņi' with bacon is referred to in tourist guidebooks as a specifically Latvian dish that is worth sampling.

#### Reference to publication of the specification

(the second subparagraph of Article 6(1) of this Regulation <sup>(?)</sup>)

[http://www.pvd.gov.lv/lat/kreis\\_izvlne/novertesana\\_un\\_registracija/lauksaimniecibas\\_un\\_partikas\\_p/](http://www.pvd.gov.lv/lat/kreis_izvlne/novertesana_un_registracija/lauksaimniecibas_un_partikas_p/)

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<sup>(?)</sup> See footnote 1.