

## 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 281/08)

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

‘TERNERA DE ALISTE’

EU No: ES-PGI-0005-01134 — 29.7.2013

PDO ( ) PGI ( X )

**1. Name**

‘Ternera de Aliste’

**2. Member State or Third Country**

Spain

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

Class 1.1. Fresh meat (and offal)

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

Meat from young cattle of races bred for their meat performance, adapted to the geographical area and produced using the area’s traditional feed and management methods, aged between 8 and 12 months at slaughter.

Depending on the production method, a distinction is made between the following types of animals:

- Milk-fed: meat from animals kept in stalls since birth and which are not weaned before slaughter.
- Grass-fed: meat from animals fed on their mother’s milk and the grazing resources in the area and subsequently kept in stalls until their slaughter.

The fresh meat covered by the PGI is characterised by its evenly distributed, pearly-white fat and firm, slightly moist muscle tissue. In terms of its organoleptic qualities, the meat is very tender and juicy, with a subtle, delicate taste and smell which is not too pronounced and melts in the mouth.

The minimum maturation period for the meat is 4 days.

The conformation of the carcasses includes types E, U, R and O and the degree of fat is 2 or 3 in the case of males and 2, 3 or 4 in the case of females. Depending on the type of animal from which the meat is obtained, the colour varies from light pink in the case of milk-fed animals to between pink and red in the case of the grass-fed animals.

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

The female calves used for breeding are reared using mixed systems of stalls and grazing on small, traditional farms with daily grazing. The animals’ feed is based on the natural resources of the area supplemented, when resources become scarce, with permanent pasture hay, root vegetables and other local agricultural products. During the weaning period, they also receive a supplement of cereals and leguminous plants from the same farm.

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

Two types of management have evolved in parallel and may be distinguished as follows:

Milk-fed veal for which the basic feed is the mother's milk supplemented with feed from their own farm, fodder and concentrates, until slaughter age is reached, without the animal having been weaned. From its first weaning, the calf is housed in a specific place in an appropriate environment and stays in stalls after birth so that it can be directly fed by its mother. From the age of 1 month, hay is included in the feed to develop the animal's rumen and so that concentrates can start to be added to the feed.

Pasture-raised veal for which there are two different stages, the first in the meadow and the second in the stalls.

- The first stage consists of grazing with the mother animals while feeding on the mother's milk. From 3 months' of age, special hoppers containing concentrates are put in the meadow in order to optimise the calf's growth and to help it adjust to a feed of concentrates when it has been weaned. The length of the period spent in the meadow depends on climatic factors and the availability of natural resources, the minimum period being 5 months.
- The second stage takes place in the stalls where the animals are kept and fed with fodder, cereal straw and concentrates, until slaughter.

The feed must be of plant origin, and it must mainly be cereal (with a minimum of 60 % of its quantitative composition) and it may not exceed 50 % of the annual dry matter. The use of products that could interfere with the animals' normal rate of growth and development is expressly forbidden.

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

The birth, the rearing and the fattening of the protected animals up to the time of slaughter take place in the defined geographical area.

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

The product may be presented in portions, fillets or pieces provided that these operations are carried out by operators subject to control.

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

Both the cuts of meat and packages containing portions, fillets or pieces are despatched bearing a label containing at least the terms 'Protected Geographical Indication' and 'Ternera de Aliste', as well as the logo for the protected geographical indication and the European logo for a protected geographical indication.



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

The production area comprises the districts of Aliste, Sayago and Sanabria which are in the western part of the province of Zamora.

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

The link between the geographical area and the product 'Ternera de Aliste' is based on the specific qualities of the product and its reputation.

##### Physical characteristics

The districts of Aliste, Sayago and Sanabria are dominated by low-relief, slightly undulating peniplains, with altitudes above 600 metres. The soils in the area, from the palaeozoic base, situated on granites, metamorphic rocks and slates, are characterised by their shallow depth, water retention and high level of acidity and are therefore considered to be 'uniformly poor soils'. The area therefore cannot be used for high-yield crops and is thus used for grazing.

The climate varies according to the altitude, location and orientation of the mountain ranges. The average annual rainfall varies from almost 2 000 mm on the peaks of the Sierra Segundera to 600 mm in the western part, which has a positive impact on plant growth and the green carpet in the pastures and meadows.

#### Natural factors

It is an area of pastures which alternates with scrubland. Fine grasses (*Agrostis*, *Poa*, *Briza* and *Bromus*) and leguminous plants predominate. The spontaneous vegetation which covers more than four fifths of western Zamora is chiefly grassland with Pyrenean oak and holm-oak groves. Heather (*Erica arborea*, *Erica australis* v. *aragonensis* and *Calluna vulgaris*), rockrose (*Cistus ladanifer*, *Cistus laurifolius*), Scotch broom, Spanish broom and common broom are also abundant. As the area is largely untouched by human hand, the pastures are varied and not very rich in nitrogen but rather dry and harsh, which diversifies the cattle feed.

The geographical area has been and is still the natural habitat of the Iberian wolf (*Canis lupus signatus*), and it is currently the nature reserve with the highest population density of the species in Europe. The presence of the wolf in the area has greatly influenced the management of the veal, since the presence of the wolf has made breeders feel it necessary to protect the young animals to avoid their possible loss and thus the resulting negative impact on household income which came almost exclusively from the sale of veal. This is the reason why cows were kept in stalls and veal always stayed sheltered in them as they grew, in order to be protected from the wolf.

#### Historical and human factors

The western part of Zamora is made up of a number of outlying districts which have been marginalised for centuries, and where people have lived and adjusted to the environment to extract the few resources from it which they could, in practice generating a subsistence economy. Cattle farming has been the most widely used means of making a living given the poor soils and the difficulty of farming. These difficulties led to a better use of the grazing resources in cattle farming by the numerous small family farms. Cattle played a dual role, as working animals and as an additional household income, with two basic functions: as foodstuff (the milk produced was consumed), and an economic resource (with the sale of the veal).

The physical characteristics of the geographical area, its natural factors, and the historical/human factors define a traditional production system in which cattle farmers have had to use all kinds of pasture and natural resources, and have set up large numbers of small cattle farms on which the breeding females are reared in systems comprising both stabling and grazing. On these farms historically two types of animal management have co-existed according to the needs of the farm, with milk-fed veal being produced when the needs were minimal and pasture-raised veal when the cow was needed as a working animal or to produce milk for the family needs. The farms display a special symbiosis between the cows, the heifers and the natural environment and benefit from the breeders' care and skills which have been handed down from their ancestors, with a careful, artisanal management and specific attention paid to individuals and the farm as a whole in each case.

#### Specificity of the product

The specific rearing methods, based largely on rearing veal which is milk-fed, together with the slaughter at a young age, produces meat with its own distinctive characteristics that is notable for its characteristic light-pink colour for milk-fed veal and pink colour for pasture-raised veal ( $L^*=41,2-43,1$ ,  $a^*=12,1-12,9$ ,  $b^*=11,5-12,4$ ), a delicate taste and is appreciated for being juicy (12,2 % cooking loss (CL) up to 100 °C) and tender (3,31-3,71 kg/cm<sup>2</sup>, Warner-Bratzler shear force test), with a white and pearly, firm, fat.

The characteristic colour of 'Ternera de Aliste' meat is due to the cattle being kept in stalls and the early age at slaughter which produces a low concentration of myoglobin (2,8-3,2 mg/g meat) in the muscle as well as fewer red fibres than white fibres. This in turn results in a light pink colour for the milk-fed veal and a slightly deeper pink in pasture-raised veal, as it spent the first stage of its life in the meadow and is older when slaughtered.

The tenderness which is a characteristic of 'Ternera de Aliste' is due to the young age upon slaughter and the veal being kept in stalls which reduces muscle tone; both these factors make the collagen in the meat less stable in the presence of heat during cooking.

'Ternera de Aliste' meat is very juicy due to the cattle being kept in stalls, the use of high-energy diets and the young age upon slaughter which mean the meat matures rapidly, as a result of which the muscle protein has a very high water-retention capacity. This means that more juice is released during chewing, which is made easier by the tenderness of the meat and the typical degree of fat.

The smooth flavour which is characteristic of 'Terñera de Aliste' is due to the fact that animals are fed on their mother's milk, which contains short and medium-chain fatty acids from which the flavour is obtained. This combined with the fact that the animals have a digestive system which is not fully developed given the early age at which they are slaughtered means that these fatty acids do not undergo any metabolic digestive processes and are incorporated directly into the lipid content responsible for the characteristic flavour of the meat.

#### Reputation

A very care-intensive production system, with traditional cattle feed and management methods specific to this area confer certain highly desirable characteristics on the product and the product's reputation in gastronomy.

'Terñera de Aliste' meat has a reputation and is preferred by consumers due to its exceptional quality. Numerous historical documents attest to the excellent reputation of this meat, such as those which have appeared in the news reports on the province of Zamora and the newspaper *El correo de Zamora* since February 1976, which extol the qualities of this meat, with opinions and comments such as: 'succulent and juicy', 'exquisite', 'the best meat in the world', 'no meat as good' or 'there is no veal in the whole of Spain which is comparable'.

There are a multitude of references to it in the media: in local and regional newspapers and in the specialised press (*Eurocarne, Cárnica 2.000, Origen, Distribución y consumo, ITEA, Mundo Ganadero*, etc.) and documentaries on local and national television and radio.

'Terñera de Aliste' meat is also featured in cookbooks and dining out magazines, such as the book 'Secretos de los chefs: técnicas y trucos de 50 estrella Michelin' published by Bon Vivant (2008), with a prologue from Ferrán Adrià, and the article 'Boccatto di Cardinale: un recorrido por diez de los mejores manjares para disfrutar: Terñera de Aliste' in the *Crónica* of Guadalajara.

'Terñera de Aliste' owes its reputation and renown largely to the vast culinary tradition which for years has meant it has featured on the menus in numerous restaurants in Spain, especially in Castile-Leon. Mention should also be made of the most recent events focusing on 'Terñera de Aliste' which were held in the Parador Nacional de los Condes de Alba at Aliste in Zamora in the framework of a number of general food events which went by the name of 'Muestras Gastronómicas de los Productos de España. Carnes con Origen'.

#### Reference to publication of the specification

(the second subparagraph of Article 6(1) of this Regulation)

[http://www.itacyl.es/opencms\\_wf/opencms/informacion\\_al\\_ciudadano/calidad\\_alimentaria/4\\_condiciones\\_DOP/index.html](http://www.itacyl.es/opencms_wf/opencms/informacion_al_ciudadano/calidad_alimentaria/4_condiciones_DOP/index.html)

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