# Publication of an application for approval of an amendment, which is not minor, to a product specification 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

(2020/C 424/13)

This publication confers the right to oppose the amendment application pursuant to Article 51 of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council ([1]) within three months from the date of this publication.

APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF AN AMENDMENT TO THE PRODUCT SPECIFICATION OF PROTECTED DESIGNATIONS OF ORIGIN/PROTECTED GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS WHICH IS NOT MINOR

**Application for approval of an amendment in accordance with the first subparagraph of Article 53(2), of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012**

**'Rheinisches Zuckerrübenkraut' / 'Rheinischer Zuckerrübensirup' / 'Rheinisches Rübenkraut'**

**EU No: PGI-DE-0717-AM01 – 31.3.2020'**

**PDO ( ) PGI (X)**

## 1. Applicant group and legitimate interest

| | |
|---|---|
| Name of association: | Schutzgemeinschaft Rheinischer Zuckerrübensirup / Rheinisches Apfelkraut [Association for the protection of Rheinischer Zuckerrübensirup/Rheinisches Apfelkraut] |
| Address: | Wormersdorfer Straße 22-26, 53340 Meckenheim |
| Country: | Germany |
| Email address(es): | info@sg-zuckerruebensirup-apfelkraut.de |

## 2. Member State or third country

Germany

## 3. Heading in the product specification affected by the amendment(s)

- ☐ Name of product
- ☒ Description of product
- ☐ Geographical area
- ☐ Proof of origin
- ☐ Method of production
- ☒ Link
- ☐ Labelling
- ☐ Other [to be specified]

([1]) OJ L 343, 14.12.2012, p. 1.

4. **Type of amendment(s)**

☒ Amendment to product specification of a registered PDO or PGI not to be qualified as minor in accordance with the third subparagraph of Article 53(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012.

☐ Amendment to product specification of registered PDO or PGI for which a Single Document (or equivalent) has not been published not to be qualified as minor in accordance with the third subparagraph of Article 53(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012

5. **Amendment(s)**

*Description of product*

Amendment

Current wording: '— Iron: min. 4 mg/100 g'

Requested change: The reference to iron should be removed completely.

Explanation

Analyses carried out in recent years have shown that the iron value indicated in the original specification was due, in part, to adhesions of clay and soil (which, as a result of the subsequent cooking and filtering processes, were never detrimental to the quality of the finished product). At that time, the clay and soil could not be removed for technical reasons and entered the production process with the sugar beet. Furthermore, there have always been substantial variations from year to year on account of the weather.

Nevertheless, improvements in the production process now enable significantly more clay and soil to be removed from the beets. This means that the iron level is reduced.

Further optimising this process is one of the objectives of the product's manufacturers. However, this means that the value of at least 4 mg of iron per 100 g of product cannot always be guaranteed. Therefore, the iron value should be deleted.

*Link*

Amendment

Section (2) 'Specificity of the product', first paragraph

Current wording: 'The careful production method, firmly rooted in the region through tradition, guarantees that the finished product retains valuable minerals such as magnesium and iron. The product also contains potassium and, albeit in variable amounts that diminish with storage, folic acid. It is made without any additives.'

Requested change (deletion of the parts of the text where iron and folic acid are mentioned):

'The careful production method, firmly rooted in the region through tradition, guarantees that the finished product retains valuable minerals such as magnesium. The product also contains potassium. It is made without any additives.'

Explanation

As regards the iron value: see explanation under (b).

As regards the reference to folic acid: The folic acid value in the description (point (b)) was already deleted as part of the last amendment application since measurements taken after registration showed that the level of folic acid steadily decreases naturally after production. This is because the folic acid decomposes.

Folic acid is now no longer measured, since such measurements would be superfluous in the light of the requirements of the specification. As the level of folic acid always decreases anyway during the lengthy storage of the product and the substance is eventually no longer present, it is generally not appropriate to refer to it.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

**'Rheinisches Zuckerrübenkraut' / 'Rheinischer Zuckerrübensirup' / 'Rheinisches Rübenkraut'**

**EU No: PGI-DE-0717-AM01 – 31.3.2020**

**PDO ( ) PGI (X)**

1. **Name(s) [of PDO or PGI]**

'Rheinisches Zuckerrübenkraut' / 'Rheinischer Zuckerrübensirup' / 'Rheinisches Rübenkraut'

2. **Member State or third country**

Germany

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 pure, natural, concentrated juice of freshly harvested sugar beet with no vegetable fibre or any other additive.

— Appearance: dark-brown, highly viscous syrup

— Taste: sweet and malty

— Smell: sweet, with malt and caramel

— Final sugar content (tolerance of ± 3 %)

Sucrose: 33 %

Glucose: 17 %

Fructose: 16 %

— Brix degrees: at least 78° Brix

— pH value: from 4,4 to 5

— Water content: max. 22 %

— Magnesium: min. 60 mg/100 g

— Potassium: min. 50 mg/100 g

— Sugar beet syrup is produced without any additives. The product is made during the beet harvesting period, from late summer to spring. The traditional method of production based on modern food legislation is as follows:

— Reception of goods/quality: delivery of freshly harvested beets.

— Acceptance testing: determination of the sugar content in order to define the necessary operational parameters (temperature, duration of cooking process, etc.). Visual inspection for soil and foliage.

— Storage: short period of storage both on the farm and at the production site, coordination of harvesting and delivery.

— Treatment prior to further processing: pre-cleaning; removal of foliage, earth and stones; subsequent cleaning in the sugar beet washer.

— Processing: Processing takes place in the geographical area. The beets are processed whole or cut up. The mash is heated for several hours and boiled gently. Care must be taken to allow the mash sufficient time to rest. The length of time during which the beets are boiled and the temperature depend on the company's tradition. The beet pulp is then squeezed under high pressure to obtain the raw juice. Filter equipment is used to remove nearly all the solid particles from the raw juice extracted. The clear juice is sent on to the evaporation unit, where the

water is gently removed from it in a vacuum. The dry matter content of the final product is at least 78° Brix. Prior to storage, the pH, colour, sucrose, fructose, glucose and dry substance of the final product are analysed in the processing plant. The final product is also regularly examined by an external laboratory. The sugar beet syrup obtained is stored in tanks from which it can be taken for packaging.

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

Without exception, all of the sugar beet used as a raw material must come from the geographical area in question.

Traditionally, the sugar beet used to make sugar beet syrup comes solely from the beet producers in the region.

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

The entire production process takes place within the geographical area.

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

—

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

—

## 4. Concise definition of the geographical area

The Rhineland. In the state of North Rhine-Westphalia, this includes the government regions of Cologne (without the Oberbergisch district) and the following districts in the government region of Düsseldorf: Mettmann District, Düsseldorf City, Rhine District of Neuss, Mönchengladbach City, Viersen District, Krefeld City, Cleves District and Wesel District. In the state of Rhineland-Palatinate, it includes the rural districts of Ahrweiler and Mayen-Koblenz.

## 5. Link with the geographical area

*Specificity of the geographical area:*

The centuries-old Rhineland tradition of syrup-making has resulted in the perfection of production process and taste. The relevant skills have been passed on from generation to generation. In the 14th and 15th centuries, sugar beet became firmly established as a farmed crop. In the Rhineland, the beets were one of the tithes which farmers had to pay to their feudal lords from the 15th century on. In the early 17th century, the Thirty Years' War gave rise to a period of famine; cultivating beets proved to be easier and more productive than growing cereals. In the Rhineland, among other places where the unrest had less of an effect, people could invest the time and effort required in cultivating these sweet, white beets.

Today, it is impossible to state when precisely the production of beet syrup began in the Rhineland, but it has probably been common since the 18th century. The centre of 'Rübenkraut' production is the Lower Rhine region. Around 1860, the district of Grevenbroich alone had some 63 registered presses (at the time, there were 309 syrup producers in the Prussian state). Initially, the beet syrup was made from mangelwurzels or carrots. In the 19th century, however, the 'Lanker Rübe', a type of mangelwurzel grown in the Lower Rhine region, became established. In the latter half of the century, sugar beets became the more popular raw material. Records from around 1870 belonging to the chamber of commerce in Cologne show that between 6 000 and 10 000 Zehntner (= 300 and 500 tonnes) of beet syrup was produced every year.

Furthermore, beet syrup appears as an important, traditional ingredient in a range of typically Rhenish recipes, e.g. for the marinated beef dish 'Rheinischer Sauerbraten' and 'Aachener Printen' gingerbread. The long tradition of sugar beet syrup production in the Rhineland is also very apparent in the local language: people from the Rhineland call it 'Rübenkraut' (in olden times 'Rüöwenkrut' or 'Röbenkraut'). Even outside the Rhineland, this term is still used and

understood. Before it was known that they could be used to produce sugar, mangelwurzels were used as vegetables. The name 'Rübenkraut' was given to the syrup made from mangelwurzels, drawing on the word 'Apfelkraut', which was the name given to a syrup made from apples.

Figure 2 in a publication by Block entitled 'Rübensirup – Seine Herstellung, Beurteilung und Verwendung' ('Beet syrup – its production, assessment and use'), Leipzig 1920, shows that there was a concentration of beet syrup factories (blacked-in circles) in the Rhineland. Sugar factories were widely spread throughout the German Empire, but were few and far between in the Rhineland. However, the Rhineland made up for this with its unrivalled concentration of beet juice factories. Even today, beet juice is still produced in large quantities in the Rhineland.

*Specificity of the product:*

The careful production method, firmly rooted in the region through tradition, guarantees that the finished product retains valuable minerals such as magnesium. The product also contains potassium. It is made without any additives.

As a result of its incomparable, markedly sweet and malty taste, which, like its sweet, malty and caramelly aroma, is the result of the careful production method, it is eminently suitable for use not only as a spread but also as a taste-inducing additive in cooking and baking.

For a long time now, the product has enjoyed great renown and a very good reputation, particularly in the Rhineland but also beyond its borders. The renown and reputation enjoyed by the product stem from its long history in the geographical area.

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 excellent reputation enjoyed by the product stems from its geographical origin.

'Rübenkraut' was invented in the Rhineland and has been produced there ever since. It has always been made with sugar beet from the Rhineland. The fact that the beets originate from the production area is one key reason why the product enjoys such a good reputation. It is this local sourcing of the sole raw material (sugar beet) which is inextricably linked to the product's authenticity.

Today the beet syrup is still made in almost exactly the same way as in bygone centuries. Only beets from the geographical area were processed. That is also why there is such a concentration of beet juice factories in the Rhineland. Large quantities of sugar beet are still grown in the Rhineland – most are used for sugar production, but a significant quantity is processed to make 'Rübenkraut'.

Traditionally, the sugar beet used to make sugar beet syrup comes solely from the beet producers in the region. Sugar beet is cultivated on the basis of a contractual arrangement between processors and farmers, thus facilitating comprehensive farming advice. Cooperation between producers and processors is now streamlined, transparent and accountable. A sales guarantee ensures that beet growers have the basic security they need to plan for the future. The chemical quality of the sugar beets is checked routinely by means of identical analytical procedures.

**Reference to publication of the specification**

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

https://register.dpma.de/DPMAregister/blattdownload/marken/2019/44/Teil-7/20191031