

**Publication of an application for registration of a name 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**

(2021/C 63/11)

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> within 3 months from the date of this publication.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

**‘Balatoni hal’**

**EU No: PGI-HU-02470 – 25.5.2018**

**PDO ( ) PGI (X)**

**1. Name(s) [OF PDO OR PGI]**

‘Balatoni hal’

**2. Member State or third country**

Hungary

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

**3.1. Type of Product**

Class 1.7: Fresh fish, molluscs, and crustaceans and products derived therefrom

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

‘Balatoni hal’ [Balaton fish] is the exclusive name of carp (*Cyprinus carpio* L. 1758) and pike-perch (*Sander lucioperca* L. 1758) that live, are propagated and farmed in Lake Balaton or in the catchment area of Lake Balaton (to be detailed in point 4), and are sold live or processed (fresh, chilled or frozen; usually in piece, rarely in fillets).

**a) ‘Balatoni hal’: Pike-perch**

‘Balatoni hal’ pike-perch is a fish belonging to the zander species (*Sander lucioperca* L.) within the perch genus, exclusively living and/or farmed in the geographical area defined in point 4 (the catchment area of Lake Balaton). It is one of Hungary’s most sought-after and valuable fishes. The flesh of the pike-perch is white, lean, boneless and tasty, has a low fat content and is rich in protein. The flesh of ‘Balatoni hal’ pike-perch is considered to be whiter and tastier than the flesh of river pike-perch.

The quality parameters of ‘Balatoni hal’ pike-perch flesh:

- water content: 78,0-79,5 %,
- proteins: 19-20 %,
- fat: 0,5-1,0%.

‘Balatoni hal’: The minimum size at which ‘Balatoni hal’ pike-perch is sold (live, fresh, chilled or frozen) is 0,5 kg.

**b) ‘Balatoni hal’: Carp**

‘Balatoni hal’ carp is a fish belonging to the carp species (*Cyprinus carpio* L.) within the cyprinid family, exclusively bred in the catchment area of Lake Balaton, and exclusively including the State-recognised local ‘Balatoni sudár’ and ‘Varászlói tükrös’ varieties farmed in the geographical area defined in point 4.

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

Typical quality parameters of 'Balatoni hal' carp 'Balatoni sudár ponty' flesh are (OMMI [National Institute for Agriculture Quality Control] 2004 MgSzH [Agricultural Office] 2011, Gorda and Borbély 2013):

- water content: 74,1-77,4 %,
- proteins: 16,6-17,6 %,
- fat: 4,2-8,0 %.

Typical quality parameters of 'Balatoni hal' carp 'Varászlói tükrös ponty' flesh are:

- water content: 73,9-78,3 %,
- proteins: 16,8-17,7 %,
- fat: 3,5-7,7 %.

The flesh of 'Balatoni hal' carp is firm and flaky.

The minimum size at which 'Balatoni hal' carp is sold (live, fresh, chilled or frozen) is 1,5 kg (ideally, 1,5-3 kg).

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

The use of fertilisers to enhance production yield is forbidden in the geographical area. The nutrition of the 'Balatoni hal' pike-perch is special in that the baby fish shift from feeding on zooplankton to feeding on fish after they have reached a body length of 12-15 cm, which is relatively late compared to other predatory fish. The available feed sources are also special in the catchment area of Lake Balaton, where common bleak (*Alburnus alburnus*), common bream (*Abramis brama*) and ziege (*Pelecus cultratus*) occur in abundance in the diet of pike-perch (Specziár 2010). The supply and composition of feed are similar across the entire catchment area of Lake Balaton. 'Balatoni hal' pike-perch are not given any feed supplements, and farming is entirely based on natural fish feed chiefly originating from the tributaries of fish ponds, i.e. the streams in the catchment area of Lake Balaton.

'Balatoni hal' carp are given natural feed and feed supplements, which comprise two main components. The first includes nutritive mixers (wheat, triticale and maize/corn); the second alien species of zebra mussel (*Dreissena polymorpha* and *Dreissena bugensis*). Fish farmers (holders of an ecological, selective fishing permit) harvest the mussel biomass used for feed from mobile rafts installed in several locations on Lake Balaton (the southern sides of all three basins, primarily places in the vicinity of fish farms). The mussel biomass, which grows in 8 to 12 months, is harvested from the rafts and used for feed in carp farms, ensuring that the mussel types remain within the fish farm.

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

All four steps of producing 'Balatoni hal' must be conducted in the geographical area listed under point 4. These include natural spawning, artificial (incubator) breeding, rearing in natural waters and farming in the fish farm. Under current legislation, pelagic fishing in Lake Balaton has been banned since 5 December 2013. As an exception, selective fishing is permitted for ecological and demonstration purposes (3 000 kg of carp and 500 kg pike-perch annually, with eel traps). 'Balatoni hal' is therefore primarily farmed, but specimens reared in a natural environment are also occasionally available as a bi-product of selective eel fishing for ecological purposes.

### 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 farming of 'Balatoni hal' in Hungary is conducted in the following locations of the catchment area of Lake Balaton.

1. Lake Balaton and its water system (waters included in fish farming: 61 139 ha)

Specific water bodies of Lake Balaton and its water system:

- the entire area of Lake Balaton,
  - the stretch of the Zala River extending from the mouth to the Fenékpusztá railway bridge,
  - the stretch of the Hévíz Canal from the mouth up to 50 metres from the downstream side of the dam on Lake Hévíz,
  - the stretch of the Páhok Canal from the mouth to the Hévíz Canal,
  - the stretch of the United Belt Canal (Egysített-övcatorna) from the Boat Bridge (Bárkázó híd) to the inflow of Gyöngyös Stream,
  - the stretch of the Fenyves Canal (Fenyvesi-nyomócsatorna) from the mouth to the pump station in Balatonfenyves,
  - the stretch of the Western Belt Canal (Nyugati-övcatorna) extending from the mouth to the Pálmajor railway bridge,
  - the stretch of the Eastern Brush Canal (Keleti-Bozót-csatorna) from the mouth to the bridge of the road leading to Pusztaberény railway station,
  - the stretch of Jama Stream from the mouth to the sluice gates on Bugaszeg Fish Pond,
  - the stretch of Tetves Stream from the mouth to the sluice gates on Balatonlelle Fish Ponds,
  - the stretch of the Kismetszés from the mouth to the No 70 road,
  - the stretch of the Nagymetszés from the mouth to the wooden bridge in Szólád,
  - the Lesence, Kétöles, Tapolca, Egervíz and Burnót Streams and the stretch of Egermalom Canal from the mouth to the No 71 road,
  - the stretches of the Sár and Cigány inland inundation canals from the Somogyszentpál access road to the Western Belt Canal (Nyugati-övcatorna),
  - the stretch of the Western Belt Canal (Nyugati-övcatorna) from the Pálmajor railway bridge to the Határ-Külvíz Canal,
  - the stretch of the Határ-Külvíz Canal from the mouth to the main road between Marcali and Öreglak,
  - the Cigány Canal, and
  - the Eastern Brush Canal (Keleti Bozót Canal).
2. Little Balaton Water Protection System, Stage I (Lake Hídvég; area: 2 000 ha)
3. Little Balaton Water Protection System, Stage II (Lake Fenéki; area: 5 110 ha)
4. Marcali Reservoir (area: 407 ha)
5. Fonyód-Zardavár Fish Ponds (area: 135 ha)
6. Balatonlelle-Irmapusztá Fish Ponds (area: 275 ha)
7. Buzsáki-Ciframalom Fish Ponds (area: 138 ha)
8. Balatonszárszó-Nádfedeleles Fish Pond (area: 15 ha)
9. Balatonföldvár Fish Pond (area: 23 ha)
10. Somogyvár-Tölös Fish Ponds (area: 26 ha)
11. Varásló Fish Ponds (area: 174 ha)
12. Siófok-Törek Fish Ponds (area: 36 ha)

## 5. Link with the geographical area

The link between 'Balatoni hal' and the geographical area is based on the product's quality and reputation.

The place of production of 'Balatoni hal' is primarily the southern and south-western catchment area of Lake Balaton. Fish ponds are nowadays found in areas that used to be bays on lake Balaton before it was drained, that is, the former bed of the lake. Accordingly, their subsoil is similar to that of Lake Balaton.

The area has a humid continental climate, with sub-Mediterranean effects. The sub-Mediterranean effect chiefly refers to the temporal distribution of precipitation, which in average years has two peaks (June and September) and is crucial to fish farming. The area is wetter than the Hungarian average (620 mm p.a.). Most of the rain falls in the summer months, which is better for fish farming, ensuring adequate quantities and quality of water recharge. The tributaries of the fish ponds in the catchment area are typically short (30-40 km), and are free of untreated-sewage outlets (Ferincz et al. 2017). Thanks to this and the non-use of organic fertilisers, the water and sediments of the fish ponds are non-anaerobic. Consequently, the flesh of the fish produced there is free from extraneous flavours. The mean annual temperature (11,2) is also higher than the national average, which enhances fish growth. The composition of fish flesh is influenced by a number of environmental and production factors, including age, species, feed or natural feed (Trenovszki, 2013); most crucially, the quantity and quality of feed.

Crucially, too, for reasons of water quality protection, the use of organic fertilisers to enhance production yield (a routine practice in other areas) is forbidden in fish ponds within the catchment area of Lake Balaton. Consequently, fish farmed there do not come into contact with the extraneous flavour-impairing substances invariably found in organic fertilisers. The flesh of 'Balatoni hal' pike-perch owes its characteristic quality to the fish-pond water of adequate quantity and quality (sandy, loess pond beds; low organic content of incoming water), the aerobic lake-bottom sediments, and to the large quantity and proportion of chiefly indigenous white-fleshed bleak and roach characteristic of the area. Due to good water quality and natural fish feed, the flesh of 'Balatoni hal' pike-perch is snow-white, with no secondary flavour. It has a flaky structure due to the large water surface (more movement in searching for food).

Specziár (2010) has established that the nutrition of the 'Balatoni hal' pike-perch is special in that the baby fish shift from feeding on zooplankton to feeding on fish after they have reached a body length of 12-15 cm, which is relatively late compared to other predatory fish. The available feed sources are also special in the catchment area of Lake Balaton, where common bleak (*Alburnus alburnus*), common bream (*Abramis brama*) and ziega (*Pelecus cultratus*) occur in abundance in the diet of pike-perch (Specziár 2010). 'Balatoni hal' pike-perch flesh owes its special quality to these factors. The flesh of 'Balatoni hal' carp is firm. It owes its flexible consistency to protein-rich natural feed and to complementary natural shellfish feed, because protein-rich natural nutrients have a positive effect on the flesh quality of the carp (Balogh, 2015).

'Balatoni hal' is one of the mainstays of local cuisine. 'Balatoni hal' carp is an essential ingredient of 'Balatoni halászlé' fish soup, the recipe of which is unique and typical of the catchment area.

The present-day reputation of 'Balatoni hal'

- The close relationship between Lake Balaton and 'Balatoni hal' carp is also demonstrated by the fact that the International Balaton Carp Cup was held for the fifth time in 2019.
- The Balaton Fish and Wine Festival has been held regularly by the city of Balatonfüred since 2015. The aim of the event is to raise consumers' awareness of Balaton fish and to combine the consumption of local fish and wines, creating a market for local fish farms and wine producers.
- Appropriately made from 'Balatoni hal', Balaton fish soup ('balatoni halászlé') has become a household culinary name (e.g.: [http://itthonotthonvan.hu/cikkek/2687482/a\\_balatoni\\_halaszle\\_titka](http://itthonotthonvan.hu/cikkek/2687482/a_balatoni_halaszle_titka)).
- The following article discusses the special taste and traditional fishing methods of 'Balatoni hal': <http://magyarkonyhaonline.hu/magyar-izek/a-balatoni-halal>

- The book 'A halfőzés fortélyai a Balaton mentén' [Tricks of cooking fish by the Balaton] is a collection of 400 fish dishes from 40 towns and villages around Lake Balaton (Szabó Zoltán 2014, ISBN 978-963-08-8628-4).
- Michelin-star restaurants, including the Stand in Budapest (chefs Tamás Szél and Szabina Szulló), use 'Balatoni sudár ponty' as an ingredient, which is indicated on the menu (<https://diningguide.hu/szell-tamas-cikke-halaszlevita-szell-tamas-halaszle-receptjevel/>).

#### Historical background of the reputation of 'Balatoni hal' pike-perch

- In discussing French fisheries in issue 44 of *Fischerei Zeitung* in 1917, Brussels scientist Waldmann remarked how 'before the Great War, the "fogasch" was much sought after in Paris. This is the name of the zander in Hungary's Lake Balaton.'
- In 1933, Neresheimer, fisheries expert of the Austrian Government, wrote in the *Österreichisches Nahrungsmittelbuch* (the Austrian Food Code), 'The name "Fogasch" can only be correctly applied to zander originating from Lake Balaton'. He added that calling the fish by this name suggests to consumers that it has come from Lake Balaton. In his opinion, only zander from Lake Balaton could rightfully be called 'Fogasch' [pike-perch].
- At the International Fishery Congress held in Paris in July 1931, Károly Lukács declared the Balaton zander a special local variety of pike-perch and proposed that its taxonomic designation be *Lucioperca sandra varietas Fogas balatonica* (Szári, 1988).
- In the 1930s the Balaton Halászati Részvénytársaság (Balaton Fisheries Stock Company) acquired exclusive rights to the name 'fogas' [pike-perch], which only applied to zander caught in Lake Balaton. Consignments were required to be accompanied by a certificate of origin of Lake Balaton. In 1931, a small convex metal seal was registered in the Bern International Patent Office in 1931, which was subsequently attached as a trade mark on the opercula (gill covers) of exported pike-perch. (Héjjas and Punk, 2010).

#### Historical background of the reputation of 'Balatoni hal' carp

- As regards the importance of the carp, a publication called 'A Balaton halai' [Fish of Lake Balaton] declares the carp to be second only to the pike-perch (Lukács, 1936).
- The carp was the other species, alongside the pike-perch, whose stocks Balaton fish farms sought to increase through conscious farming from the 1920s onwards.

#### Reference to publication of the specification

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

<https://gi.kormany.hu/foldrajzi-arujelzok>

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