

Publication of an application pursuant to Article 6(2) of Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin for agricultural products and foodstuffs

(2009/C 75/15)

This publication confers the right to object to the application pursuant to Article 7 of Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 ⁽¹⁾. Statements of objection must reach the Commission within six months from the date of this publication.

SUMMARY

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006

‘SOBAO PASIEGO’

EC No: ES-PGI-005-0478-28.06.2005

PDO () PGI (X)

This summary sets out the main elements of the product specification for information purposes.

1. Responsible department in the Member State:

Name: Subdirección General de Calidad Diferenciada y Agricultura Ecológica, Dirección General de Industria y Mercados Alimentarios, Ministerio de Medio Ambiente y Medio Rural y Marino
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2. Group:

Name: Asociación de Fabricantes de Sobaos Pasiegos y Quesadas de Cantabria

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Composition: Producers/processors (X) Other ()

Sobao and quesada producers

3. Type of product:

Class 2.4: Bread, pastry, cakes, confectionery and other baker's wares

4. Specification:

(Summary of requirements under Article 4(2) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006)

4.1. Name:

‘Sobao Pasiego’

⁽¹⁾ OJL 93, 31.3.2006, p. 12.

4.2. Description:

'Sobao Pasiego' is made from a dough of wheat flour, butter, sugar, eggs and a number of minor ingredients and additives; its characteristics are as follows:

Technical characteristics:

- (a) organoleptic properties: strong yellow crumbs and toast-coloured surface; dense, spongy texture; sweet flavour; prominent buttery aroma;
- (b) morphological: sobaos come in three different weights:
 - large (130 to 180 g), medium (40 to 80 g) and small (20 to 40 g);
- (c) presentation: 'Sobao Pasiego' is put up in a rectangular-based paper casing, the edges of which are folded up in a characteristic wing shape.

Physical and chemical characteristics:

These are as follows, within the values indicated:

Moisture (15-20 %), proteins (4 % or more), fat content using acid hydrolysis (24-32 %), glucose (45 % or more), ash (1;70 % or less); water activity (0;7-0;9 %).

Microbiological characteristics:

The product must comply with requirements under technical health legislation.

4.3. Geographical area:

The geographical area consists of the following municipalities in Cantabria: Anievas, Arenas de Iguña, Astillero (El), Bárcena de Pie de Concha, Camargo, Cartes, Castañeda, Cieza, Corrales de Buelna (Los), Corvera de Toranzo, Entrambasaguas, Liérganes, Luena, Marina de Cudeyo, Medio Cudeyo, Miengo, Miera, Molledo, Penagos, Piélagos, Polanco, Puente Viesgo, Reocín, Ribamontán al Mar, Ribamontán al Monte, Riotuerto, San Felices de Buelna, San Pedro del Romeral, San Roque de Riomiera, Santa Cruz de Bezana, Santa María de Cayón, Santander, Santillana del Mar, Santiurde de Toranzo, Saro, Selaya, Suances, Torrelavega, Vega de Pas, Villacarriedo, Villaescusa, Villafufre.

4.4. Proof of origin:

Proof that the sobaos are produced in the designated geographical area is provided by the following:

- the characteristics of the sobao: 'Sobao Pasiego' has specific characteristics, as set out in Sections 4.2 and 4.5, due to its particular production conditions,
- control arrangements guaranteeing traceability and thus also the origin of the sobao.

Elements to be taken into account:

- the sobaos are produced and packaged only in processing plants listed in the Register of Bakeries (*Registro de Obradores*) for the Protected Geographical Indication,
- the bakeries have to undergo an initial inspection before being registered and periodic inspections thereafter in order to remain on the PGI Register,
- the sobaos must be produced according to the method described in Section 4.5,
- Sobaos may be marketed with a guarantee of origin only if the production process has been subject to all the controls and the products bear a label or secondary label with a serial number,
- the inspection body will carry out periodic controls and assessments of the production and marketing process,
- any infringements will be subject to the penalty arrangements provided for in its rules, as appropriate,
- product testing will consist of physico-chemical, organoleptic and microbiological analyses.

Once all the relevant controls and assessments have been carried out, the inspection body identified in Section 4.7 will authorise the use of numbered labels or secondary labels, thus ensuring the traceability of the product.

4.5. Method of production:

1. 'Sobao Pasiego' is produced from the following ingredients: butter (26 % ± 3 %), sugar (26 % ± 4 %) (sucrose), fresh eggs (19 % ± 6 %), wheat flour (26 % ± 4 %). Minor ingredients: dextrose, glucose and salt (0,3 % ± 0,3 %); grated lemon peel, anis or rum may also be added.

2. Additives. Use of the following additives is permitted:

Raising agent: (1,5 % ± 1,5 %), preservative: potassium sorbate (maximum 1,5 g per kilogram of dough, butter flavouring and moistening agent.

The steps in the production of the sobaos are as follows:

1. preparation of the mixture;
2. batching;
3. baking;
4. cooling;
5. packaging; the finished product is dispatched and transported from the bakeries in suitable packaging or wrapping with appropriate labels and markings;
6. preservation: the product may not be preserved by freezing.

4.6. Link:

Historical factors

Various authors (García Lomas and Vega Ruiz) have said that the sobao was a cake made crudely from bread dough (to use up scraps), sugar and butter. This old version of sobao was improved by the addition of eggs, grated lemon peel and anis or rum.

The big change in the production method came when high-quality wheat flour was used instead of bread dough and adjustments were made to the quantities of other ingredients used. In his book *Los Pasiegos* (1986), García Lomas attributes the creation of the new *sobao moderno* to the cook Eusebia Hernández Martín, a letter from whose son includes the following passage: 'I knew that my late mother invented the sobao that we know now, i.e. as made from flour, as a variation on the old bread dough version. This was before 1896, the year in which she married my father, Joaquín Laso; she was then 19 years old and died in Vega in 1902 at the age of 25, leaving three sons and a daughter; I was her first child, born in 1897'.

Finally, in a 1946 study on terms used in the high valleys of Santander province but not included in the *Diccionario de la Lengua Española*, J Calderón Escalada records the term *Sobau*, defining it as follows: 'Cake made from flour, eggs, sugar and butter, baked in the oven in paper folded into a special shape; given as a favour on her wedding day by the bride to her friends'.

Current reputation: The *Gran Enciclopedia de Cantabria* refers to the sobao as a product 'going back at least a century and as enjoying enormous popularity'.

The *Inventario Español de Productos Tradicionales*, edited by the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, notes that 'Sobao Pasiego' is one of the products most typical of Cantabria, originating in Vega de Pas but known throughout Spain.

Human factors

By dint of their skill and professionalism, the producers have been able to maintain the distinctive character of 'Sobao Pasiego' over time and throughout the protected area.

Sobao embodies the coming together of wheat and butter, eggs and sugar, to produce a dish that reflects all aspects of the region's culture, as typified by the butter.

Causal relation between the geographical area and the characteristics or reputation of the product

The link between 'Sobao Pasiego' and the geographical area in which it is produced is based above all on the reputation and characteristics described in Section 4.2, which stem from the traditional method of production.

There are many references, such as those cited above, demonstrating that 'Sobao Pasiego' is a typical product of the Pasiego region. It is human factors that have helped over the years to make the product so well known and give it a reputation that has grown and been passed down from one generation to the next: a level of know-how which thus forms part of the region's heritage, to the extent that the product is named after, and recognised as coming from, the region.

The fact that the product has become so well known and well regarded has meant that, while for decades it was customary for individuals to make it at home to mark special occasions (weddings, festivals, market days, etc.), it is now a basic component of the local economy, which is responsible for over 90 % of sobaos produced in the region as a whole.

'Sobao Pasiego' started to be produced in greater quantities and, as a consequence, to be recognised more widely, from the second half of the last century when producers looked beyond the immediate area of Vega de Pas to use more developed communication channels to improve sales, and moved closer to more populated centres so as to be better able both to sell the product there and transport it to other parts of the region.

In addition, the Pasiego region has traditionally been characterised by dairy products — cheeses, ice-cream, butter, etc. — enjoying, as it does, farming and climatic conditions that are very favourable to milk production. Butter, in particular, is a basic ingredient of 'Sobao Pasiego', and is what is most responsible for its specific character, setting it apart from similar confectionery products made with other fats such as margarine, thus showing again how the geographical area contributes to the reputation and specificity of the product.

The extent and quality of the reputation of 'Sobao Pasiego' was reflected in a recent survey of consumers in various parts of Spain which found that nine out of ten interviewees were familiar with the product and over 73 % felt that it had a very good reputation; there was also a high level of awareness as to the origin of the product, with over 80 % tracing it to Cantabria and, despite its small size, over 35 % referring to the Pasiego region itself.

4.7. *Inspection body:*

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Nature and characteristics: Public authority

4.8. *Labelling:*

In addition to the obligatory markings laid down in general regulations, labels must feature the following:

- the name of the geographical indication: 'Sobao Pasiego',
- the term 'Indicación Geográfica Protegida' or 'IGP'.

These terms must appear together in the same visual field in visible, legible and indelible characters larger than those used for other text on the label.

The same label or secondary label must also bear the following, as previously authorised by the inspection body and not obscuring the label required under the general regulations:

- the PGI logo,
 - the control number issued by the inspection body,
 - the name of the inspection body.
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