

OTHER ACTS

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Publication of an amendment 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

(2017/C 368/08)

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⁾.

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**‘SALCHICHÓN DE VIC’/‘LLONGANISSA DE VIC’****EU No: PGI-ES-2158 — 4.7.2016****PDO () PGI (X)****1. Applicant group and legitimate interest**

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The Regulatory Council for the Protected Geographical Indication ‘Salchichón de Vic’/‘Llonganissa de Vic’ is made up of all the producers of the sausage covered by the ‘Salchichón de Vic’/‘Llonganissa de Vic’ PGI, and it has a legitimate interest in submitting an amendment application.

2. Member State or Third Country

Spain

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

- ☐ Name of product
- ☒ Product description
- ☐ Geographical area
- ☐ Proof of origin
- ☒ Method of production
- ☒ Link
- ☒ Labelling
- ☒ Other (Inspection body and legislative requirements)

4. Type of amendment(s)

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

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 343, 14.12.2012, p. 1.

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

5. Amendment(s)

Product description:

- The wording of the first paragraph of the product description in the specification has been revised and supplemented in order to make it consistent with the different sections of the specification and the single document. In that section, no reference was made to either the fat, despite it being a key component of the product, or to the sugar, even though its use has always been a standard practice. In addition, the sections used the terms 'leg and back' or 'ham and shoulder ham'. Although these terms are equivalent, it was considered a good idea to standardise the terms in order make the document easier to understand. It is now worded as follows:

"Salchichón de Vic"/"Llonganissa de Vic" is a traditional sausage from Catalonia, made with lean pork (ham, shoulder ham and top-quality lean meat), and fat, sugar, salt and pepper as the only seasonings. It is minced, macerated, stuffed into casing, and then cured.'

- The type of casings permitted in the production of Salchichón de Vic has been expanded. The use of sewn and reconstituted casings, which are also natural casings as defined until now, has been added. This amendment is being made to adapt to changes that have taken place in the natural sausage-casing market. These new features do not affect the organoleptic characteristics of the final product.

The wording now reads as follows: 'Natural, wide, crimped, sewn or reconstituted casings.'

- The heading of the 'Chemical composition' subsection in the specification has been changed to 'Physico-chemical parameters', which was considered better suited to its content.
- The physico-chemical parameters have been partially amended to improve the description of the product covered by the 'Salchichón de Vic'/Llonganissa de Vic' PGI. In this respect, it has been made clear that the maximum percentage of 'sugar' refers to 'total sugars expressed in glucose'. In addition, the 'humidity (%)' parameter has been replaced with a 'Water activity (A_w) at 20 °C' parameter. The pH measurement has also been added. These two new parameters provide more accurate information on the product's physico-chemical and food-safety characteristics.

The following values, which take into account the variability contributed by the drying process, have been set. A_w (at 20 °C) < 0,92 and $5,3 \leq \text{pH} \leq 6,2$.

The wording now reads as follows:

- Maximum fat: 48 % (*)
- Minimum protein: 38 % (*)
- Maximum collagen/protein ratio x 100: 12
- Total soluble sugars expressed in maximum glucose: 3 % (*)
- Added protein: Absent
- Water activity at 20 °C: $A_w < 0,92$
- $5,3 \leq \text{pH} \leq 6,2$

(*) Value expressed on the basis of dry matter.'

- It has been specified that the only sugars permitted as ingredients are mono- and disaccharides.
- The additives permitted in the production of the product covered by the PGI have been specified, because this piece of information was not specified in the previous version of the specification. The only additives are ascorbic acid and its sodium salt, potassium nitrate, sodium nitrate, potassium nitrite, and sodium nitrite.

— Sizes and formats:

In response to changes in the market and new consumer demand, the range of weights and formats of the product covered by the 'Salchichón de Vic'/'Llonganissa de Vic' PGI has been expanded. Specifically, smaller pieces (weighing less than 300 g), and a sliced, packaged format have been added. This means a reduction in the diameter and minimum curing time of the small pieces to preserve the product's characteristics. In addition, information concerning length has been removed, because the dimensions of the protected product are sufficiently defined with the diameter and weight.

The new size range, together with the corresponding curing period, is as follows:

Weight (g)	Diameter of the cured sausage (dried) (mm)		Minimum curing period (in days)
200-300	≥ 35	≤ 75	30 days
≥ 300	> 40	≤ 90	45 days

- The reference to the 1980 quality standard applicable to raw-cured, sausage meat products has been removed because this standard was repealed. Given that the products covered by the PGI must comply with the current sectoral legislation at all times, it was not deemed necessary to state the rule that replaced it.

Production method:

In addition to the amendments described below, some purely formal changes have been made to the text.

- The 'Production method' section of the specification has been rewritten, with the aim of improving it and leaving only the necessary information. In this respect, the reference to maceration conditions has been removed. This is because of the study that was carried out on how the weather and maceration-temperature conditions affect the pieces of fresh meat and ingredients of Salchichón de Vic after it is kneaded and before it is stuffed into the casing. This study concluded that during this stage in the preparation of the sausage, the effects of these factors in terms of intensity, time to take effect, and the interactions between all of these do not materially affect the production process, the final organoleptic and hygienic qualities, or the subsequent sale (*shelf-life*) of the product covered by the 'Salchichón de Vic'/'Llonganissa de Vic' PGI.
- The curing period has been adapted to the new range of weights.
- In addition, the idea that the aroma and taste of Salchichón de Vic is due to the fermentation and enzymatic processes originating from the microbiological flora specific to the Plain of Vic has been emphasised and expanded upon.

It is proposed that the wording of the 'Production method' section of the specification be as follows:

'The fresh meat parts are refined by specialised technicians, and then minced and mixed with the diced fat and the rest of the ingredients, among which sourdough — containing the producer's own bacterial flora — may also be included. Once the perfect blending of the ingredients with the meat mixture is completed, it is prepared into solid blocks that have no internal air pockets. These undergo a maceration process using traditional know-how, aimed at managing a good start to the fermentation, which can be seen in the appearance of a characteristic aroma and colour.

The matured meat mixture is put into completely clean natural casings that were prepared beforehand. The process of putting the meat mixture into the casing must be carried out with great care, making sure that there are no empty pockets or spaces left (the presence of air), because they would be the cause of poor stability and abnormal fermentation.

Once the meat is placed in the casings, the sausages are placed in drying chambers, where their curing and dehydration are completed. This process requires a period of at least 30 days for the smallest pieces weighing less than 300 g, and 45 days for those pieces of 300 g or more. The ambient conditions in the drying chambers (temperature, relative humidity and air velocity) may optionally be adjusted according to the prevailing climatology conditions.

The sausage must be cut in a uniform, smooth, and well-bound fashion, without abnormal colouration, and with a clear distinction between the lean meat and the diced cubes of fat. It must have the characteristic smell and flavour, resulting from the fermentation and enzymatic metabolism processes, caused by the bacterial and fungal flora specific to the Plain of Vic.'

Link with the area:

- In the 'Natural' subsection of the specification, certain references to the type of microbial flora have been corrected and clarified. Specifically, the relevant amendments made are:
 - The phrase '[...] a typical fungal flora developed in the area and adapted to it [...]', is amended to read '[...] a typical microbial flora developed in the area and adapted to it [...]'.
 - The phrase '[...] the development of the lactic-acid fungal flora enables acidification of the meat mixture, restraining some of the unwanted flora that produces fermentation and causes it to rot' is amended to read '[...] the development of the lactic-acid bacterial flora enables acidification of the meat mixture, restraining some of the unwanted flora that cause imbalances in the fermentation'.
- In this subsection, the following paragraph has been removed, as it was deemed unnecessary:

'Attempts have been made to produce starter cultures to implant the microbial flora in other production areas, and the curing process was not successful, either in the development and implantation, or in the resulting sausage being the equal of that produced in the Plain of Vic. This showed that it is only possible to produce Salchichón de Vic — Llonganissa de Vic in the geographical area covered by this Protected Geographical Indication.'

The differences in this section between the Single Document and the summary sheet are also because the sheet was too brief in summarising the specification and an effort was made to make the new Single Document more comprehensive.

Labelling:

- The labelling information has been updated. Specifically, a requirement has been added to include the EU's Protected Geographical Indication symbol, and the 'Salchichón de Vic'/'Llonganissa de Vic' PGI's own logo has been added.

Other:

- Inspection body: Data on the inspection body were updated.
- National legal requirements: This section has been deleted, as it is not a requirement of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

'SALCHICHÓN DE VIC'/'LLONGANISSA DE VIC'**EU No: PGI-ES-2158 — 4.7.2016****PDO () PGI (X)****1. Name**

Salchichón de Vic/Llonganissa de Vic

2. Member State or Third Country

Spain

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

Class 1.2. Meat products (cooked, salted, smoked, etc.)

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

'Salchichón de Vic'/'Llonganissa de Vic' PGI is a traditional sausage from Catalonia, made with lean pork, fat, sugar, salt and pepper as the only seasonings. It is minced, macerated, stuffed into casing, and then cured.

Stuffed into natural casings, it is characterised by a wrinkled external appearance with the casing sticking closely to the meat mixture, a more-or-less regular cylindrical shape, and a whitish outer colour, due to the fungal flora, which takes on purplish-brown tones over time. On the inside, the diced fat and peppercorns are visible.

Characteristic and pleasant aroma and flavour, which it gets from the spices and the curing process.

The casing that is used determines the diameter and size of the 'Salchichón de Vic'/'Llonganissa de Vic' PGI. The dimensions at the time of dispatch and the curing times are set out below:

Weight (g)	Diameter of the cured sausage (dried) (mm)		Minimum curing period (in days)
200-300	≥ 35	≤ 75	30 days
≥ 300	> 40	≤ 90	45 days

Physico-chemical parameters:

- Maximum fat: 48 % (*)
- Minimum protein: 38 % (*)
- Maximum collagen/protein ratio x 100: 12
- Total soluble sugars expressed in maximum glucose: 3 % (*)
- Added protein: Absent
- Water activity at 20 °C: $A_w < 0,92$
- $5,3 \leq \text{pH} \leq 6,2$

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

Selected lean pork (ham, shoulder ham and top-quality lean meat), fat, salt, pepper and natural casings (wide, crimped, sewn or reconstituted) are used.

Other ingredients: The only ingredients that may be used are sugar (mono- and disaccharides), the producer's own sourdough, potassium nitrite, sodium nitrite, potassium nitrate, sodium nitrate, ascorbic acid and its sodium salt.

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

The production of the product (preparation of the fresh meat, refining and mincing, mixing, kneading, maceration, stuffing in casing, and curing-maturation) must take place in the geographical area described in point 4.

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

Salchichón de Vic is permitted to be sold in slices and packaged, which can be done both within and outside of the geographical area described in point 4.

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

The 'Salchichón de Vic' (in Spanish) or 'Llonganissa de Vic' (in Catalan) Protected Geographical Indication name and logo, as well as the EU's symbol for PGIs and the Regulatory Council's authorised, numbered label must be clearly indicated on the packaging, along with the other information generally required under the legislation in force.

Reproduction of the logo itself:



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

The area defined by this indication comprises the municipalities of the Plain of Vic, located in the district of Osona in the Province of Barcelona, as follows:

(*) Value expressed on the basis of dry matter.

Aiguafreda, Sant Martí de Centelles, El Brull, Seva, Tona, Muntanyola, Malla, Taradell, Sant Julià de Vilatorrada, Santa Eugènia de Berga, Calldetenes, Folgueroles, Vic, Santa Eulàlia de Riuprimer, Gurb, Tavèrnoles, Roda de Ter, Manlleu, Santa Cecília de Voltregà, Sant Hipòlit de Voltregà, Les Masies de Voltregà, Orís, Torelló, Centelles, Balenyà, Les Masies de Roda, San Vicenç de Torelló and Sant Pere de Torelló.

5. **Link with the geographical area**

The uniqueness of Salchichón de Vic is based on the reputation and renown that this product has acquired both in Catalonia and in the rest of Spain over the centuries, especially from the 19th century on. It is also due to the environmental and climate conditions in the geographical area that enable its production.

The PGI's geographical area, the Plain of Vic, is a plain with outstanding agricultural conditions and a large number of farms and small rural centres. The area is located at an altitude of between 400 and 600 metres, and is surrounded by the Guilleries, Montseny, Collsacabra and Lluçanès mountain ranges, which give it a certain degree of isolation. It has a continental Mediterranean climate, but due to its location, during anticyclonic weather conditions, it is common for the air in this area to become stagnant. Thermal inversion then occurs, with temperatures reaching as much as 20 °C less in the plain than in the surrounding areas. In addition, mists hover persistently over the area (225 days of mist per year on average). For all of these reasons, the Plain of Vic produces very specific environmental conditions that are difficult to replicate. This promotes the development of a typical microbial flora, which is responsible for the fermentation and enzymatic processes that give Salchichón de Vic its characteristic aroma and flavour.

There are written references to Salchichón de Vic as far back as 1456, even though it might be possible to trace its origin back to the 4th century. In the past, this product was made in the homes of the area's peasant farmers, as a way of preserving the prime cuts of meat. From the mid-19th century onwards, many writings praised the quality of Salchichón de Vic and attested to its good reputation. By way of example, an account from the 'El Porvenir' newspaper of 29 May 1867 stated the following: '...the already famous salchichones de Vic'. It is even known that one of the fans of Salchichón de Vic was King Alfonso XIII himself. Thus, Vic and the sausage have for years gone together like the surname and first name of great families, and over time it has become a small treasure.

Despite the tradition of the word 'salchichón', referring to a thick, cured sausage, we must point out that in Catalan it is called 'llonganissa', this being its original and native name, which became 'salchichón' when it passed into Spanish. This is why the designations 'Salchichón de Vic' and 'Llonganissa de Vic' are used interchangeably.

In summary, Salchichón de Vic is a product with an excellent reputation, that is the result of experience passed down from generation to generation of producers and of the specific environmental conditions of the geographical area in which it is produced.

Reference to publication of the specification

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

<http://agricultura.gencat.cat/pliegosalchichonvic>
