

**Publication of an application for registration pursuant to the second subparagraph of Article 8(1) of Council Regulation (EEC) No 2082/92 on certificates of specific character**

(2001/C 125/03)

This publication confers the right to object to the application pursuant to Articles 8 and 9 of the abovementioned Regulation. Any objection to the application must be submitted via the competent authority in the Member State concerned within a time limit of five months from the date of this publication. Supporting arguments for publication are set out below, in particular under points 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4, and are considered to justify the application within the meaning of Regulation (EEC) No 2082/92.

COUNCIL REGULATION (EEC) No 2082/92

APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION OF A CERTIFICATE OF SPECIFIC CHARACTER

**National application No: —**

**1. Responsible department in the Member State**

Name: Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

Agriculture Department — Rural Policy and Structures Unit

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FIN-00023 Valtioneuvosto

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**2. Applicant group**

2.1. Name: Suomen Sahtiseura ry

2.2. Address: Liesontie 554, FIN-16900 Lammi

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2.3. Composition: Manufacturers/processors ( ) other (x)

**3. Type of product:** Beers

**4. Summary of product specification**

(summary of requirements under Article 6(2))

4.1. **Name:** Sahti

4.2. **Specific production or manufacturing method:** Sahti is traditionally prepared from raw materials including, in addition to malted barley, other cereal malt and cereals (rye, barley, wheat and oats) and usually hops, fermented using baker's yeast or harvested yeast.

Sahti is brewed by gradually adding water to the mixture of malt and cereals, starting at a temperature of around 40 °C, which is increased to around 100 °C by the time the last water is added. This is known as 'mashing', and in some places this phase also includes boiling the mash. The heating times vary from short to a thorough boiling. Next, the wort is separated by straining in a trough or vat, and hops may be added. Traditionally, juniper twigs and rye straw are used for straining the wort, which is then fermented into sahti using baker's or harvested yeast. Top fermentation is used. The main fermentation takes around three days at room temperature or cooler, after which the sahti is kept cool for at least one week. The alcohol comes exclusively from the sugar in the malts and other cereals.

The methods and raw materials used for making sahti have traditionally varied somewhat from place to place, but within the range described above. It takes about 20 kg of malt and 50 g of yeast to make 50 litres of sahti.

- 4.3. **Traditional character:** Sahti is made according to traditional methods using traditional raw materials and no additives. The finished product is neither filtered nor pasteurised, but drunk fresh. Sahti has a long history: the brewing instructions have probably been handed down from generation to generation for thousands of years, although written records do not date back very far. Sahti was, and still is, used as a festive drink and forms part of the living rural culture in its home regions of Kanta-Häme, Päijät-Häme and Pohjois-Satakunta. Sahti production is a craft and has its own special equipment: the wooden trough at least is characteristic. The earliest written reference to the traditional nature of sahti and its geographical distribution dates from 1792. Sahti is among the most unusual and clearly distinguishable malt-based drinks in the world and is one of the last 'original' beers in Western Europe. It could be dubbed an 'ethnobeer'.
- 4.4. **Description of the product:** Sahti is a traditional, slightly cloudy, strong beer produced by fermentation. It is neither pasteurised nor filtered and the fermentation is left to run its course, so it is drunk fresh. The original gravity of the wort is at least 19 °Plato and the alcohol content varies between 6 % and 12 % by volume. The pH is less than 5. The colour varies from yellow to dark brown depending on the raw materials used. Sahti is cloudy because it is unfiltered. Because of the high residual-sugar content fresh sahti is slightly sweet tasting.
- 4.5. **Minimum requirements and inspection procedures to which specific character is subject:** Each producer of sahti draws up a self-monitoring plan for production monitoring, which is approved by decision of the accredited national authority. The raw materials, broken down into malt, malt extract, cereals, starch, sugar and sugar products, are declared in annual reports. Producers are also required to draw up regular production and delivery reports.

Producers of new products must first have them analysed by the official laboratory (ACL, laboratory notified by the EU). The quality of products already on the market is checked on the basis of samples. The parameters checked include alcohol content, pH, degree of fermentation, external properties, original wort and apparent extract concentration.

Samples have to be collected from breweries and distributors each year in order to check that the products are being made in accordance with the self-monitoring rules and the product analysis. It has to be established that the traditional production method is used. The inspection covers original gravity, alcohol content, pH value and extract concentration. The annual checks must include recipes, use of raw materials, purchases and consumption of raw materials, accounting and self-monitoring by producers.

5. **Request for reservation pursuant to Article 13(2):** Yes.

**EC No:** S/FI/00014/98.08.26.

**Date of receipt of the full application:** 7 July 2000.

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