



C/2024/4535

18.7.2024

Publication of an application for registration of a name pursuant to Article 50(2), point (a), of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs

(C/2024/4535)

Following this publication, the authorities of a Member State or of a third country, or a natural or legal person having a legitimate interest and established or resident in a third country, may lodge, in accordance with Article 17 of Regulation (EU) 2024/1143 of the European Parliament and of the Council⁽¹⁾ an opposition with the Commission within 3 months from the date of this publication.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

'Livanjski sir'

EU No: PGI-BA-2881 — 16.12.2022

PDO () PGI (x)

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

'Livanjski sir'

2. **Member State or Third Country**

Bosnia and Herzegovina

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

3.1. *Type of product*

Class 1.3. Cheese

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

'Livanjski sir' is a hard full-fat cheese made from pasteurized, thermalized or raw cow's milk, sheep's milk or their mixtures, which is produced in a defined geographical area. The taste and smell of 'Livanjski sir' is slightly sweetish, reminiscent of walnut kernels, and ripe cheese is slightly piquant. It contains at least 60 % of dry matter and at least 45 % of fat in dry matter. Concentration of salt in cheese is from 1,8 % to 2,2 %. The shape of cheese is cylindrical, with flat bases and a flat or slightly convex mantle. Diameter of wheel of cheese is from 18 to 28 cm, and the height is from 7 to 10 cm. Cheese weighs from 1,8 to 3,5 kg. 'Livanjski sir' is also produced in smaller sizes with a diameter of 9 to 14 cm, height of 6 to 12 cm and a weight of 0,6 to 1,2 kg. Rind is smooth and hard, without cracks or signs of damage, golden yellow in color and is formed naturally during ripening of cheese, which lasts optimally for 90 days and the shortest for 60 days. The color of rind during ripening can change from golden yellow to a slightly darker golden yellow. Cheese dough is compact, weakly elastic, easy to cut, with dense texture, without or with a small number of small regular holes. If cheese is made from raw milk, there may be more holes which are often irregular. It is light yellow. As cheese dough ripens, it loses its elasticity, and color takes on a darker shade. Taste is slightly and pleasantly piquant and sweetish, and the spiciness intensifies with longer ripening. Smell is pronounced and typical for mature hard cheeses, and it intensifies with ripening. Aroma is slightly reminiscent of aromatic herbs from the defined area of milk production. Among other things, cows and sheep eat this grass, the aromatic substances are transferred into the milk, and this is precisely the most important 'ingredient' and the secret of 'Livanjski sir'.

⁽¹⁾ Regulation (EU) 2024/1143 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11.4.2024 on geographical indications for wine, spirit drinks and agricultural products, as well as traditional specialities guaranteed and optional quality terms for agricultural products, amending Regulations (EU) No 1308/2013, (EU) 2019/787 and (EU) 2019/1753 and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 (OJ L, 2024/1143, 23.4.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1143/oj>).

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

The main component of fodder rations is grazing (6 months), hay, or haylage (75 % of the dry matter of the daily ration), which are prepared in geographical area defined under point 4. Basic feed ration can be supplemented with additional feed mixtures and mineral-vitamin supplements. Voluminous fodder for feeding milking cows, produced outside of the area defined above, can be used in daily rations in quantities of up to maximum of 40 %. Concentrated animal feed can be produced in any area outside the area referred to in point 4.

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

Preparation of milk for curdling, curdling and processing of cheese curds (coagulum), shaping and separation of cheese grains from whey, pressing of cheese wheels, salting of cheese wheels and ripening of cheese.

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

'Livanjski sir' can also be marketed as cut into pieces or grated (cutting and grating is done at the place of production), and is packed in a vacuum or in a modified atmosphere. Cheeses weighing less than 1,2 kilograms can only be placed on the market as a whole wheel. 'Livanjski sir' that has ripened for more than 12 months can be put on the market as grated cheese. Cheese is packed in a vacuum or in a modified atmosphere. After cutting the cheese, side surfaces of the obtained pieces are left without natural protection, due to which there is an accelerated loss of cheese quality and a reduction of shelf life for such products. Therefore, pieces of cheese are packed only in the prescribed type of packaging and thus retain the typical sensorial properties of 'Livanjski sir' which are prescribed by this specification and which the consumer expects. Process of cutting the cheese also destroys the integrity of casein label on which the product traceability is based, which is why no physical sign remains on the piece of cheese that would guarantee the authenticity of the product, then such packaging is marked on the declaration with a batch code which is used for product's traceability.

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

Cheeses that meet all the requirements of the specification are marked with the name of the producer, the name 'Livanjski sir' and with the sign of PGI. The label must also state whether the cheese is made from raw, pasteurized or thermalized milk, and the type and proportion of milk must be specified by the type of animal from which milk originates. If cheese was ripened at least for 6 months, producers can additionally indicate maturity of these cheeses and such 'Livanjski sir' can carry PREMIUM mark.

4. Concise definition of the geographical area

The geographical area where production of milk for 'Livanjski sir' takes place includes following municipalities: Livno, Tomislavgrad, Kupres, Glamoč, Grahovo, and Drvar. The geographical area of production of 'Livanjski sir' includes a narrower region than the area designated for milk production and represents a traditional area of production of 'Livanjski sir', where it has been produced for decades. 'Livanjski sir' is historically linked to this area. It includes the entire municipality of Livno, part of the municipality of Glamoč (villages: Skucani, Vidimlije, Staro selo, Kopic, Dolac, Dragnic), part of the municipality of Kupres (village Gornji Malovan), part of the municipality of Tomislav Grad (villages: Šuica, Eminovo selo, Stipanići and Prisoje).

5. Link with the geographical area

The request to register 'Livanjski sir' PGI is based on the special characteristics of cheese and reputation

Characteristics and uniqueness of 'Livanjski sir' stem from the special characteristics of milk from which it is produced. Geographical area of milk production provides ideal conditions for raising livestock. Specific collision of the Mediterranean and continental climates, combination of pastures on the mountains and unique complex of karst fields result with vegetation composed of valuable plants, some of which are endemic, such as, for example, black root (*Scorzonera vilosa*), spotted gorse (*Hypochoeris maculata*), spike (*Dantonionia* sp.) and Pannonian clover. 'Livanjski sir' is a hard cheese characterized by a pleasant piquant taste and a compact, closed texture.

Although it is produced in the area of the municipality of Livno and parts of neighboring municipalities, 'Livanjski sir' has built a high reputation with its history and quality and has become a recognizable symbol, trademark and ambassador of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the world. Also, since the end of the 19th century, specific method of production of 'Livanjski sir' has remained for decades in the area of its production, being passed down from generation to generation, where the skill of the master cheesemaker contributed to the standard quality of Livanjski cheese. Cheese's specificity, long tradition of production, standard quality, but also the sale and popularity of cheese abroad had a dominant influence on the popularization of cheese and the creation of a good reputation, which is referenced in scientific papers, everyday news, and confirmed with many awards on fairs and competition (List of scientific papers and awards received can be found under point 5.4)

5.1. *Specificity of the geographical area*

A continental to mountainous climate prevails in defined geographical area, and its main features are cold and harsh winters and moderate and warm summers. Decisive factors that determine climate of this area are: geographical location, geomorphological characteristics of area, and proximity to the Adriatic Sea. Rainfall is characteristic for this area. Main maximum in the amount of precipitation is in November, while the second maximum is from February to April. The main characteristic of this area is that it is karst, and because of this there is a rapid draining of precipitation, which is why there are frequent droughts in summer months. Also, this area is characterized by precipitation in November, which is followed by a winter snow blanket during winter months. The result of all this is an excessive amount of water, which causes flooding of certain parts of this area.

The fact that the geographical area of milk and cheese production is located at the geographical transition from Herzegovina on the south and Bosnia on the north, where influences of warm Mediterranean from the south and cold mountain climate from the north collide, has caused, over time, creation of special ecological conditions. They are characterized by pronounced temperature and hygroscopic extremes, as well as a high amount and specific distribution of precipitation. Ecosystems developed under these conditions are simultaneously inhabited by thermophilic (warm-loving) and frigidophilic (adapted to low temperatures), i.e. mountain plant and animal species. Most of the species that make up these communities are of endemic Dinaric and Balkan character. One of the important facts is that this area has huge areas of natural grasslands (pastures) in relation to the total agricultural areas (over 80 % of the total areas under grasslands). 'Livanjski sir' has a long and rich tradition of production in a defined geographical area. Beginnings of cheese production in this area date back to the distant past, and are associated with the beginning of grazing and keeping cattle in the districts in the mountains, which is understandable, because at that time cheese making was the only way to preserve milk in hilly-mountainous conditions.

5.2. *Specificity of the product*

'Livanjski sir' is a hard cheese that is characterized by a pleasant piquant taste and a compact closed texture. It can be recognized by its regular, low cylindrical shape. Cheese dough is light yellow to dark yellow in color, and rind is natural, hard and smooth. Depending on its maturity, texture and taste of 'Livanjski sir' may differ. 'Livanjski sir' aged two months is weakly elastic, easy to cut, and on cross-section it may be without or have a smaller number of sparsely distributed round small holes (with 'Livanjski sir' obtained from raw milk, there may be a considerable number of holes on cross-section). Its taste is slightly sweet, moderately salty and pleasantly piquant. It has a pronounced persistent aroma characteristic for the area of production, reminiscent of aromatic and spicy herbs.

5.3. Causal connection

Characteristics and uniqueness of 'Livanjski sir' originate from special characteristics of milk from which it is produced. Geographical area of milk production and processing into 'Livanjski sir' is special and unique in many respects. It provides ideal conditions for raising livestock. Specific collision of Mediterranean and continental climates, combination of pastures on the mountains and unique complex of karst fields provide vegetation composed of valuable plants and the geographical environment that cannot be found anywhere else. Botanical composition of natural grasslands used for production of 'Livanjski sir' indicates that described area is home to a large number of aromatic plants, some of which are valuable and unique only to these areas. Cattle grazing in such an environment where there is a large presence of various aromatic plants significantly affects increase in nutritional value of milk, and thus cheese produced from such milk. In addition, cheese obtained in this way has a special taste and smell that is characteristic and closely related to the vegetation of this region. Main livestock grazing takes place on mountainous and hilly areas with most valuable plants. This way of grazing and feeding livestock has been present in these regions since ancient times. Tradition of herders in this region is to make maximum use of pasture when feeding dairy cattle. Milking cows are fed on pasture for about 6 months, and remaining part of the year cows are fed with hay or silage obtained from pastures or arable land from the production area. In such an environment, milk and whey (if it is used for plant culture) have a rich and diverse microflora that is transferred to cheese and gives it special characteristics. Production plants are also home to a rich microflora that comes from environment surrounding dairies and that inhabits cheese during production and ripening phases.

5.4. List of scientific papers and awards

1. Livanjski sir, (S. Kirin i sur), Professional paper an importance of cheese from the region of Livno, through its 117 years of production is described. The most important technological parameters, basic chemical composition and organoleptic characteristics of Livno cheese are described on the basis of literature data. A significant quality difference, between traditionally and industrially manufactured cheeses, mainly due to milk used, production processes and technical abilities, is established. The presented organoleptic properties and technological parameters, as well as chemical composition, can be use to standardise this type of cheese. This will also enable eventual protection of its geographical origin, *Mljekarstvo* 53 (4) 281-291, 2003.
2. Consumers' preferences and composition of Livanjski cheese in relation to its sensory characteristic (Matić A., Kalit S., Salajpal K., Ivanković S., Sarić Z.), *Mljekarstvo* 64 (3), 170-177, 2014.
3. The impact of proteolytic changes on sensory properties of Livno cheese (Matić A., Sarić Z., Kalit S), *Works of the Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciencies, University of Sarajevo*, Vol. LIX, No. 64/1, pages 155-173, 2014.

List of awards:

Date	State	City	Fair/Competition	Product	Award
6.-8.11.2014.	Austria	Hopfgarten im Brixental	12. Međunarodnoj izložbi sira u Austriji (Die internationale Käsiade)	Livanjski sir	Gold medal
9-15.5.2015.	Serbia	Novi sad	82. međunarodni poljo-privredni sajam	Livanjski sir	Great Gold medal
2021-22	Spain	Oviedo	World cheese awards	Livanjski sir	Bronze medal
2021-22	Spain	Oviedo	World cheese awards	Livanjski sir	Silver medal

2022	Belgium	Brussels	International Taste Award	Livanjski sir	Superior taste Award
2023	Belgium	Brussels	International Taste Award	Livanjski sir	Superior taste Award

Reference to publication of the specification

https://fsa.gov.ba/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Livanjski-sir_-small-modified-specification.pdf
