Transmission of an established geographical indication of spirit drinks

Ostpreußischer Bärenfang

EU No: PGI-DE-02013

Submitted on 24 July 2018

PGI

# Technical file

## Name and type

### Name(s)

Ostpreußischer Bärenfang (de)

### Category

47. Other spirit drinks

### Member State or third country

Germany

### Application language

German

### Type of geographical indication

PGI – Protected geographical indication

## Contact details

### Applicant name and title

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| Applicant name and title | Bundesministerium für Ernährung und Landwirtschaft (BMEL), Referat 414 (Wein, Bier, Getränkewirtschaft) [Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL), Unit 414 (Wine, beer, beverages sector)] |
| Legal status, size and composition (in the case of legal persons) |  |
| Nationality | German |
| Address | Rochusstraße 1  D-53123 Bonn |
| Country | Germany |
| Telephone | 0049 (0)228 99 529-0 |
| Email address(es) | 414@bmel.bund.de, poststelle@bmel.bund.de, werner.albrecht@bmel.bund.de |

### Intermediary details

### Interested party details

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| --- | --- |
| Interested party name and title | Bundesverband der Deutschen Spirituosen-Industrie und -Importeure e.V. (BSI) [Federal Association of the German Spirit Drinks Industry and Importers of Spirit Drinks] |
| Legal status, size and composition (in the case of legal persons) | Registered association [*eingetragener Verein, e.V.*] |
| Nationality | German |
| Justification of the interest | Representation of the interests of German spirit drinks producers |
| Address | Urstadtstraße 2  53129 Bonn |
| Country | Germany |
| Telephone | 0049 (0)228 539940 |
| Email address(es) | info@bsi-bonn.de |

### Competent control authority details

### Control body details

## Description of the spirit drink

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| --- | --- |
| Title – Product name | Ostpreußischer Bärenfang |
| Physical, chemical and/or organoleptic characteristics | Concise description of the spirit drink ‘Ostpreußischer Bärenfang’:  ‘Ostpreußischer Bärenfang’ is a sweetened spirit drink made by flavouring ethyl alcohol of agricultural origin with honey and, possibly, with herbs or spices such as cinnamon or vanilla. Other sweetening products such as sugar may be added.  - Actual alcoholic strength of the ready-to-drink product: at least 30 % vol.  - Extract content: at least 400 g per litre  - Honey content: at least 25 kg per 100 litres of finished product  - Clarity: clear or cloudy  - Colour and appearance: honey-yellow, more viscous than other spirit drinks  - Smell: typical honey aroma, possibly with spicy tones, depending on the other ingredients used, e.g. cinnamon or vanilla  - Taste: of honey, and possibly of other ingredients used, such as herbs, cinnamon or vanilla  - Ingredients used: ethyl alcohol of agricultural origin, honey and, where necessary, other sweetening products, possibly also herbs or spices such as cinnamon sticks, vanilla pods or cloves, and water for reduction to drinking strength. The notes of honey must be the dominant flavour, however. |
| Specific characteristics (compared with spirit drinks of the same category) | - Minimum alcoholic strength of 30 % vol., higher than that laid down for other spirit drinks (15 % vol.).  - Minimum honey content of 25 kg per 100 litres of finished product, corresponding to about 18 litres of honey per 100 litres of finished product.  - Caramel and other colourings are not added. |

## Define geographical area

### Description of the defined geographical area

The spirit drink ‘Ostpreußischer Bärenfang’ is now made within Germany according to traditional East Prussian recipes.

### NUTS area

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| --- | --- |
| DE | GERMANY |

## Method used to obtain the spirit drink

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| Title – Type of method |  |
| Method | ‘Ostpreußischer Bärenfang’ is produced in particular on the basis of ethyl alcohol of agricultural origin and honey. Herbs or spices and other sweetening products may be added.  The first production step is usually to dissolve floral honey in ethyl alcohol of agricultural origin. *Bärenfang* is mostly made from floral honey, as the use of forest honey (made from honeydew) can impart a bitter note. Herbs, raw vegetable materials or spices, such as vanilla pods, cinnamon sticks, cloves or lemon peel, may be added, the mixture being stirred well and allowed to infuse for a few days.  The second production step is to filter the *Bärenfang* and possibly decant it into a dark-coloured container to mature. The spirit drink must not be stored at too low a temperature, or else the honey will crystallise.  After the storage or maturation stage, the production process is completed by carrying out the following steps:  - reduction of the high alcoholic strength of the *Bärenfang* to drinking strength using water,  - bottling or decanting into other suitable sale containers, and  - labelling and packaging. |

## Link with the geographical environment or origin

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| Title – Product name | Ostpreußischer Bärenfang |
| Details of the geographical area or origin relevant to the link | Until the end of the Second World War, ‘Ostpreußischer Bärenfang’ was made in East Prussia, which was part of Germany until then. ‘Ostpreußischer Bärenfang’ was a sort of national drink in East Prussia. Many producers had a long-standing tradition of making ‘Ostpreußischer Bärenfang’.  However, the producers of ‘Ostpreußischer Bärenfang’ are no longer in East Prussia, but are located throughout Germany, as they fled westwards shortly before the end of the Second World War, the recipe for their treasured speciality spirit drink being one of the few belongings they took with them.  Because it was easy to make, *Bärenfang* was a popular home-made drink in East Prussia, although high-percentage vodka was generally used instead of ethyl alcohol.  According to legend, East Prussian peasants once used *Bärenfang* to catch a wild bear which they could not otherwise have captured owing to the hunting ban. The bear, lured by the honey, was in the end so drunk that it could be driven off.  Records show that *Bärenfang* was first produced in East Prussian homes in the 15th century. In parts of East Prussia, *Bärenfang* was also known as *Petzfang* (*Meister Petz* is a synonym for bear in German) or *Meschkinnes* (*meškinis*, from *meška*, the Lithuanian word for bear).  As the national drink, ‘Ostpreußischer Bärenfang’ also appeared in many songs and poems in the East Prussian dialect, such as the *Bärenfang* poem by Heinz Harnack.  Since 1945, its producers who fled west to Germany have enabled this once East Prussian speciality spirit drink to acquire global renown.  These refugee producers’ exclusive right to continue to use the name ‘Ostpreußischer Bärenfang’ and the fact that this name is a protected indication of geographical origin for those German producers were expressly recognised in a number of bilateral agreements concluded in the 1960s between the Federal Republic of Germany and other states such as Switzerland, France, Greece and Spain.  As ‘Ostpreußischer Bärenfang’ has been exported to other countries, mainly in the English-speaking world, the spelling ‘Baerenfang’ has also become established.  There are many historical records, treatises and other documents which emphasise that ‘Ostpreußischer Bärenfang’ was the national alcoholic drink of East Prussia. An internet search for the term ‘Ostpreußischer Bärenfang’ shows that many products are also offered for sale online. |
| Specific characteristics of the spirit drink attributable to the geographical area | East Prussia always had a large brown bear population compared with the rest of Germany, and was also a region that produced significant amounts of honey. The diverse heath landscapes, with plants such as broom and heather, provided bees with abundant food for the production of honey. ‘Ostpreußischer Bärenfang’ could be made relatively easily at home in East Prussia and was a popular warming drink amongst forestry workers and farmers, in particular in the harsh winter months.  In East Prussia, *Bärenfang* was also used as an ingredient in cooking or in certain types of cake.  The honey used to make ‘Ostpreußischer Bärenfang’ is now sourced from around the world. |
| Causal link between the geographical area and the product |  |

## Requirements under EU, national or regional legislation

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| Title |  |
| Legal reference | - EU food legislation  - EU spirit drinks legislation  - national spirit drinks legislation (federal legislation). |
| Description of the requirement(s) | - labelling rules  - product specifications. |

## Supplement to the geographical indication

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| Supplement to the geographical indication | Ostpreußischer Bärenfang |
| Definition, description or scope of the supplement | (a) Basic rules on supplements to the geographical indication ‘Ostpreußischer Bärenfang’:  Under current Union spirit drinks legislation, the name ‘Ostpreußischer Bärenfang’ may be supplemented only by:  - the terms specified under (b) and (c); or  - terms other than those specified under (b) and (c) which can be shown to have been in common use on 20 February 2008.  (b) Additional product names:  Other similar product names, such as ‘Ostpreußischer Petzfang’, ‘Ostpreußischer Bärenjäger’, ‘Ostpreußischer Baerenjaeger’, ‘Ostpreußischer Baerenfang’ or ‘Ostpreußischer Meschkinnes’, are used in addition to the geographical indication ‘Ostpreußischer Bärenfang’, which is the commercial name.  (c) Additional age and quality indications:  - If indications concerning maturing, ageing or storage (e.g. ‘*alt*’ or ‘*alter*’ [old]) are added to the geographical indication ‘Ostpreußischer Bärenfang’, the products must be matured or stored for at least six months in suitable containers. In the case of products matured in wooden casks, the storage time may be indicated in months and/or years (e.g. ‘matured for 12 years’ or ‘three years old’).  - If quality terms (e.g. ‘*feiner*’ [fine], ‘*Tafel-*’ [table]) are added to the geographical indication ‘Ostpreußischer Bärenfang’, the products must be of significantly higher quality than the standard products. This may, for instance, be on account of having a higher pure floral honey content than standard products, or containing only monofloral honey, only organic floral honey or no sweetening products other than honey. |

## Specific labelling rules

# Other information

## Supporting material

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| File name | Auszug Wehlauer Heimatbrief Bärenfang.pdf |
| Description |  |
| Document type | Product specification |

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| File name | Auszug Ostpreußen Chronik Bärenfang.pdf |
| Description |  |
| Document type | Other document |

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| File name | Auszug Ostpreußen Warte Seiten 5 ff Bärenfang.pdf |
| Description |  |
| Document type | Other document |

## Link to the product specification

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| Link |  |