

OTHER ACTS

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Publication of an 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

(2015/C 375/08)

This publication confers the right to oppose the application pursuant to Article 51 of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽¹⁾.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

'SLAVONSKI KULEN'/'SLAVONSKI KULIN'**EU No: HR-PGI-0005-01216-20.3.2014****PDO () PGI (X)****1. Name(s)**

'Slavonski kulen'/'Slavonski kulin'

2. Member State or Third Country

Republic of Croatia

3. Description of the agricultural product or foodstuff**3.1. Product type**

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

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

'Slavonski kulen'/'Slavonski kulin' is a preserved sausage made from a mixture of the highest quality pork cuts, back fat, salt and spices stuffed into the caecum of a pig. The stuffed intestine is submitted to consecutive processes of fermentation, cold smoking, drying and maturation over the course of at least 150 days.

Irrespective of the different time windows when its production may begin, by the end of the production process of a minimum of 150 days, 'Slavonski kulen'/'Slavonski kulin' of all producers must exhibit the physico-chemical and organoleptic properties laid down in point 3.2.

From the outside, 'Slavonski kulen'/'Slavonski kulin' appears cylinder-shaped, with a form that may vary depending on the size and volume of the pig's caecum. It is uniformly light to dark brown in colour without any blemish, wrinkle or crack, bound together with a string made out of hemp fibres which cuts into the caecum's natural folds. A cross-section reveals well-intermingled particles of meat and fat without any vestigial remnants of connective tissue. The meat is light to dark red in colour, whereas the fat is white to orange in colour, and the 'kulen' has no or only a slightly pronounced dark outer edge.

The sausage has a pleasant aroma: that of deciduous wood smoke on the outside and fermented pork, paprika and garlic with a mild hint of smoke on the inside. It has a firm consistency, is not friable, lends itself well to slicing and is easy to chew. Its flavour is intense, characterised by the taste of fermented aged pork, salty and hot, but without any acidity or bitterness.

When 'Slavonski kulen'/'Slavonski kulin' is placed on the market, it must weigh at least 900 g and have the following physico-chemical properties: water content of no more than 40 %, fat content of no more than 35 % and water activity (aw) of under 0,90.

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

'Slavonski kulen'/'Slavonski kulin' is produced solely from the meat of pigs farrowed and fattened in the geographical area referred to under point 4. The progeny of pigs of the autochthonous Black Slavonian breed, pure-bred and

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 343, 14.12.2012, p. 1.

domestically reared Large Yorkshire and Swedish Landrace breeds, two-breed crosses and back-crosses of these breeds and three-breed crosses of these breeds with the Duroc breed must be used. Castrated males and females (gilts and separated young sows) aged between 12 and 20 months and having a final weight of at least 140 kg must be used.

Only the following categories of pork are used in 'Slavonski kulen'/'Slavonski kulin': first (I) — the leg (without the shank), loin and back parts of the longissimus dorsi muscle; second (II) — shoulder blades (without forelegs); and third (III) — neck, and firm back fat (no more than 10 %). A cleaned and drained caecum serves as the sausage casing. The filling is seasoned with table salt, hot and sweet red paprika and garlic.

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

All phases of production of 'Slavonski kulen'/'Slavonski kulin', including fattening of the pigs, must take place within the geographical area specified in section 4. The production process includes the preparation of the stuffing, fermentation, cold smoking, drying and maturation. The production cycle runs from 1 November to 31 March every year.

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

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

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

'Slavonski kulen'/'Slavonski kulin' is produced in a limited part of the Croatian region of Slavonia. This area falls within the administrative boundaries of the towns and municipalities of the following counties:

Vukovar-Srijem County: entire; the following towns and municipalities of Osijek-Baranja County: Belišće, Donji Miholjac, Đakovo, Našice, Osijek, Valpovo, Antunovac, Bizovac, Čepin, Donja Motičina, Drenje, Đurđenovac, Erdut, Ernestinovo, Feričanci, Gorjani, Koška, Levanjska Varoš, Magadenovac, Marijanci, Petrijevi, Podgorač, Podravska Moslavina, Punitovci, Satnica Đakovačka, Semeljci, Strizivojna, Šodolovci, Trnava, Viljevo, Viškovci, Vladislavci and Vuka; Slavonski Brod-Posavina County: entire; Požega-Slavonia County: entire; the following towns and municipalities of Sisak-Moslavina County: Lipovljani, Kutina (the villages of Banova Jaruga, Međurić, Jamarica and Janja Lipa), Novska and Jasenovac; the following towns and municipalities of Bjelovar-Bilogora County: Garešnica (the villages of Duhovi, Gornji Uljanik, Uljanik, Uljanički Brijeg and Hrastovac), Dežanovac, Končanica, Đulovac, Sirač and Daruvar; the following towns and municipalities of Virovitica-Podravina County: Virovitica, Slatina, Orahovica, Crnac, Čačinci, Čađavica, Gradina, Lukač, Mikleuš, Nova Bukovica, Pitomača (the villages of Stari Gradac, Starogradački Marof and Križnica), Sopje, Suhopolje, Špišić Bukovica, Voćin and Zdenci.

5. **Link with the geographical area**

The link between 'Slavonski kulen'/'Slavonski kulin' and its geographical area is based on the following factors: the traditional know-how of local producers and climatic conditions favourable to natural processing and preservation of the meat.

Historical evidence suggests that production of 'kulen' in Slavonia dates back over 200 years. Slavonia, as an area with a strong tradition of crop-growing and stock-farming, has always offered good conditions for pig breeding and the processing of pigmeat. More intensive commercial development of pig rearing in Slavonia began with the withdrawal of the Turks and the establishment of the Military Frontier in the 17th Century, when the rearing of pigs for consumption by the military and major consumer centres began on a large scale. At first pigs were reared mainly for bacon and lard, and only somewhat later, with the development of the butcher's trade, did other products such as sausages and 'kulen' take off.

Slavonia has a moderate continental climate with cold winters and hot summers. Pig slaughter and production of 'Slavonski kulen'/'Slavonski kulin' traditionally take place in winter, when the low air temperatures provide good natural conditions for the processing of meat. The average mean air temperature between November and March is 0,2-6,9 °C, which ensures good natural protection from meat spoilage.

The restrictions imposed with regard to the origin of the pigs stem from the tradition of production of 'Slavonski kulen'/'Slavonski kulin' and the reputation of the product on the market. 'Slavonski kulen'/'Slavonski kulin' is a product of the Slavonian tradition of slaughtering heavy home-reared pigs at the onset of winter in order to

produce meat, lard and dry-cured meat products that would sustain the local community throughout the following year. The traditional Slavonian pig-slaughter comprised all the steps, from the actual slaughter of the animal to the production, smoking and drying of traditional preserved meat products. Pig slaughtering was an important social event attended by relatives, friends and neighbours and followed by a feast of song and dance. 'Slavonski kulen'/'Slavonski kulin' was made from the meat of pigs bred on the same private farm or bought from neighbouring farms. This tradition continues to the present day. There is no evidence to suggest that 'Slavonski kulen'/'Slavonski kulin' has ever been made from pork produced anywhere else but Slavonia.

'Slavonski kulen'/'Slavonski kulin' derives its organoleptic and physico-chemical properties from the production method and the tradition and know-how of the locals. The production of 'Slavonski kulen'/'Slavonski kulin' has always relied on the specific know-how and skill of local producers in selecting the raw material and the production process. Only selected highest-quality cuts and back fat from locally reared older and heavier pigs are used in the production process. Production follows a traditional recipe that calls for a mixture of condiments of exclusively natural origin: sweet and hot red paprika, garlic and table salt. The fat accounts for only a small part (up to 10 %) of the filling, which means that owing to its high meat content 'Slavonski kulen'/'Slavonski kulin' is a particularly high-value sausage but also one of the hardest to dry.

The stuffing of the filling in a pig's caecum, which has a comparatively large diameter, and the handling of the resulting heavy-weight sausage entail additional skills and knowledge on the part of the producer for tying up the product by hand and smoking, drying and maturing it for a relatively long period of time. This makes the production of 'Slavonski kulen'/'Slavonski kulin' more complex in technological terms and more time-consuming compared with other sausages.

The specific production method gives 'Slavonski kulen'/'Slavonski kulin' a specific appearance and properties. 'Slavonski kulen'/'Slavonski kulin' is stuffed into a pig's caecum, which is tied up with a twine in a characteristic pattern. The product is mildly surface-smoked in the smoke of hornbeam, ash or beech. The inside is distinguished by a harmonious mosaic of meat and fat particles pressed through grinder plates with 6-12 mm holes. The careful cold-smoking in deciduous wood smoke gives 'Slavonski kulen'/'Slavonski kulin' its mild smoky finish, while the aroma and taste of characteristically salty and spicy fermented mature pork come from the traditionally used condiments, the high content of lean meat and the special technique of drying and maturing the product for several months.

It is thanks to the selection of top-quality ingredients, the traditional recipe, the production process and its timing, which have been preserved through generations to this day, that 'Slavonski kulen'/'Slavonski kulin' boasts its distinctive characteristics and maintains its link with the local community. The reputation of 'Slavonski kulen'/'Slavonski kulin' stems from the product's role in Slavonian heritage, its name and its economic importance.

In the past, 'kulen' was a highly prized commodity; something that could be served to a dear friend or given to an important person as a gift. Since production used to be relatively small-scale, i.e. one 'kulen' per pig, the product would be set aside for special occasions and important guests. 'Kulen' is also referred to in the works of many authors chronicling the haps and mishaps in the lives of Slavonians and describing their way of life. Higher production and the increased purchasing power of the local population have led to banquets being organised and 'kulen' being offered as gifts more often nowadays. It is practically impossible to imagine public celebrations, church festivities, national holidays, traditional ceremonies and family get-togethers in which 'Slavonski kulen'/'Slavonski kulin' does not feature. The custom of giving 'Slavonski kulen'/'Slavonski kulin' as a gift has survived to this day (*Izravna prodaja seljačkih proizvoda*, Agrarno savjetovanje, Zagreb, 2005, p. 127).

The reputation of 'Slavonski kulen'/'Slavonski kulin' is also linked to its name. The name 'Slavonski kulen' was first mentioned in 1968 in the Vinkovački list newspaper (Vinkovački list No 15, 12.4.1968, p. 5). It should be noted that in different Croatian dialects 'kulen' is referred to as 'kulin', 'kuljen' and 'kulijen'. However, 'kulen' and 'kulin' are the most common, with the former being the preferred name among speakers of Štokavian (the official Croatian, ijekavian, dialect) and the latter among speakers of the ikavian dialect. Today the names used in trade and commercial documents (invoices, product labels, price lists) include either 'Slavonski kulen' or 'Slavonski kulin'.

There are farms in Slavonia for which production of 'Slavonski kulen'/'Slavonski kulin' represents an important source of income. On the domestic market, the demand for the product exceeds the supply. Furthermore, 'Slavonski kulen'/'Slavonski kulin' is one of a handful of products that can make farms in Slavonia, particularly those rearing pigs, competitive on the market.

The specificity of 'Slavonski kulen'/'Slavonski kulin' in comparison with other products stems from the use of traditional production technology, which has been retained to the present day, the quality of the raw materials (choice cuts of mature meat from autochthonous or domesticated pigs), natural condiments and a traditional time of production.

All of the above serves to illustrate the importance of 'Slavonski kulen'/'Slavonski kulin' to the people of Slavonia, who consider it to be not only a traditional foodstuff, but also an integral part of their cultural traditions and heritage.

Reference to publication of the product specification

(second subparagraph of Article 6(1) of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 668/2014 of 13 June 2014 laying down rules for the application of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs ⁽¹⁾).

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 179, 19.6.2014, p. 36.