

## OTHER ACTS

## EUROPEAN COMMISSION

**Publication of an application pursuant to Article 6(2) of Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin for agricultural products and foodstuffs**

(2011/C 309/10)

This publication confers the right to object to the application pursuant to Article 7 of Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 <sup>(1)</sup>. Statements of objection must reach the Commission within six months from the date of this publication.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

**COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006****'KRAŠKI ZAŠINK'****EC No: SI-PGI-0005-0824-29.09.2010****PGI ( X ) PDO ( )****1. Name:**

'Kraški zašink'

**2. Member State or third country:**

Slovenia

**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 point 1 applies:**

'Kraški zašink' is a traditional dried meat product from the Karst region, which is made from neck of pork. It has a characteristic cylindrical shape and a natural casing which is covered by elastic netting. The minimum weight of the final product is 0,90 kg. The surface of 'Kraški zašink' is firm but elastic and slightly wrinkled at the ends. The full aroma of the meat and fat develops during the drying and maturing process. 'Kraški zašink' has a characteristic, slightly salty flavour. The salt content must be less than 6 %, the degree of drying attained must be at least 36 %, the aw value must be less than 0,92, and the protein content must be at least 24 %.

Slices of 'Kraški zašink' have a reddish-pink colour, and their edges are slightly darker. The fat is white in colour. The texture of the meat and fat is smooth in the mouth and melts quickly.

**3.3. Raw materials (for processed products only):**

The neck of meaty breeds of pig is used to produce 'Kraški zašink'. The part of the neck used comprises all the cervical vertebrae up to the fifth dorsal vertebra. The meat is free of surface fat, bone and gristle, well bled and has no incisions or bruising. The minimum weight of a fresh neck is 1,5 kg.

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 93, 31.3.2006, p. 12.

3.4. *Feed (for products of animal origin only):*

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

- The temperature of the fresh pork neck must lie between + 1 °C and + 4 °C, as measured just before salting.
- Marking of the start of salting and labelling of the batch — day, month and year.
- Salting with sea salt. The quantity of salt is adapted to the weight. Sugar, pepper and garlic are added.
- Salting lasts for between 7 and 12 days at a temperature of between + 1 °C and + 6 °C.
- Removal of remaining salt and stuffing of the neck into casings made from natural fibres, followed by wrapping in elastic netting.
- Cold-drying lasts for 7 days at a temperature of + 1 °C to + 6 °C.
- Drying at a temperature of 20 °C to 22 °C for at least 12 hours.
- Drying/maturing at a temperature of 10 °C to 16 °C; the total production period lasts for at least 12 weeks and is extended appropriately for heavier necks of pork.
- Measurements are taken of the degree of drying attained, which must be at least 36 %; the aw value must be less than 0,92, the salt content less than 6 %, and the minimum weight of the final product is 0,90 kg.
- Sensory testing of the product, analysis of the salt content and the aw value.
- Matured products are stored at a temperature of + 8 °C.
- Traceability, verification of documentation, storage of documentation, accompanying veterinary documentation, producer's records (technical sheet).
- 'Kraški zašink' may be marketed whole with its netting, as vacuum-packed pieces or as slices of 'Kraški zašink' that are vacuum-packed or packed in a modified atmosphere.

3.6. *Specific rules concerning slicing, grating, packaging, etc.:*

In order to ensure the authentic nature of the product, to preserve its typical qualities and organoleptic properties and to ensure its microbiological safety, the process of packing in a vacuum or a modified atmosphere must take place only in plants approved for the production of 'Kraški zašink'. In these procedures it is vital to take into account the special knowledge, experience and expertise gained by the producers of 'Kraški zašink' in the course of many years of producing the product. Inadequate equipment, exposure to the air, the wrong temperature or humidity can cause the typical properties of the product to deteriorate quickly, which may also make it microbiologically unfit for consumption. All the abovementioned phases are monitored by qualified staff who are familiar with all the characteristics of 'Kraški zašink'. This system ensures ongoing supervision, full traceability and preservation of the typical properties of 'Kraški zašink' that are valued and sought after by consumers.

3.7. *Specific rules concerning labelling:*

'Kraški zašink' that is produced in accordance with the specification and that has been awarded a certificate may be labelled with the name 'Kraški zašink', the 'Kraški zašink' logo, the statement 'protected geographical indication' and the national quality symbol. The logo is a stylised neck of

pork with the inscription 'Kraški zašink' and is the same for all producers. The producer's registration number is placed next to the logo. The use of the logo is compulsory for all formats of 'Kraški zašink' that are marketed.

#### 4. Concise definition of the geographical area:

The production area for 'Kraški zašink' is delimited by a line running from Kostanjevica na Krasu to Opatje selo, from there to the border between Slovenia and Italy and along that border to the Lipica border crossing, from there along the road to the settlement of Lokev, then along the road to Divača, from there in a straight line to the village of Vrabče and on to Štjak, Selo, Krtinovica, Kobdilj, and from there in a straight line through Mali Dol to Škrbina towards Lipa and Temnica and back to Kostanjevica na Krasu. All the abovementioned villages form part of the geographical area.

#### 5. Link with the geographical area:

##### 5.1. Specificity of the geographical area:

The Karst (Kras) is one of the largest landscape areas in Slovenia and is clearly distinct from the neighbouring landscapes. It is an undulating limestone plateau with a typical Karst terrain whose altitude decreases from the south-east to the north-west. The famous Karst *terra rossa* formed on the limestone substratum. There is little soil on the surface, which is mainly rocky, even though grasses, bushes or thin forest do grow in some places. The proximity of the sea is the predominant influence on the climate in the Karst region. Here the mild Mediterranean climate encounters the cold continental air. Temperature swings are common in the Karst region, where there is an influx of cold continental air into the Mediterranean area in the form of the Karst bora wind. The proximity of the sea means that, in the midst of winter, there is often a sharp rise in the temperature after days of icy bora winds. Whenever snow falls, it soon melts. The proximity of the sea has a significant effect in the summer, when hot clear weather predominates. The diversity of the Karst plateau and the immediate vicinity of the sea means that there is always a wind or breeze, promoting a comparatively low level of relative humidity. The natural conditions of the geographical area offer favourable microclimatic conditions for drying meat, which local people have exploited since time immemorial. They balance out the right combination of temperature and humidity using different rooms in the thick-walled Karst houses. Farmers transfer *pršut* (hams), *panceta* (fatty bacon), *vratovina* (pork neck), sausages and other products from one room to another in the constant search for the right combination of humidity and temperature for the individual technological stages of the maturing process. Thus, over time, technical skills and practical knowledge have evolved with experience and have become permanently established amongst local people.

##### 5.2. Specificity of the product:

'Kraški zašink' is a traditional dried meat product from the Karst region.

One of the specific characteristics of 'Kraški zašink' is the careful selection of the raw material (pork neck), which comprises all the cervical vertebrae up to the fifth dorsal vertebra and is free of surface fat, bone and gristle. 'Kraški zašink' also differs from other similar products in its technological production process, in which only the traditional dry manual salting procedure is used, involving a moderate quantity of sea salt, which is rubbed into each pork neck manually. Another specific characteristic is the drying/maturing process, which involves no heat treatment and takes place at temperatures under 16 °C. This means that there is no deterioration of proteins due to heat and that the firmness of the fat tissue is preserved.

The process of dry salting and the sufficiently lengthy period of maturing at low temperatures have a significant impact on the typical organoleptic characteristics of 'Kraški zašink'. The slight firmness of the mature muscle meat and fat can be felt in the mouth. The strong aroma and flavour without any aftertaste of spices is typical. A slice of 'Kraški zašink' has the typical, even, pinkish-red colour of the muscle meat and the white colour of the intermuscular fat.

##### 5.3. Causal link between the geographical area and the quality or characteristics of the product (for PDO) or a specific quality, the reputation or other characteristic of the product (for PGI):

The success in terms of the current reputation and development of pork neck production in the Karst is due to the traditional and individual techniques used by farmers.

The diversity of the Karst plateau and the immediate vicinity of the sea mean that there is always a wind or breeze and the relative humidity is comparatively low in the geographical area, which since ancient times has provided local people with favourable microclimatic conditions for the drying of meat products. The drying of pieces of meat probably dates right back to the time when the Karst was settled by people. Records on the diet of the people of the Karst region dating back to 1820 state that a farmer's habitual diet included dried meat products. Anton Melik, among others, wrote of the high level of development of pig-rearing in the Karst region in his book 'Slovensko Primorje' (1960). Several different authors have written extensively about the reputation of 'Kraški zašink', including Dr Stanko Renčelj, in the books 'Suhe mesnine narodne posebnosti' (Dried meat products — national specialities) (1991), 'Kraška kuhinja' (Karst cuisine) (1999), 'Suhe mesnine na Slovenskem' (Slovenian dried meat products) (2009), 'Okusi Krasa' (Flavours of the Karst) (2009) and 'Kras, zvestoba tradiciji' (The Karst, faithful to tradition) (Anny Rechberger Pečar, Umberto Pillizon, 2006), and in tourist guides such as 'Dobrote Krasa in Brkinov' (Delicacies of the Karst and Brkini regions) (TIC Sežana, 2010).

Over time local people have acquired invaluable experience and practical knowledge, which they have used to develop their traditional technology for producing 'Kraški zašink'. Unlike other regions in Slovenia, the people of the Karst always use exclusively dry salting and a moderate quantity of salt when producing dried meat products. In other areas of Slovenia brine is used, or a combination of dry and wet salting. Salting is done manually with a rather small quantity of sea salt, which is rubbed into each pork neck manually. The local people of the Karst region are also proud of the tradition of drying pork neck. Originally pork neck was dried in one piece together with the neck bones, but the product dried out too much, and the surface was hard and dry and often cracked. Given the drawbacks of the process of drying the pork neck together with the neck bones, the local people abandoned this method and developed the process of drying the pork neck off the bone in natural casings. They placed the salted pork neck in a natural casing before drying. Initially this casing was a pig's bladder; subsequently they started using a rectum. String was typically wound around the product, which gave it a particularly attractive appearance. It is an established tradition for the entire drying/maturing phase to be conducted without heat treatment. Thanks to the rather low temperatures, there is no deterioration of proteins through heat. The dry-salting process and the sufficiently lengthy period of maturing at quite low temperatures have a significant impact on the typical organoleptic properties of 'Kraški zašink'.

The wealth of experience has been passed down from one generation to another and led to the development of a tradition. The technology in the production of 'Kraški zašink' includes high levels of practical and craft knowledge and experience, which gives the product its characteristic organoleptic properties, which have made it an established gastronomic and culinary speciality.

**Reference to publication of the specification:**

(Article 5(7) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006)

[http://www.mkgp.gov.si/fileadmin/mkgp.gov.si/pageuploads/Varna\\_hrana/KRASKI\\_ZASINK\\_splet\\_10611.pdf](http://www.mkgp.gov.si/fileadmin/mkgp.gov.si/pageuploads/Varna_hrana/KRASKI_ZASINK_splet_10611.pdf)

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