

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

(2010/C 323/14)

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

SINGLE DOCUMENT

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006**‘CORDERO DE EXTREMADURA’****EC No: ES-PGI-0005-0725-09.10.2008****PGI (X) PDO ()****1. Name:**

‘Cordero de Extremadura’

2. Member State or third country:

Spain

3. Description of the agricultural product or foodstuff:**3.1. Type of product:**

Class 1.1. Fresh meat (and offal)

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

Meat from the carcasses of lambs or their cuts verified as originating from animals with the specific characteristics described in point 5.2.

These animals have carcasses with the following specific characteristics:

- (a) Weight: the weight of the male carcasses must be less than 16 kg and less than 14 kg for female carcasses.
- (b) Degree of fat cover: between Slight (2) and Average (3) (Regulation (EC) No 1249/2008)
- (c) Between pink and pale pink in colour.
- (d) Conformation: Class ‘O’ (Fair) and above (Regulation (EC) No 1249/2008).
- (e) without any defects caused during dressing, and free of bruising.
- (f) Characteristics of the fat:
 - external fat which is white in colour and firm in consistency;
 - body cavity fat which is white in colour and covers half, but never all, of each kidney.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 93, 31.3.2006, p. 12.

The characteristics of the meat of the PGI Cordero de Extremadura are:

- meat which is from pink to pale pink in colour.
- organoleptic characteristics: an excellent texture with a very pleasant taste and a moderate level of streaking of intramuscular fat. The meat is very tender and low in fat. As a result of the distribution and quality of the fat, the aroma, bouquet and succulence of the meat are excellent.

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

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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:*

On farms producing the PGI the extensive and semi-extensive production system traditional to the area is applied, with an extensive system or regime being used for breeding stock and lambs during the rearing stage.

The farming practices for breeding stock are consistent with the techniques, customs and use of natural resources in a traditional extensive farming regime. The feed supply for the breeding stock is based on the use of the pasturelands' natural resources, which are grazed throughout the year, and, where necessary, feed supplements, which are composed primarily of straw, grain, fodder, by-products and concentrates whose main constituents are cereals, oilseeds and protein crops. The length of time in which the feed supplement is administered and the quantity thereof depend on the resources at hand and the needs of the animals at the particular time.

The lambs stay with their dams and feed on maternal milk until they are weaned (when they are between 40 and 50 days old). From the time they are three weeks old, they can in addition be fed with starter feed which is particularly suited to them. Once weaned, the lambs remain housed and monitored, either in suitable premises on the farm or on fattening farms and in finishing centres entered in the relevant Register. They are mainly fed concentrates consisting primarily of cereals, oilseeds, protein crops and cereal straw. In the feed supplement for slaughter lambs only feed consisting primarily of cereals, oilseeds and protein crops is used.

The slaughter lambs covered by the Protected Geographical Indication must come from farms that have been entered in the registers of the Regulatory Council, and they must arrive at the slaughterhouse clearly identified.

The slaughter of the lambs and the dressing of the carcasses is carried out in slaughterhouses and cutting plants which can prove that the product complies with specifications, the facilities comply with legislation in force, appropriate records are kept to ensure traceability of the product and the performance of regular checks is permitted. The aim is to ensure that PGI Cordero de Extremadura is protected and its integrity preserved. The time taken to transport the lambs from their farms of origin to the slaughterhouses must not exceed two hours. This aims to prevent transportation from being stressful for the animals, while at the same time preventing the quality of the meat from being affected by variations in pH as the result of such stress.

The Regulatory Council is also involved in both the dressing and cutting up of the carcase, verifying that the presentation of the carcasses or cutting them up does not lead to a reduction in quality.

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

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3.7. *Specific rules concerning labelling:*

The protected meats are placed on the market with a certification mark which must bear the words 'Indicación Geográfica Protegida "Cordero de Extremadura"' or the Community symbol and the logo of the Regulatory Council in addition to the brand name.

Regardless of the form in which the protected meats are placed on the market for human consumption, they must have a certifying mark made up of a numbered label clearly identifying the product, so as to avoid creating any confusion for the consumer.

4. Concise definition of the geographical area:

The area in which products covered by the Protected Geographical Indication 'Cordero de Extremadura' are produced fall within the boundaries of the Extremadura region.

5. Link with the geographical area:

5.1. Specificity of the geographical area:

The Phoenician, Roman and Arab civilisations protected and expanded sheep grazing in the area, followed by the establishment, during the reign of King Alfonso X, of the *Honrado Concejo de la Mesta de los Pastores* (Honoured Council of the Association of Shepherds), a watershed moment for sheep-breeding in Spain.

The geographical area, besides possessing the requisite stock, is also home to an historic sheep-breeding tradition and traditional farming systems and practices. Its physical and geographical characteristics are consistent with those of pasturelands and other grasslands able to be used for extensive grazing, and covers districts with particular features that serve to distinguish it from other geographical areas, such as its geophysical characteristics and soils, autochthonous flora and fauna, pastoral products, rainfall, hours of sunshine and climate.

The area contains plains and peneplains of an altitude of between 200 and 800 metres. The area has a semi-arid Mediterranean climate, tempered by the influence of the ocean, with an average annual temperature of between 16 and 17 degrees C, with cold winters and hot summers. Annual rainfall is between 450 and 850 mm, with the most significant falls in winter and at the beginning of spring, and none in summer. The number of hours of sunshine exceeds 3 000 a year.

A pastureland ecosystem, which has developed from Mediterranean woodlands over the centuries as the result of human activity, covers large areas of Extremadura. Traditionally, livestock production has been extensive and animals (both wild and domestic), the environment and human activities have always been in equilibrium with one another. Herbaceous pasture is the main energy source for the system and is made up of a diverse flora rich in self-seeding annuals.

5.2. Specificity of the product:

The meat covered by the PGI Cordero de Extremadura comes from animals with the following specific characteristics:

(a) Farming system.

The lambs stay suckling from their dams in an extensive grazing system and are able to supplement their milk with concentrates made up primarily of cereals and pulses until weaned.

The finishing of slaughter animals is carried out exclusively inside, using concentrates and cereal straw.

The age of the lambs at slaughter is never more than 100 days.

(b) The stock characteristics of the progenitors of the lambs covered by the PGI Cordero de Extremadura are:

For dams: Merino or Merino crossed with Merino Precoz, Merino Fleischschaf, and Ile de France, provided that at least half of the lamb's progenitors are Merinos.

For sires: pure-bred or simple hybrids of any strains of the Merino breed (Merino, Merino Precoz, Merino Fleischschaf, Ile de France and Berrichon du Cher).

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 application for recognition of Cordero de Extremadura as a PGI is justified by the specificity of the meat and the product's reputation.

(a) Specificity of the product:

The meat owes its tenderness, succulence, colour and fat content to the production system characteristic of Extremadura, as indicated in certain studies:

'This production system, characteristic of the Extremadura region, associated with the pastoral ecosystems particular to the region and whose husbandry and feeding systems and breeding stock are specific to the area under consideration, influences the composition and organoleptic characteristics of the lamb's meat' (Sañudo et al. (1997), Díaz et al (2005)).

The system of production characteristic of Extremadura, based on the use of the natural resources of pastoral ecosystems, the keeping of lambs with their dams throughout their rearing period, and their feed and age at slaughter, gives the lambs' meat special characteristics in terms of tenderness, colour and succulence.

(b) Reputation of Cordero de Extremadura:

The livestock sector always been a fundamental component of the regional economy, and sheep-rearing in particular has always held pride of place, as shown by historical sources such as the Catastro of Ensenada (*El Catastro del Marqués de la Ensenada*) compiled in the 18th Century, in which the sheep flock is cited as comprising more than 1 300 000 head.

Furthermore, there are very many illustrative references that link the quality of the sheep (particularly as regards the Merinos) to the pastures of Extremadura:

'Extremadura is a noun that defines the areas which transhumant pastoralists who tend herbivores set aside for grazing over the winter. To keep the dams in one place and put the lambs in another is to "extremar el rebaño". From this practice Extremadura got its name. The Region came to be defined as that part of the Traslasierra where winter pastures can be found: the "prohibited" pastures off-limits to the local inhabitants ... (and the shepherds are already off to the winter pastures ("extremadura" in lower-case) *La Historia de Extremadura* (The History of Extremadura), Hoy (ed.), Diario de Extremadura (1997)).

Ivan Sorapan, in 'Medicina española contenida en proverbios vulgares de nuestra lengua' (Spanish remedies contained in the popular proverbs of our language, 1616), had this to say in reference to Extremadura:

'the good quality of its pastures and acorns is used for rearing livestock to furnish meat for the whole of Old Castile and the Court, La Mancha, the Kingdom of Toledo, Seville and Granada ...'

'It is said, and rightly so, that the stock bred in Extremadura are famous throughout the world, and on the banks of the Guadiana alone more than five hundred thousand head of cattle and sheep graze each year ...'

Of the importance of lamb's meat in Extremadura there can be no doubt, given that part of the history of the region is that of its culinary tradition, being the history of the diet of the people who have successively occupied this land. This is also affirmed in several quotations by historians who, over the course of time, have extolled the merits of Extremaduran lamb:

— In the *Historia Universal de la Primitiva y Milagrosa Imagen de Ntra. Sra. de Guadalupe* (Universal History of the Primitive and Miraculous Image of Our Lady of Guadalupe) of 1743, references can be found to the gastronomic tastes of the Emperor Charles V:

'Having retired to our Monastery of Yuste, he visited the Prior once every month, because of the strong affection in which he always held this House, and also because His August Majesty was partial to the mutton that was fattened there ...'

— In Dionisio Pérez's *Guía del buen comer español* (The Spanish Good Eating Guide) (1952), the famous Dr Thebusse defines Extremaduran cuisine and highlights two dishes which he describes as 'majestic': the *caldereta de los pastores* and the *pollo caminero*.

Current reputation of Cordero de Extremadura.

There are countless local recipes whose main ingredient is lamb: *caldereta extremeña*, *cochifrito de borrego*, *carnero con orégano*, *chanfaina*, *manos de cordero* etc. (*Recetario de Cocina extremeña: Estudio de sus orígenes* (Recipe-book of Extremaduran cuisine: an investigation into its origins), Universitas Editorial (1985)).

The tradition and reputation associated with PGI Cordero de Extremadura persist. The demand by the region's restaurants and food-lovers to incorporate this product into local dishes is growing ever stronger, and the meat is frequently used in dishes forming part of the new cuisine (*Nuevo Recetario de Cocina Extremeña* (The New Extremaduran Recipe-Book) (2001)).

Recent studies have highlighted the uniqueness of the meat designated as PGI Cordero de Extremadura:

- *Caracterización de la calidad de la canal de los corderos con D. E. 'Cordero de Extremadura' y 'Cordero Manchego'* (Characterisation of the quality of the carcasses of lambs with the Special Designations 'Cordero de Extremadura' and 'Cordero Manchego') (Alonso, I, Sánchez, C, Pardos, J F, Pardos, J J; Delfa, R, Sierra, I, Fisher, A (1999)).
- *Identificación y adecuación de la calidad y la composición de la carne de diferentes tipos ovinos europeos. Adaptación a las preferencias de los consumidores. Proyecto FAIR3-CT96-1768 'OVAX'* (Identification and improvement of the quality and composition of the meat of different European breeds of sheep. Adaptation to consumer preferences. Project FAIR3-CT96-1768 'OVAX') (Sañudo, C et al. (1999)).
- *Evaluación de los caracteres cuantitativos y cualitativos de las canales de corderos obtenidas en distintos sistemas de explotación.* (Evaluation of the quantitative and qualitative characteristics of sheep carcasses produced in various farming systems) (María de la Montaña López Parra (2006)).

Reference to publication of the specification:

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

http://aym.juntaex.es/NR/rdonlyres/694B12E7-A6EF-41B3-971A-2F72813DF862/0/PliegoIGP_Cordero.pdf
