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

(2018/C 153/05)

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

'LIČKA JANJETINA'

EU No: PGI-HR-02179 – 13.9.2016

PDO ( ) PGI (X)

1. **Name(s)**

'Lička janjetina'

2. **Member State or Third Country**

Croatia

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

3.1. *Type of product*

Category 1.1 Fresh meat (and offal)

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

'Lička janjetina' is meat obtained from the slaughter of male and female lambs born from an autochthonous breed of sheep, the Lika Curly ('lička pramenka').

Lambs of the Lika Curly breed which are used to produce 'Lička janjetina' are slaughtered when they are between 90 and 160 days old and have a body weight of between 22 kg and 36 kg. A dressed carcass used to produce 'Lička janjetina' ranges from 12 kg to 18 kg in weight and up to 80 cm in length. The fresh meat of 'Lička janjetina' ranges from bright to a more intense red in colour and has a delicate muscle structure, with firm deposits of subcutaneous and visceral fat, which are white with a yellowish tint, and an intense, but not overpowering, aroma of mutton.

'Lička janjetina' is eaten in cooked form only. When 'Lička janjetina' is cooked, the fat gradually melts and the meat becomes juicy and tender and develops an intense, but not overpowering, taste and aroma of mutton; the aromatic profile of 'Lička janjetina' contains volatile compounds (aldehydes, alcohols, ketones) from the feed of the Lika Curly lambs, containing plant species from the pastures and meadows in the geographical area where the Lika Curly is bred.

([1]) OJ L 343, 14.12.2012, p. 1.

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

Prior to slaughter, lambs intended for the production of 'Lička janjetina' are fed sheep's milk (by suckling), meadow hay and a mix of cereals (oats, triticale, barley, rye, wheat and corn) during the winter and put out to pasture during the summer. Lambs of the Lika Curly spend a minimum of 30 days on pasture.

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

Rearing, mating and lambing of the Lika Curly (sheep) and the rearing and slaughter of lambs of that breed must all take place within the geographical area referred to under point 4.

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

'Lička janjetina' is placed on the market solely as a fresh whole carcass or half-carcass, without the lower parts of the leg or the organs in the thoracic, abdominal and pelvic cavities. The head, kidneys and kidney tallow form integral parts of the carcass.

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

'Lička janjetina' is labelled in the slaughterhouse by placing an indelible mark on the haunches, shoulders or ribs of the chilled carcass. The indelible mark is oval in shape and comprises the word 'lička', situated at the top, the indication 'žig klaonice' ('slaughterhouse mark'] in the middle, and the word 'janjetina' at the bottom.

4. Concise definition of the geographical area

The geographical area of Lika is found in two administrative regions, the majority of it in Lika-Senj County and a smaller part in Zadar County. The area in which the Lika Curly is raised and 'Lička janjetina' produced covers the town of Gospić and the municipalities of Donji Lapac, Karlobag, Lovinac, Perušić, Plitvička jezera, Udbina, Vrhovine, Senj, Brinje and Otočac in Lika-Senj County and Gračac in Zadar County.

5. Link with the geographical area

Protection is sought for the name of the product 'Lička janjetina' owing to the reputation of the product, which stems from the quality of the meat and a long tradition of raising the sheep in a specific way.

Description of the geographical area

Lika is a continental region bound by mountain ranges (the Velebit range to the south, the Velika Kapela range to the west, Mount Plješivica to the east and Mount Mala Kapela to the north) containing numerous karst plains (or 'polje') (Gacko polje, Ličko polje, Krbavsko polje, Ličko Pounje, etc.). It is a site of agricultural production; cereals (except corn) are cultivated there, used primarily as feed for sheep. Karst plains are an accumulative tectonic-type landform. The shape of their surface has a favourable influence on the structure of the soil. Clayey sand and sandy soils predominate. The area of Lika has a harsh mountain climate with a relatively short vegetation period. On its plateaus and plains, the average temperature in January hovers around – 2 °C, and during the first six months of the year the minimum temperature falls below 0 °C. In Lika, the strong action of the northwest wind, coupled with the long winters, affects plant cover and composition and the distribution of plant communities.

Specific way of raising the sheep

The inhabitants of the Lika region have always raised sheep of the Lika Curly breed the old traditional way – on open pastures. This is attested to in several historical accounts (Kosović, B. (1935), Postanak naziva Lika i Ličani [Origin of the names 'Lika' and 'Ličani'], Lički kalendar, pp. 62-63, 75-79), and this method of rearing has persisted even to the present day. The way sheep were raised in Lika differs significantly from the approach used in other similar areas, because in the mountainous areas of the region, under conditions of abundant pasture during the summer and meagre nutrition in the winter, Lika Curly sheep would spend the whole time in the same area. In Dalmatia, on the other hand, because of the meagreness of pasture in the summer months, sheep of the Dalmatian Curly breed were often removed to higher pastures, returning to lower-altitude areas in late autumn. The traditional method of raising sheep practised in the Lika region has also affected the characteristics of the Lika Curly sheep: because they are very physically active, they are very hardy, disease-resistant and modest in terms of their accommodation and nutritional requirements.

Link between the way the sheep are raised and their meat

Owing to the specific method of raising this autochthonous breed of Lika Curly sheep out in the open in the mountainous areas of Lika, the meat of 'Lička janjetina' also has a distinctive taste, colour and aroma in comparison to lamb from other areas. This has been confirmed by a variety of scientific studies. The meat from Lika lambs reared on pasture, because of their more intensive movement and physical activity, is of a more intense red colour than meat from lambs reared on holdings. In addition to the breed, the change in the colour of the meat is also directly linked to the body weight of the Lika lamb prior to slaughter (between 22 kg and 36 kg). As the Lika lambs become older and their body weight increases, so too does oxidative activity and amount of myoglobin, so the meat of those animals is a more intense red colour (Kaić, A. (2013), Fizikalno-kemijska svojstva mesa i sastav trupa janjadi ličke pramenke [Physico-chemical characteristics of the meat and composition of the carcasses of Lika Curly lambs], doctoral dissertation).

The characteristics of the cooked meat of 'Lička janjetina', which has an intense, but not overpowering, taste and aroma of mutton, is influenced by the geographical area in which the sheep are raised, the fact that they feed on the diverse and abundant vegetation of mountain pastures, and their age (90-160 days) and body weight at the time of slaughter (22-36 kg). Owing to better nutritional conditions (milk, pasture and hay), Lika lambs are slaughtered later than lambs from other areas of Croatia (Cres lambs are slaughtered when 80 days old, Pag lambs when 33 days old), so the carcasses of Lika lambs are also longer (up to 80 cm) and more developed than the carcasses of Cres or Pag lambs (Kasap et al. (2010), Neke odlike trupova janjadi ličke pramenke [Certain characteristics of Lika Curly lamb carcasses], scientific study, pp. 858-861).

The aromatic profile of the cooked meat of 'Lička janjetina' is distinctive owing to the botanical composition of the meadows and pastures on which the Lika lambs are raised. The aroma of Dalmatian lamb is different because the botanical composition of the meadows and pastures there is different.

Over 85 % of the volatile compounds in the total aromatic profile of the cooked meat of 'Lička janjetina' are accounted for by aldehydes, alcohols and ketones. The three most abundant volatile compounds in the meat of 'Lička janjetina' are hexanaldehyde, the alcohol ethanol and the ketone 2,3-octanedione. The volatile compound most representative of the influence of raising the animals on pasture is 2,3-octanedione.

The vegetation of pastureland in Lika can be classified partly as pasture of the continental lowlands (natural and sown meadows), and partly as stony meadows (natural pastures), with a floristic composition of 96 species. A significant share is represented by aromatic herbs, of which the dominant ones are the protected common heather (*Calluna vulgaris*) and bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*). Parsley-piert (of the genus *Aphanes*), health speedwell (*Veronica officinalis*) and a number of lichens also occur widely.

Research has shown that the feed, the plant communities of the Lika pasturelands and meadows and the composition of the feed ration play a vital role in determining the aromatic profile of 'Lička janjetina'.

Apart from ewe's milk, the feed ration, i.e. nutritional intake of Lika Curly lambs grazing on Lika's meadows and pastures, is composed of the following plant species: *Bromus erectus* (erect brome), *Scorzonera villosa*, *Chrysopogon gryllus* (scented grass), *Festuca pseudovina* (hard fescue), *Dichantium ischaemum* (yellow bluestem), *Satureo edraianthetum*, *Filipendula hexapetala* (dropwort), *Lotus corniculatus* (common bird's-foot trefoil), *Leontodon hispidus* (rough hawkbit), *Sanguisorba muricata* (small burnet), *Eryngium amethystinum* (amethyst eryngo), *Sesleria tenuifolia*, *Trinia carniolica*, *Gentiana symphyandra* (great yellow gentian) and *Genista holopetala* (broom).

This suggests that the main factor distinguishing the volatile aromatic compounds of 'Lička janjetina' from those of other comparable lambs is the geographical area in which the lambs were raised (the so-called 'territorial effect') (Krvavica et al. (2015), *Isparljivi spojevi arome ličke janjetine* [Volatile aromatic compounds of 'Lička janjetina'], scientific study, pp. 238-246).

Reputation

The reputation of 'Lička janjetina' has been emphasised in the Lika region particularly since 1998, when an event called Autumn in Lika ('*Jesen u Lici*') was launched. At this event, visitors are introduced to the identity of the Lika region, and local Lika products prepared. The aim of this annual gastronomic event on the cultural tourism calendar is to introduce visitors to the authentic folk-songs and folk-dances of the Lika region and prepare and showcase local traditional products of the region, spit-roasted 'Lička janjetina' and Lika-style sour lamb stew among them.

The link between the reputation of the product 'Lička janjetina' and the Lika area is also attested to by the culinary work *Vodič Hrvatske gastro ikone* [Guide to Croatian culinary icons], which lists 'Lička janjetina' (Andrić, V. et al. (2007), *Vodič kroz hrvatske gastro ikone*, Gastronomad, Zagreb, pp. 210-211) as one of the 'culinary icons' of the Lika region. *Hrvatska eno-gastronomija* [Oeno-gastronomy of Croatia] also refers to 'Lička janjetina' as a product which defines the Lika region in gastronomic terms and is one of its most well-known specialities. 'Lička janjetina' is prepared under a baking lid or on a spit.

The reputation and quality 'Lička janjetina' still possesses today is evidenced by the fact that the name of the product and its method of preparation are mentioned in specialised publications and journals on meat (Cvrtila et al. (2007), *Kakvoća janjećeg mesa* [Quality of meat of lamb], *Meso* 9/2:114-120, p. 115).

Recipes for preparing 'Lička janjetina' are referred to in various culinary publications, such as, for example, in the series '*Hrvatska tradicionalna jela i pila*' [Traditional Croatian foods and beverages].

Reference to publication of the product specification

(the second subparagraph of Article 6(1) of this Regulation)

http://www.mps.hr/datastore/filestore/110/IZMJENJENA_SPECIFIKACIJA_LICKA_JANJETINA_18072017.pdf