C/2026/750

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Publication of an application for registration of a name pursuant to Article 50(2), point (a), of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs

(C/2026/750)

Following this publication, the authorities of a Member State or of a third country, or a natural or legal person having a legitimate interest and established or resident in a third country, may lodge, in accordance with Article 17 of Regulation (EU) 2024/1143 of the European Parliament and of the Council [1] an opposition with the Commission within three months from the date of this publication.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

'Babic de Buzău'

EU No: PGI-RO-03000 – 22.9.2023

PDO ( ) PGI (X)

1. Name(s) (of PDO or PGI)

'Babic de Buzău'

2. Member State or Third Country

Romania

3. Description of the agricultural product or foodstuff

3.1. *Combined nomenclature code*

16 – PREPARATIONS OF MEAT, OF FISH, OF CRUSTACEANS, MOLLUSCS, OR OTHER AQUATIC INVERTEBRATES, OR OF INSECTS

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

The product 'Babic de Buzău' is a spicy, raw-dried, pressed salami made from high-quality meat (cuts of meat without any bone fragments, soft fat, tendons, ligaments, cartilage, large blood vessels, or bloody tissue), half pork and half beef, cured through dry salting, minced at 10 mm, seasoned and stuffed into natural beef casings. The ingredients used to season the salami: sweet paprika powder, chili powder and chili pepper. The mixture is stuffed into natural beef casings then smoked using hardwood, pressed, matured and left to dry (for at least 20 days) in the cold.

The basic raw materials used in the production of 'Babic de Buzău' are: high-quality meat cuts of pork and beef, in equal shares.

Ingredients for the preparation of 'Babic de Buzău':

salting mixture (in accordance with the relevant legal provisions);

seasoning: sweet paprika powder, chili powder, chili pepper purchased from the local producers in Buzău;

the chili pepper used may either be: fresh (whole with seeds) or preserved (by salting and/or drying and grinding).

[1] Regulation (EU) 2024/1143 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 April 2024 on geographical indications for wine, spirit drinks and agricultural products, as well as traditional specialities guaranteed and optional quality terms for agricultural products, amending Regulations (EU) No 1308/2013, (EU) 2019/787 and (EU) 2019/1753 and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 (OJ L, 2024/1143, 23.4.2024, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1143/oj).

Additional ingredients:

natural veal/beef casings preserved by salting.

Ancillary material:

Hardwood.

Organoleptic properties

External appearance: pressed sticks of a length of 20 cm to 40 cm (whole sticks) or up to 100 cm (thicker salamis for slicing), a diameter of between 25 mm and 45 mm and a weight of between 200 grams and 1 kg. The ends are tied or clipped. The natural casing is undamaged and adheres well to the mixture. It exhibits fine creases and is sometimes unevenly covered in a thin layer of white yeast.

Texture: springy to firm on the surface and at the ends, softer but without breaking up in the middle.

Appearance when cut: the mass of the composition is compact, consistent and speckled, with flecks of beef and/or pork fat uniformly distributed throughout the entire cross-section. The chili pepper in the salami is visible.

Colour: on the outside, the casing ranges from light to dark brown and appears clean and non-sticky, with occasional patches of white yeasts. The cross-section colour ranges from reddish-brown to ruby-red, displaying a visually well-balanced marbled mosaic pattern. A darker hue extending up to a maximum of 15 mm from the circumference is permissible.

Taste and aroma: smoky and spicy aroma and a hot, spicy, pungent taste due to the blend of spices used; moderately salty.

Physical and chemical characteristics at the end of the curing period

Parameters to be verified	Permissible values
Fat (%)	maximum 20
Protein (%)	minimum 18
Salt (%)	maximum 5

'Babic de Buzău' is marketed in two forms:

— *as pressed salami sticks*, in bulk and/or packaged using wax paper or permeable, cellophane, microperforated or vacuum-sealed packaging; or

— *as salami sticks intended for sale in slices* – the product is sliced with the casing on. The slices are sold in various weights and sizes, packed in wax paper, in a protective atmosphere, or vacuum-packed.

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

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

Taking delivery of the raw materials, ingredients and ancillary materials, cutting the carcasses and the anatomical cuts, dry salting, mincing, stuffing the casings, drying and cold smoking the salami sticks over hardwood, then pressing, maturing and drying them – all these steps must take place in the defined geographical area.

Producing the ground meat: The meat shall be weighed in equal proportions and placed in the grinder. The ground meat thus obtained is homogenised by hand and mixed with the spices. It is then matured for 12 hours at a temperature of between -1 °C and + 4 °C.

Stuffing the casings: The ground meat is stuffed into the natural casings.

Drying and cold smoking: This process is carried out for 8 to 24 hours at a temperature between 10 °C and + 12 °C.

Hardwood is used for the smoking. The salami is smoked then pressed for between 3 to 8 days.

After the first smoking cycle, the salami sticks are pressed. Each layer of salami sticks is manually pressed (in the first stage) using wooden or metal rolling pins. Pressing is then carried out mechanically or hydraulically.

After the first pressing operation, the salami sticks are put back on the grills and cold smoked for around 6 hours.

If necessary, they may be pressed again (1-2 days). The salami sticks are then taken away for maturation and drying.

Maturation/drying period: at 12-16 °C, for approximately 14 to 16 days. The process is completed when the salami sticks make a 'rustling' sound when touched.

The production cycle lasts for a minimum of 20 days for the product to comply with the physical and chemical values under point 2.

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*

The label contains the words 'Babic de Buzău PGI'.

4. Concise definition of the geographical area

The defined geographical area comprises the administrative territorial unit of Buzău County.

5. Link with the geographical area

The application for registration of the name 'Babic de Buzău' as a PGI is based on its reputation, on the human dimension that comes from the skills of those involved in its production and on the spicy taste given by the locally produced chili peppers. In other words, the distinctive qualities of 'Babic de Buzău' are linked to the geographical area where it is made and the specific local method used there. These qualities are a result of the selected blend of seasoning used, including chili, and of the tradition that has established the product's reputation and led to the development of specific skills by those involved in the production process, skills that have been handed down from generation to generation.

'Babic de Buzău' is a traditional product with a strong reputation, developed over time and guided by the region's culture and geography, as well as the product's recognition, both nationally and internationally. It is more than just a delicacy, it is a symbol of the local gastronomic heritage, deeply rooted in the history and culture of Buzău County. Its story begins around 1900, and its tradition has been passed down from generation to generation, carrying with it a part of the area's history.

Local origin and tradition

The name 'Babic de Buzău' is closely linked to the geographical area in which the salami has been produced since ancient times. The Babic salami made in Buzău County has been a main source of income for many locals and an essential food reserve for families in the area. This traditional method has been preserved with great dedication, handed down from generation to generation, and, despite the difficulties imposed by the communist regime, which restricted access to information and knowledge, the craft continued to be passed on by word of mouth, without any official documents.

In the encyclopedia papers entitled 'Buzău county: traditions, legends, habits, customs' (Editgraph Publishing House, 2012, pp. 219-220) and 'The gastronomic heritage of Buzău County' (the Universul Școlii Publishing House, 2018, pp. 23-26) the 'Babic de Buzău' is described in the recipe as a 'famous food product, known since the end of the eighteenth century', when the use of pepper was borrowed 'from Serbian gardeners who lived in Buzău city' (...), which uses 'pork meat (and beef), minced peppers, salt, and beef casings'. (...) The pepper is left to 'spoil' in a bag for

one week (...), it is then passed through a strainer to obtain a paste, (...) and the skins are used to make paprika powder. 'Preparation: the meat is coarsely ground, the ingredients mentioned above are added, and the mixture is kneaded several times over the course of two days. The casing is filled and the salami is then flattened with a bottle to eliminate any air bubbles. It is left to dry and then smoked'.

The reputation of 'Babic de Buzău'

In recent years, 'Babic de Buzău' has been increasingly featured in gastronomic publications, TV broadcasts, and press articles, which has strengthened its reputation both nationally and internationally. Some of its most important mentions have appeared in the Romanian media, including the Agerpres press agency and the *Financiarul* and *Adevărul* newspapers, where both its authentic taste and traditional method of preparation were highlighted. 'Babic de Buzău' has been featured in various TV broadcasts, all of which have contributed to promoting the product and the culinary tradition of Buzău County.

The product has also gained wide international recognition. In recent years, 'Babic de Buzău' was ranked as the 7th highest rated salami in the world by TasteAtlas in 2017. In 2023, it received a gold star from the International Taste Institute in Brussels, confirming its authentic quality and taste.

Presence at fairs and promotion through gastronomic tourism

'Babic de Buzău' is always present at the agri-food fairs organised in Romania and the Republic of Moldova, and it is one of the most popular products at these events. The product gained recognition on the international market thanks to major fairs, such as those held at Romexpo Bucharest and in Chișinău.

Nowadays, local gastronomic tourism plays a key role in strengthening the product's reputation. In the context of the culinary circuits organised in Buzău County, 'Babic de Buzău' stands as a representative item of the local heritage, as highlighted in the 'Map of traditional products' (ANTREC Buzău, page 295).

The Napoleonic Legend

One of the most popular legends of 'Babic de Buzău', known to locals in the geographical area and mentioned online on the adevărul.ro site (https://adevarul.ro/stiri-locale/buzau/secretele-babicului-de-buzau-deliciosul-salam-1760382.html of 18 January 2017), is linked to Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte. '"Babic de Buzău" has also become a subject of legend. The story has it that when he was retreating after the Russian campaign, Emperor Napoleon was a guest at Mr Vernescu's house, a boyar from Buzău, for one night. Among the local delicacies offered at the table were "țuică de Lopătari" (a type of brandy), "brânză de burduf de Penteleu" (a type of cheese), but also "Babic de Buzău" – brought by the leader of the Serbian gardeners – which the emperor greatly appreciated. Upon his departure, Napoleon received 20 sticks of "Babic de Buzău" and offered the boyar a few written lines as a thank-you gift.'

As far as the human factor is concerned, the recipe for 'Babic de Buzău' was handed down from generation to generation, as the product was the locals' main source of income and preserved non-perishable food.

Farms in the geographical area are of low to medium capacity, and many production stages are carried out manually: dry-brining the meat, turning it, homogenising the ground meat, tying the ends of the salami sticks with twine, pressing the salami sticks during the first stage, and preparing the salami as required for it to be placed on the market. The producers' skills are called upon in all these stages, along with the local skills in growing the chili and sweet peppers used.

These skills are part of the gastronomic heritage that has been passed down through generations, and they were validated by the certificate awarded by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development in 2016, which recognises 'Babic de Buzău' as a traditional product.

The transmission of this knowledge and experience has maintained the continuity, in the mentioned geographical area, of a product appreciated both in Romania and abroad.

These skills are much valued by the locals who have dedicated their lives to making this product as good as possible. They have carefully passed down the secrets to the next generation with passion and dedication. This legacy is like a certificate passing the knowledge on, and ensuring that every aspect of the craft is fully understood and appreciated (source: Notary's document passing the craft down to the next generation from Ms Georgeta Marica, 77 years old, to her grandchildren, 2014).

The production methods traditionally used by the local population of Buzău, handed down from generation to generation, are reflected in their knowledge of how to select the pork and beef cuts needed to give the product its pressed and homogeneous appearance when sliced. Its external appearance comes from the pressing technique. Its hot and spicy taste is the result of using the right blend of meat and spices (sweet paprika, chili powder and the local chili pepper).

Another technique used by the locals is smoke-curing, which involves exposing the product 'Babic de Buzău' to smoke produced by slowly burning dry hardwood in such a way as to make a little flame and a lot of smoke. The producers know exactly when the salami will acquire its typical smoky flavour intensity and when it should be pressed manually with wooden or metal rolling pins. During the smoking process, local producers, based on their expertise, assess the time needed for pressing and drying and know when 'Babic de Buzău' is ready, by detecting the 'rustling' sound of the salami sticks.

In terms of taste characteristics, unlike other regions, only the Buzău region is known for the use of chili pepper as an ingredient in the Babic salami and for the mixture of pork and beef mince. Buzău has a temperate-continental climate, with hot summers and mild winters. These conditions are suitable for the maturation of 'Babic de Buzău'. The moderate humidity influences the drying process, giving it its specific texture.

Interest in cultivating chili and sweet peppers in this area has grown since World War II, thanks to assiduous selection practices that have succeeded in maintaining local varieties. At the Buzău research facility, a number of studies have been carried out since 1996 to stabilise the characteristics of chili peppers in Romanian native varieties. The vegetable-growing area is characterised by a low altitude and a predominantly flat topography, typical of floodplain terraces. This geographical configuration facilitates the uniform distribution of water in the soil and ensures efficient drainage, essential conditions for the optimal development of chili pepper crops. The sandy soils of Buzău's floodplain terrace are perfect for gardening, the area being ideal for cultivating the hot chili peppers which are used to produce 'Babic de Buzău', and which give it its characteristic hot, spicy and pungent taste. The chili peppers used in the product are grown in this area. The peppers are processed traditionally (curing by salting and/or drying and grinding).

'Babic de Buzău' producers still source the natural spices they use from the market gardeners in Buzău (sources: Viorel Frîncu, *Buzău and the Bulgarian gardeners*, the DacoRomână Publishing House, 2005; Marius Constantinescu, Annex 6 to the 'Cârnați de Pleșcoi PGI' Specifications).

On the Buzău sub-Carpathian foothills, the broad-leaved forests have traditionally been an important source of wood for the smoking process of 'Babic de Buzău'. The predominant species include various oak varieties, adapted to the soil and climate conditions of the area, characterised by loamy, well-drained and nutrient-rich soils. The tradition of using hardwood essences (oak) is maintained, ensuring the continuity of the smoking method and preserving the specific organoleptic qualities of the product.

As a consequence, over decades in which the production process, imbued with the skills of the local producers, has remained largely unchanged, the inseparable connection between the product, its name, and its geographical origin has become firmly established in the consumer's mind. Consumers recognise 'Babic de Buzău' as a raw-dried, pressed salami produced in the defined geographical area from pork and beef seasoned with salt and a blend of spices, that is reddish-brown in colour, with a spicy aroma and taste attributable to the local hot chili peppers, plus the cold smoking process using hardwood, and the pressing, maturing, and drying procedures.

Reference to publication of the specification

https://www.madr.ro/docs/ind-alimentara/2025/caiete-de-sarcini-2023/Caiet-de-sarcini-IGP-Babic-de-Buzau-cu-revizia-UE-30.07.2025.pdf