OTHER ACTS

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Publication of an amendment application 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

(2017/C 19/05)

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

APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF AN AMENDMENT TO THE PRODUCT SPECIFICATION OF PROTECTED DESIGNATIONS OF ORIGIN/PROTECTED GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS WHICH IS NOT MINOR

Application for approval of an amendment in accordance with the first subparagraph of Article 53(2), of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012

'CORNISH SARDINES'

EU No: UK-PGI-0105-01306 — 29.1.2015

PDO ( ) PGI (X)

1. **Applicant group and legitimate interest**

Cornish Sardine Management Association
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UNITED KINGDOM

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The Cornish Sardine Management Association (CSMA) represents all the ring net vessels prosecuting the Sardine fishery and the processors handling the Sardines within the boundaries set out in this document.

2. **Member State or Third Country**

United Kingdom

3. **Heading in the product specification affected by the amendment(s)**

— ☐ Name of product

— ☒ Description of product

— ☒ Geographical area

— ☒ Proof of origin

— ☒ Method of production

— ☒ Link

— ☐ Labelling

— ☒ Other: update details relating to applicant group

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

4. **Type of amendment(s)**

— ☒ Amendment to product specification of a registered PDO or PGI not to be qualified as minor in accordance with the third subparagraph of Article 53(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012

— ☐ Amendment to product specification of registered PDO or PGI for which a Single Document (or equivalent) has not been published not to be qualified as minor in accordance with the third subparagraph of Article 53(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012

5. **Amendment(s)**

The amendments are required to update changes to:

— the name of the fisheries management body mentioned throughout the product specification for Cornish Sardines. The Cornish Sea Fisheries Committee (CSFC) have now been replaced by Cornwall Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (CIFCA),

— update the practice of landing Cornish sardines. Due to the movement of the fish further east, and in the interests of maintaining fish quality standards it has become necessary to extend the geographical area to include the port of Plymouth for landing and processing purposes only, the catching area will remain unchanged, and refers to the sea areas of the new jurisdiction (district) of the Cornwall Inshore Fisheries and Conservation (CIFCA). This change of practice in the industry has come about as a result of an eastward shift in the shoals of sardines. This eastward shift is likely to have come about due to ocean current changes fuelled by climate change. The temperature of the water eastwards has been on average 2 degrees centigrade warmer, according to Plymouth Marine Laboratories records from satellite and buoy recordings, which also show an increase in the zooplankton stock on which mature sardines feed. The delicate composition of the fish requires them to be landed and processed ashore quickly in order to maintain quality and high standards. The eastward shift of sardine shoals within the defined geographical area requires Plymouth, the only non-tidal port to the eastern end of the capture area capable of handling, landing and processing of the catch within the required timeframe, to be included as a point of landing and processing. There is a long tradition of Cornish Sardine fishing vessels being based in the port of Plymouth due to its proximity to the fishing grounds and the port has long played a pivotal role in the seine net fishery, as noted by Crispin Gill in 1979 in his book *Plymouth — A New History*. There are references to merchants in Plymouth developing an export market for pilchards/sardines as far back as the 16th century. Merchants built cellars around the Plymouth area to process and store the fish. Comments from the Herring, longline and Pilchard fishery dated 1889-90 stated 'all the buyers of Pilchards/sardines from the SW were based in Plymouth at certain times'.

Plymouth traditionally provided a market with landing and processing capabilities required to sell, process and distribute the Sardines whilst maintaining quality through minimising the time from capture to landing. Plymouth continues to provide these roles as well as having the facility for fishermen to clear and mend their nets using traditional net making techniques. The issue of safety and providing a safe haven for vessels to shelter in times of bad weather is also key to Plymouth as a port for the Cornish Sardine fishery. Vessels fishing around the area of Plymouth Sound, if not landing their catch in Plymouth, would otherwise have to make passage for ports to the West with no guarantee of shelter on arrival due to the tidal nature of ports such as Looe and Polperro. The extended 'steaming' time to these ports would have safety implications in terms of stability of fully loaded vessels travelling further to land their catches. The extended travelling time also having a detrimental effect on the quality of the catch.

a) *Description*

Reason for amendment:

To update the reference to the geographical area to take account of the requested change to the geographical area.

Amend to read:

'Cornish Sardines is the name given to the pelagic fish of the species sardina pilchardus which have been caught, landed and processed in the designated geographical area. The colloquial name given to the fish is pilchard'.

b) *Geographical area*

Reason for amendment:

To update the details of the governmental bodies and expand the geographical area to include the port area of Plymouth (for landing and processing purposes only) which falls under the post code PL4; the catching area will remain unchanged (The sea areas of the Cornwall Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (CIFCA) jurisdiction, analogous to those defined by the Cornish Sea Fisheries Committee (CSFC) for catching). This post code covers the area of the fish landing dock and fish market in Plymouth.

This expansion is required to take account of the movement of the shoals of sardines which have progressed eastwards. This eastward shift is likely to have come about due to ocean current changes fuelled by climate change. The temperature of the water eastwards has been on average 2 degrees centigrade warmer, according to Plymouth Marine Laboratories records from satellite and buoy recordings, which also show an increase in the zooplankton stock on which mature sardines feed.

Amend to read:

'The County of Cornwall. The capture of sardines will be defined as the sea areas of the Cornwall Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (CIFCA) area of jurisdiction (also known as the CIFCA district) — up to six miles off the Cornish coast. The port area of Plymouth covered by the PL4 postcode is also included, for landing and processing only.

The Cornwall IFCA District extends from Marsland Mouth on the north coast of Cornwall, around to the western end of the Plymouth Breakwater in Plymouth Sound on the south coast, for all the waters out to the six mile limit and includes the rivers and estuaries up to tidal limits. The District is measured from the 1983 baselines as they existed on 25 January 1983, which may be from exposed rocks, including the Eddystone Rock, and other low tide elevations. The baselines are in accordance with the Territorial Waters Order in Council 1964 (1965 III p. 6452A) as amended by the Territorial Waters (Amendment) Order in Council 1979 (1979 II p. 2866).'

c) *Proof of origin*

Reason for amendment:

To update governmental bodies mentioned with current information.

Amend first paragraph to read:

'When the catch has been made, fishermen record information including tonnage, location, and depth caught, fishing methods, record of by-catch etc., whilst they are still on the vessels. The information is collected by the Cornish Sardine Management Association (CSMA) for recording on to their databases. It is a requirement of the CSMA to ensure that skippers and owners record and submit details of their catch to CSMA. This information is evidence that the product was caught within the geographical area. The information is made freely available to the CIFCA and the Marine Management Organisation and the data collected used by the CSMA to assess annual catch per unit effort'.

Amend third paragraph to read:

'All catches are recorded and monitored by CIFCA and the Marine Management Organisation (MMO)'.

d) *Method of production*

Reason for amendment:

To remove reference to the governmental bodies mentioned which is now out of date and take account of the proposed inclusion of the port area of Plymouth when describing the geographical area in relation to processing.

Amend first paragraph to read:

'The vessels are put to sea from ports in the geographical area, they use ring nets and drift nets to catch the Cornish Sardines'.

Amend second paragraph to read:

'The Cornish Sardines are brought aboard from the drift or ring nets. Once on board, Cornish Sardines are iced to maintain quality and freshness. The vessels use insulated bins and some vessels use fish holds to store the fish in chilled conditions before being taken ashore'.

Amend third paragraph to read:

'Back on land the sardines are sold to merchants and fish processors either direct from the vessel or at an auction market. The buyers collect the fish from the quayside or market and take it to their local factory. The fishermen record which processors have bought their fish to ensure traceability throughout the supply chain'.

Reason for amendment:

Update the text under the final bullet point relating to packaging. The requirement for packing to be done in 10 kilos or less should be deleted, as this practice no longer takes place.

Amend fourth paragraph:

Delete 5th bullet point: 'Packing is defined as being packed in individual containers of less than 10kg'.

Amend fifth paragraph to read:

'When whole, fresh fish is packaged in ice and cool boxes for transportation to customers. Otherwise the fish are frozen and packaged in boxes or bags for frozen storage and then onward to customers'.

e) *Link*

Reason for amendment:

To update governmental bodies mentioned with current information and to include Plymouth where the geographical area for processing is indicated.

Amend paragraph five:

Edit 'within the 6 mile limit of the CSFC' to read 'within the revised 6 mile limit of the CIFCA'.

Amend paragraph eight (penultimate paragraph) to read:

'The delicate composition of the fish requires them to be landed promptly. The boats return to local ports, from where they are taken to factories for packaging, storage, processing. The landing and processing of Cornish Sardines takes place within the defined geographical area of the CIFCA fisheries district, Cornwall and the administrative/port area of Plymouth covered by the PL4 postcode. This area includes traditional coves and ports where processing took place in the past. The modern technology and hygiene standards and the pressure on coastal property now means that the factories on industrial estates have taken over from fish cellars in village harbours but all factories are within the defined geographical area'.

f) *Other*

Amendment is required to section 2 of the product specification which provides details of the applicant group. This is required to take account of a change of address and contact details.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

'CORNISH SARDINES'

EU No: UK-PGI-0105-01306 — 29.1.2015

PDO ( ) PGI (X)

1. **Name**

'Cornish Sardines'

2. **Member State or Third Country**

United Kingdom

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

3.1. *Type of product*

Class 1.7. Fresh fish, molluscs and crustaceans and fish based products

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

Cornish Sardines is the name given to the pelagic fish of the species sardina pilchardus which have been caught, landed and processed in the designated geographical area. The colloquial name given to the fish is pilchard.

Cornish sardines are metallic green or olive coloured along the back with golden flanks and pearlescent silver shading to silvery-white on the belly. There are a series of dark spots along the upper flanks, sometimes with a second or third series below. The size of the fish can vary during the season. Each kilogram of sardines must contain between 9-18 sardines.

The flesh has a firm, fine texture when fresh, this soon softens and deteriorates exponentially as temperatures rise above 1° Celsius. The individual strength of taste varies with the freshness of the fish and level of fat in the flesh.

Fresh Cornish Sardines should be bright and firm, with most scales intact, gills should be dark pink or red in colour. They should be plump and smell fresh and are at their best in late summer when they are moist and full of taste. Cornish Sardines may be sold either fresh or frozen.

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*

The fish must be caught within the Cornish Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority area of jurisdiction; and landed and processed within the defined geographical area.

Processing in this context is regarded as any one, or a combination of filleting, heading, gutting, freezing, marinating, and salting.

— filleting is defined as the manual or mechanical separation of the head and backbone from the meat,

— heading and gutting is defined as removal of the head and intestine, with the tail on or off,

— freezing is defined as the entire product being brought and held below a temperature of zero degrees Celsius whereby it changes into a solid state,

— salting or marinating is defined as the preservation of the product by the reduction of the water phase, through the addition of salt and/or acids, to create an environment inhospitable to spoilage bacteria.

When whole, fresh fish is packaged in ice and cool boxes for transportation to customers. Otherwise the fish are frozen and packaged in boxes or bags for frozen storage and then onward to customers.

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

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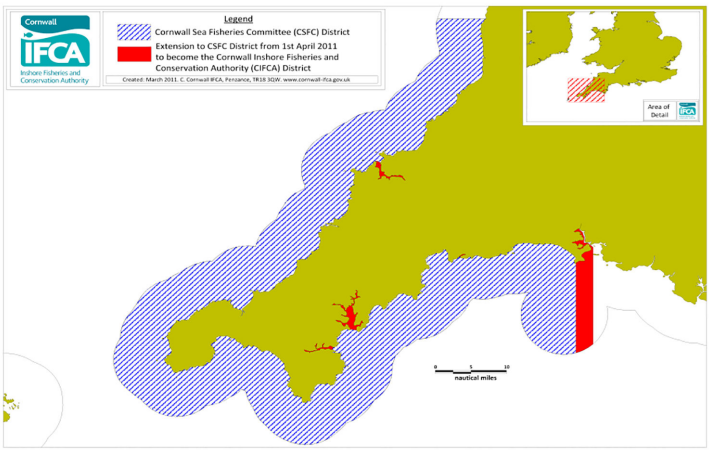
3.6. *Specific rules concerning labelling of the product the registered name refers to*

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

The County of Cornwall. The capture of sardines will be defined as the sea areas of the Cornwall Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (CIFCA) area of jurisdiction (also known as the CIFCA district) — up to six miles off the Cornish coast. The port area of Plymouth covered by the PL4 postcode is also included, for landing and processing only.

The Cornwall IFCA District extends from Marsland Mouth on the north coast of Cornwall, around to the western end of the Plymouth Breakwater in Plymouth Sound on the south coast, for all the waters out to the six mile limit and includes the rivers and estuaries up to tidal limits. The District is measured from the 1983 baselines as they existed on 25 January 1983, which may be from exposed rocks, including the Eddystone Rock, and other low tide elevations. The baselines are in accordance with the Territorial Waters Order in Council 1964 (1965 III p. 6452A) as amended by the Territorial Waters (Amendment) Order in Council 1979 (1979 II p. 2866).



5. **Link with the geographical area**

There is a very specific link between the geographical area and the fishing practices including the catching, landing and processing of Cornish Sardines, these are well documented traditional fishing methods. The Cornish Sardine is drawn to the geographical area by its environment, i.e. the conditions available to it in the shallow waters of the bays in the designated area. These waters provide the environment preferred by the fish. The North Atlantic Oscillation (NAO) is the main climatic phenomenon of the Atlantic area in which the defined geographical area lies and is generally responsible for the temperatures and tides which also control where the phytoplankton i.e. food for Cornish Sardines is found.

The specific link with the geographical area is that fishing for the sardines takes place when the fish move to these shallow bays. This characteristic style fishing technique is reminiscent of the traditional practices of previous generations.

Traditionally, the fish were caught when they came closer to the shore. In the past this was through actual sightings of the shoals by scouts on lookout on the cliffs, once the shoals of fish were sighted, the lookouts would direct (by a local semaphore) the vessels to make the catch. The area was limited by the line of sight from the cliff tops. This tradition continues; the knowledge of where the fish congregate has been passed down through generations, although modern technology has replaced the cliff top watch. The addition of modern technology means that the distance off shore has broadened over the decades but the local fleets still stay within sight of the shore following the fish where they congregate in shallow water. The geographical limits of the fish catching operations are all within the revised 6 mile limit of the CIFCA and the area therefore well describes the fish catching area. Due to the fragile nature of the fish, handling and proximity to a port of landing are key in ensuring the quality of the product landed.

The longstanding historical tradition and technique of catching, landing and processing sardines in the specified geographical area forms the basis of the link to the geographical area. The fish are now caught using modern sustainable fishing techniques which ensure good management of the fishery.

The catch

The lifecycle of the fish require them to swim close to the shore and the appearance of the shoals gave rise to the traditional fishing methods which historically became a community event. Fishermen and townsfolk came together to bring the fish in.

Whilst methods may have evolved fishing remains a vital part of the economy of the Southwest. A diverse fleet of vessels continues to catch Cornish Sardines from ports, harbours and coves which fall within the designated area.

The longstanding tradition of fishing for Cornish sardines in the area is evident in the skills acquired by the sardine fishermen. Skills which have been passed down from generation to generation include the ability not only to locate sardines and successfully catch them but also the experience to delicately handle them maintaining the quality of the catch.

A successful catch also depends on the tradition of vessels working as a team; several vessels from one port or business group working together.

Landing and processing

In the past each port had storage and processing premises (fish cellars) and the local population joined in to ensure that the fish products were processed quickly. In a similar way today the delicate composition of the fish requires them to be landed promptly. The boats return to their local ports and from there they are taken to factories for processing, packaging and storage.

The fish is processed in the defined geographical area. This area includes the traditional cove and ports where processing took place in the past. The modern technology and hygiene standards and the pressures on coastal property now means that the factories on industrial estates have taken over from fish cellars in village harbours but all the factories are in the geographical area.

The landing and processing of the fish must take place within the area of Cornwall and the port area of Plymouth which falls under the post code PL4.

Reputation

The name of Cornwall and 'Cornish' was used for centuries on the fish products and are therefore strongly linked by reputation with the fish caught, landed and processed in the geographical area.

The first recorded exports of salted sardines (known then as pilchards) were in 1555 from the Cornish port Looe. During the 17th and 18th centuries these exports become one of the mainstays of the Cornish fishing industry with the largest recorded landings being for 1871, equivalent to some 16 000 tonnes. The Catholic based countries of Europe were the main recipients, particularly Italy where the product was known in the north as 'Salacche Inglesi'.

The use of the name Cornish Sardine and the reputation of the quality of the product has grown in the past 10 years due to the hard work of the members of the Cornish Sardine Management Association and the high quality of their product. Cornish Sardines have achieved an increasing volume of sales particularly in the UK retail market where they have acquired a cachet.

Reference to publication of the specification

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

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/571339/cornish-sardines.pdf