C/2026/735

3.2.2026

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/2026/735)

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

'Simojärven muikku'

EU No: PGI-FI-02965 – 15.6.2023

PDO ( ) PGI (X)

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

'Simojärven muikku'

2. Member State or Third Country

Finland

3. Description of the agricultural product or foodstuff

3.1. *Type of product*

Class 1.7. Fresh fish, molluscs and crustaceans and products derived therefrom

Combined nomenclature code

03 – FISH AND CRUSTACEANS, MOLLUSCS AND OTHER AQUATIC INVERTEBRATES

0302 – Fish, fresh or chilled, excluding fish fillets and other fish meat of heading 0304

0303 – Fish, frozen, excluding fish fillets and other fish meat of heading 0304

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

The name 'Simojärven muikku' is used for vendace (Coregonus albula) caught in Lake Simojärvi in the municipality of Ranua in southern Lapland. 'Simojärven muikku' is sold fresh or frozen.

The most important characteristics of the vendace are:

— 'Simojärven muikku' is small in size, bright silver in colour as a result of the harsh conditions of the unspoilt lake. As a result of its northern location, the region has a colder climate and light-filled summers. Owing to the habitat, the roe of the fish is orangey red, which distinguishes it from other vendace, which typically have yellowish roe The roe can be observed from September to November.

[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).

— The vendace are typically small, partly because the winters are long and the lake is ice-free only for a short period, meaning that planktonic food is scarce. After one growing season, its average length may vary between about 4 and 8 cm. Vendace caught in commercial fishing are normally between 12 and 20 cm. 'Simojärven muikku' weighs about 3 to 5 grams. The weight of vendace caught in commercial fishing is between 10 and 70 g. The 'Simojärvi vendace' that are sold are approximately 9 cm in length, as the fish has already begun its second growth season when caught.

— 'Simojärven muikku' feeds on plankton, which is present in the lake only in the summer because it needs sunlight to multiply. In the late autumn there is no more plankton in the lake and 'Simojärven muikku' stops eating. When the vendace does not obtain nourishment, it fasts throughout the long winter and its entrails shrink, making it clean to eat without gutting. Vendace can be eaten at any time of the year without being cleaned.

— Rigor mortis lasts for a longer time than is generally the case for other vendace. This is due to the small size of the vendace.

The product is firm and juicy.

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

'Simojärven muikku' only eats plankton born in Lake Simojärvi. The vendace may exceptionally eat pollen if sufficient plankton is not available.

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

'Simojärven muikku' must be caught in the defined geographical area. The permitted fishing methods are trawling, seining and fyke netting.

In order to guarantee its quality, the vendace must be chilled using a thin layer of ice (0 °C water) right after it is caught in the defined geographical area.

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 geographical area consists of Lake Simojärvi, which is located in the municipality of Ranua in the Province of Lapland.

5. Link with the geographical area

The Protected Geographical Indication for 'Simojärven muikku' is based on its specific characteristics.

The specific characteristics of 'Simojärven muikku' derive from its geographical environment, which is an unspoilt lake where conditions are harsh.

Lake Simojärvi is Finland's 50th biggest lake, whose clear waters produce clean fish. A large part of the Lake Simojärvi area is protected by the Finnish Shore Conservation Programme, which ensures that Finland's most valuable shorelines remain unbuilt. The adjacent Soppana area is protected by the Old-Growth Forest Conservation Programme In addition, a sizeable section of the Lake Simojärvi and Soppana areas belong to the Natura 2000 network. For this reason, Lake Simojärvi will continue to be an unspoilt, unregulated lake.

In terms of its fish fauna, Lake Simojärvi is a valuable part of the River Simojoki drainage basin. Thirteen fish species are found in the lake, such as whitefish, vendace, lake trout and grayling. Atlantic salmon sometimes swim up the River Simojoki and into the lake, though they do not enter other inland waters. The rivers flowing into Lake Simojärvi are home to freshwater pearl mussel populations, sea trout and grayling.

Lake Simojärvi has been a well-known fishing ground since the 16th century. Traditional seining, which has been carried out for centuries, is based on the exceptional transparency of the lake's water and the extensive primary production enabled by the clear waters. In the summer, fishing takes place in the surface waters at dusk, when the zooplankton rises. When the water has warmed up in the late summer, the vendace seek colder and deeper waters, from where they are caught with demersal seines. The dark autumn nights are the time for moonlight fishing, which, while generally rare, is distinctive for clear-watered Lake Simojärvi. The vendace is fished all year round.

'Simojärven muikku' is small in size and bright silver in colour as a result of the harsh conditions of the unspoilt lake. As a result of its northern location, the region has a colder climate and light-filled summers. The vendace feeds on plankton, which is present in the lake only in the summer because it needs sunlight to multiply. In the late autumn there is no more plankton in the lake and 'Simojärven muikku' stops eating. When the vendace does not obtain nourishment, it fasts throughout the long winter and its entrails shrink, making it clean to eat without gutting. The vendace can be eaten all year round without gutting.

The roe of 'Simojärvi muikku' is orange-red, which distinguishes it from other vendace. Typically, vendace roe is yellowish and is seen from September to November.

The vendace are typically small, partly because the winters are long and the lake is ice-free only for a short period, meaning that planktonic food is scarce. After one growing season, its average length may vary between about 4 and 8 cm. Vendace caught in commercial fishing are normally between 12 and 18 cm. 'Simojärven muikku' weighs about 3 to 5 grams. The weight of vendace caught in commercial fishing is between 10 and 25 g. The 'Simojärvi muikku' on sale is around 9 cm in length.

Rigor mortis lasts for a longer time than is generally the case for other vendace. This is due to the small size of the vendace.

There are five growing seasons in Lake Simojärvi. To ensure that the population continues to thrive, the age class that is the strongest and most abundant is caught. This can be influenced by the mesh size of the seine.

Various events have also helped make 'Simojärven muikku' well-known. The product has been sold fried at various events in Finland and abroad since 1998.

'As early as in the 18th century, local inhabitants of Simo had the right to seine in Lake Simojärvi in the winter. That is probably the origin of the name "Simojärvi"/"Simolaisten järvi" ("Lake Simo"/"Lake of the Simo people"). A new team of sea fishers came to the lake at the end of the 1970s. It is from them that I learned how to seine in the winter. Back then we used an ice pick to break through up to one metre of ice to fish; nowadays they have motorised vessels, spreaders, and ice jiggers with electric motors.' (*Lapin Kansa*, 5 August 2021)

Reference to publication of the specification

https://www.ruokavirasto.fi/globalassets/elintarvikkeet/elintarvikeala/ainesosat-ja-sisalto/nimisuojatut-tuotteet/hakemus-simojarven-muikku.pdf