C/2026/6055

20.11.2026

Publication of the communication of an approved standard amendment to a product specification of a geographical indication in accordance with Article 5(4) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2025/27 [1]

(C/2026/6055)

COMMUNICATION OF APPROVAL OF A STANDARD AMENDMENT

(Article 24 of Regulation (EU) 2024/1143)

'Jambon de Bayonne'

EU reference number: PGI-FR-0031-AM02 – 26.8.2026

1. **Name of product**

'Jambon de Bayonne'

2. **Geographical indication type**

☐ PDO

☑ PGI

3. **Sector**

☑ Agricultural products

☐ Wines

☐ Spirit drinks

4. **Country to which the geographical area belongs**

France

5. **Member State authority communicating the standard amendment**

Name

Ministry of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty

6. **Qualification as standard amendment**

The application for amendment to the 'Jambon de Bayonne' PGI does not involve any of the three situations constituting a Union amendment; specifically, it does not:

(a) involve a change in the name of the protected designation of origin / protected geographical indication;

(b) risk voiding the link to the geographical area;

(c) entail further restrictions on the marketing of the product.

The French authorities therefore consider the application to be for a standard amendment.

7. **Description of the approved standard amendment(s)**

Title

DESCRIPTION OF PRODUCT

[1] Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2025/27 of 30 October 2024 supplementing Regulation (EU) 2024/1143 of the European Parliament and of the Council with rules concerning the registration and the protection of geographical indications, traditional specialities guaranteed and optional quality terms and repealing Delegated Regulation (EU) No 664/2014 (OJ L, 2025/27, 15.1.2025, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_del/2025/27/oj).

Description

Raw materials: to ensure consistency with the production method, additional clarification has been provided with regard to the fresh ham and the pigs, e.g. clarification of the weight and of the exclusion of certain animals. In addition, immunocastrated male pigs have been added to the list of excluded animals as no study has been carried out of the impact on meat quality.

Characteristics of the finished product: to ensure all products are cured to a sufficient and comparable level, thereby guaranteeing uniformity, a single minimum weight loss of 28 % has been added.

Presentation of the product: this paragraph, which was originally included in the section on the characteristics of the product, has been moved. The presentation of the product has been reworded in order to standardise the terminology used across the various sections, while remaining consistent with the practices set out in the product specification.

Physical properties: the description 'is not hard' has been removed due to the rules on the production method which are set out in the processing steps. The word 'abnormally' has been added to qualify the term 'bloated'. The description of the firmness, colour and smell of the fat has been moved to the section on the organoleptic description of the product.

Chemical characteristics:

Moisture: the dry matter content (47 %) has been replaced by a moisture content of ≤ 61 %.

Nitrates: to take into account changes in the raw material, the maximum potassium nitrate incorporation has been replaced by a residual potassium nitrate (E252) content of < 100 mg/kg (expressed as $NaNO_3$) or < 73 mg/kg of NO_3 ion in the finished product. E252 is no longer listed as an authorised additive.

Fats: the average value (~ 6 %) has been removed as it is not considered to have any impact on product quality.

Salt (NaCl): the maximum of ≤ 7,5 % has been extended to the entire ham for greater uniformity.

Sugars: the limit value on total soluble sugars has been removed as it can vary considerably. Nevertheless, the restriction on added sugars has been maintained.

Organoleptic characteristics: to better describe the product, the meat colour has been clarified, i.e. from light red to dark red, and sensory descriptors have been added such as 'slightly marbled to marbled' in relation to the lean meat, and a distinctive dry-cured aroma.

☑ The amendment affects the single document.

Title

DEFINITION OF THE GEOGRAPHICAL AREA

Description

Consistency has been ensured regarding the steps taking place in the geographical area by specifying in relation to the production method that the maturing process is optional.

The list of municipalities has been updated on the basis of the 2025 Official Geographic Code without altering the defined geographical area. The supply area and the geographical area of the PGI (processing of the hams) remain unchanged.

☑ The amendment affects the single document.

Title

Evidence that the product originates in the geographical area

Description

Traceability has been reviewed and brought into line with the production requirements set out in the product specification and the amendments to the production method. Salt manufacturers have been removed from the section on traceability. The requirement that saltworks must always source salt from the salt springs of the Adour basin for all of their products has been removed (although its use remains mandatory for the PGI). This is to accommodate the diversification efforts of processors.

☐ The amendment affects the single document.

Title

Description of the production method

Description

Pig farming: new pig farming and health requirements (going beyond basic legislation) have been introduced for breeders and fatteners. They are aimed at controlling animal movements and ensuring compliance by pig farms by making it impossible for pigs to become mixed up with those not meeting the product specification. A positive list of feed materials applicable to animal feed as of the post-weaning stage has been added, following the structure of the EU catalogue of feed materials (Regulation (EU) No 68/2013).

Products derived from palm oil and palm kernels are prohibited.

Preparation for transport of meat-producing pigs and waiting time prior to slaughter: animal welfare rules have been added to limit animal stress prior to slaughter and improve transport conditions (fasting period on the farm, stocking density in waiting pen, showering systems, distance to slaughterhouse, etc.).

Slaughter

Grading of certifiable carcasses: immunocastrated male pigs have been added to the list of excluded animals.

Carcass chilling: the chilling procedure has been defined.

Acceptance testing: it has been clarified that in order to maintain product quality the hams are not to be frozen.

Trimming-cutting: the trimming-cutting criteria have been adjusted and refined by verifying their alignment with basic legislation and the feasibility of checking them.

Technological quality: to verify the conformity of the meat colour, a reference to the Japanese colour scale has been added.

Processing/(maturing)

The list of ingredients, additives and processing aids has been revised to make it more precise and bring it into line with current practice (restrictions on additives, enhanced seasoning, clarification of procedures).

The salting, resting, heat treatment, curing, coating, maturing, balancing and firming processes have been more clearly defined by specifying the duration, temperature and humidity, and whether they are optional or mandatory. This ensures a sufficient level of curing while preserving the product's organoleptic characteristics.

☑ The amendment affects the single document.

Title

Labelling

Description

The description of the logo has been removed from the product specification.

☑ The amendment affects the single document.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

Designations of origin and geographical indications of agricultural products

'Jambon de Bayonne'

EU reference number: PGI-FR-0031-AM02 – 26.8.2026

1. **Name(s)**

'Jambon de Bayonne'

2. **Geographical indication type**

☐ PDO

☑ PGI

3. **Country to which the defined geographical area belongs**

France

4. **Description of the agricultural product**

4.1. *Classification of the agricultural product in accordance with the Combined Nomenclature heading and code, as referred to in Article 6(1) of Regulation (EU) 2024/1143*

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

4.2. *Description of the agricultural product to which the registered name applies*

'Jambon de Bayonne' is a leg of pork, weighing at least 8,5 kilograms after trimming and cutting, salted using dry salt from the saltworks of the Adour basin and dried in that area for at least seven months. The pork is from male or female meat-producing pigs, born, reared and slaughtered within a defined area.

Once produced, the ham will have lost at least 28 % of its initial weight.

Appearance:

— it has a rounded shape on the outside;

— the rind has a uniform colour, is stretched at the shank and free of any bruising;

— the ham does not appear abnormally bloated;

— the outer muscle area does not have a crust.

Presentation of the product:

— whole on the bone: packaged or unpackaged;

— boned, rindless, trimmed, pressed, moulded and packaged;

— whole off the bone or in pieces;

— sliced.

Chemical characteristics:

— the sodium chloride content is less than or equal to 7,5 %;

— the moisture content is less than or equal to 61 %;

— the potassium nitrate (E252) content is less than 73 mg/kg of NO_3 ion or 100 mg/kg expressed as $NaNO_3$ (residual level).

Organoleptic characteristics:

— the lean meat is a uniform light red to dark red colour, slightly marbled to marbled;

— tender and succulent;

— the fat is white, uniform, hard, not greasy and does not smell rancid;

— distinctive dry-cured aroma;

— no visual defects in the muscle, such as vein defects, leaf fat, or excess fat.

4.3. *Derogations on sourcing of feed (for products of animal origin designated by a protected designation of origin only) and restrictions on sourcing of raw materials (for processed products designated by a protected geographical indication only)*

Producers of 'Jambon de Bayonne' have historically sourced their hams from pigs born and reared in the south-west of France. The pigs fattened in this region have historically been heavier and fed with local cereals, including maize from the time it was brought over to Europe. The area supplying the pigs has a cohesive geography and climate (sunlight levels and summer temperatures that favour cereal cultivation) and a cohesive economy and population due to the interrelation between areas that farrow and fatten pigs, as well as historic trade routes. Ever since 'Jambon de Bayonne' was registered as a PGI, its product specification has therefore stipulated that the hams must come from pigs born, reared and slaughtered in departments in the south-west of France, specifically: Ariège, Aude, Aveyron, Cantal, Charente, Charente-Maritime, Corrèze, Dordogne, Haute-Garonne, Gers, Gironde, Landes, Lot, Lot-et-Garonne, Pyrénées-Atlantiques, Hautes-Pyrénées, Pyrénées-Orientales, Deux-Sèvres, Tarn, Tarn-et-Garonne, Vienne, Haute-Vienne. Furthermore, the salt used for salting 'Jambon de Bayonne' may only come from deposits in the Adour basin. This salt is used for its purity and non-abrasive texture, allowing the ham to be optimally preserved without altering the product's organoleptic qualities.

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

All production steps from the point the fresh ham is placed in salt until it is deboned take place in the geographical area.

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

'Jambon de Bayonne' PGI is pre-sliced and packaged in the geographical area of the product.

Pre-slicing consists of cutting boned hams into pieces or slices.

This restriction as regards the geographical area does not apply to slicing and packaging carried out with a view to immediate sale within the meaning of Article 2(2), point (e), of Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011.

The following steps are carried out prior to this:

All hams intended for pre-slicing are deboned in accordance with their weight, fat thickness, curing time and, where applicable, maturing time. During the deboning process and prior to balancing, operators check that the ham is free of smell or colour defects.

Hardening (optional) for a maximum of 8 weeks, during which the core temperature of the ham must not fall below –13,5 °C. In no case may the ham be frozen.

Pre-slicing is an extension of the curing and, where applicable, the maturing process and requires experience and know-how as it has a direct effect on the quality of the product.

There is a long tradition of operators in the Adour basin with specific know-how. Their experience enables them to slice this delicate product whilst preserving its taste and texture. They do so whilst carrying out a thorough visual inspection of the product to make sure that slices are free of defects (blood spots, jugular, varying colour, etc.), these being impossible to see before the product is sliced.

Pre-sliced ham is a delicate product. It is vital that any oxidation is avoided by limiting contact with air which otherwise can adversely affect the quality of the fat and the colour of the ham slices. Packaging must therefore occur within one hour of pre-slicing.

The quality, specific characteristics and reputation of the product are thus maintained by carrying out these steps in the geographical area.

'Jambon de Bayonne' PGI identification markings which are applied to the rind during the various production steps are removed when the product is pre-sliced. The risk of losing traceability, and thus the risk of fraud, is limited by carrying out the deboning, pre-slicing and packaging stages in the geographical area.

For these reasons, pre-slicing and packaging processes – which require special know-how – must take place at appropriate facilities located in the geographical area of the protected geographical indication so as to guarantee the full quality and authenticity of the product.

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

Must included the words 'cured and matured in the Adour basin'. The registered name of the product 'Jambon de Bayonne' must be written in characters at least 50 % of the size of the characters used for the company mark and the product's own trademark and is to be positioned nearby.

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

The geographical area of the PGI is the Adour basin. It comprises the department of Pyrénées-Atlantiques and

in the department of Gers: Aignan, Arblade-le-Bas, Aurensan, Avéron-Bergelle, Barcelonne-du-Gers, Bernède, Bouzon-Gellenave, Castelnavet, Termes-d'Armagnac, Beaumarchés, Cahuzac-sur-Adour, Caumont, Corneillan, Couloumé-Mondebat, Fustérouau, Galiax, Gée-Rivière, Goux, Izotges, Jû-Belloc, Labarthète, Lannux, Lasserade, Lelin-Lapujolle, Loussous-Débat, Lupiac, Margouët-Meymes, Maulichères, Maumusson-Laguian, Plaisance, Pouydraguin, Préchac-sur-Adour, Projan, Riscle, Sabazan, Tasque, Saint-Aunix-Lengros, Saint-Germé, Saint-Mont, Saint-Pierre-d'Aubézies, Sarragachies, Ségos, Tarsac, Tieste-Uragnoux, Vergoignan, Verlus, Viella;

in the department of Landes: Aire-sur-l'Adour, Amou, Angoumé, Angresse, Arboucave, Argelos, Arsague, Artassenx, Aubagnan, Audignon, Audon, Aurice, Azur, Bahus-Soubiran, Baigts, Banos, Bas-Mauco, Bascons, Bassercles, Bastennes, Bats, Bégaar, Bélus, Bénesse-lès-Dax, Bénesse-Maremne, Bergouey, Beylongue, Beyries, Biarrotte, Biaudos, Bonnegarde, Bordères-et-Lamensans, Brassempouy, Buanes, Cagnotte, Candresse, Capbreton, Carcarès-Sainte-Croix, Carcen-Ponson, Cassen, Castaignos-Souslens, Castandet, Castelnau-Chalosse, Castel-Sarrazin, Castelnau-Tursan, Castelner, Cauna, Cauneille, Caupenne, Cazalis, Cazères-sur-l'Adour, Classun, Clèdes, Clermont, Coudures, Dax, Doazit, Donzacq, Dumes, Duhort-Bachen, Estibeaux, Eugénie-les-Bains, Eyres-Moncube, Fargues, Gaas, Gamarde-les-Bains, Garrey, Gaujacq, Geaune, Gibret, Gourbera, Goos, Gousse, Gouts, Grenade-sur-l'Adour, Habas, Hagetmau, Hastingues, Hauriet, Heugas, Herm, Hinx, Horsarrieu, Josse, Labastide-Chalosse, Labatut, Labenne, Lacajunte, Lacrabe, Lahosse, Laluque, Lamothe, Larbey, Larrivière-Saint-Savin, Latrille, Laurède, Lauret, Lesgor, Le Leuy, Louer, Lourquen, Lussagnet, Magescq, Mant, Marpaps, Mauries, Maurrin, Maylis, Mées, Meilhan, Messanges, Mimbaste, Miramont-Sensacq, Misson, Moliets-et-Maa, Momuy, Monget, Monségur, Montaut, Montfort-en-Chalosse, Montgaillard, Montsoué, Morganx, Mouscardès, Mugron, Narrosse, Nassiet, Nerbis, Nousse, Oeyreluy, Oeyregave, Onard, Ondres, Orist, Orx, Orthevielle, Ossages, Ozourt, Payros-Cazautets, Pécorade, Pey, Peyre, Peyrehorade, Philondenx, Pimbo, Pomarez, Pontonx-sur-l'Adour, Port-de-Lanne, Poudenx, Pouillon, Poyanne, Poyartin, Préchacq-les-Bains, Puyol-Cazalet, Renung, Rion-des-Landes, Rivière-Saas-et-Gourby, Saint-Agnet, Saint-André-de-Seignanx, Saint-Aubin, Saint-Barthélemy, Sainte-Colombe, -Cricq-Chalosse, Saint-Cricq-du-Gave, Saint-Etienne-d'Orthe, Saint-Geours-d'Auribat, Saint-Geours-de-Maremne, Saint-Jean-de-Lier, Saint-Jean-de-Marsacq, Saint-Laurent-de-Gosse, Saint-Lon-les-Mines, Saint-Loubouer, Sainte-Marie-de-Gosse, Saint-Martin-de-Hinx, Saint-Martin-de-Seignanx, Saint-Maurice-sur-Adour, Saint-Pandelon, Saint-Paul-lès-Dax, Saint-Sever, Saint-Vincent-de-Paul, Saint-Vincent-de-Tyrosse, Saint-Yaguen, Samadet, Sarraziet, Sarron, Saubion, Saubrigues, Saubusse, Saugnac-et-Cambran, Seignosse, Serres-Gaston, Serreslous-et-Arribans, Seyresse, Siest, Soorts-Hossegor, Sorbets, Sorde-l'Abbaye, Sort-en-Chalosse, Souprosse, Soustons, Tarnos, Tartas, Tercis-les-Bains, Téthieu, Tilh, Tosse, Toulouzette, Urgons, Vicq-d'Auribat, Vielle-Tursan, Vieux-Boucau-les-Bains, Le Vignau, Villenave, Yzosse;

in the department of Hautes-Pyrénées: Adast, Adé, Agos-Vidalos, Allier, Ancizan, Andrest, Les Angles, Angos, Ansost, Antist, Aragnouet, Arbéost, Arcizac-Adour, Arcizac-ez-Angles, Arcizans-Avant, Arcizans-Dessus, Ardengost, Argelès-Bagnères, Argelès-Gazost, Arras-en-Lavedan, Arrayou-Lahitte, Arreau, Arrens-Marsous, Arrodets-ez-Angles, Artagnan, Artalens-Souin, Artigues, Aspin-Aure, Aspin-en-Lavedan, Asté, Astugue, Aucun, Aulon, Aureilhan, Aurensan, Auriébat, Averan, Ayros-Arbouix, Ayzac-Ost, Azereix, Azet, Bagnères-de-Bigorre, Banios, Barbachen, Barbazan-Debat, Barèges, Barlest, Barrancoueu, Barry, Bartrès, Bazet, Bazillac, Bazus-Aure, Beaucens, Beaudéan, Bénac, Berbérust-Lias, Bernac-Debat, Bernac-Dessus, Betpouey, Bettes, Beyrède-Jumet-Camous, Boô-Silhen, Bordères-sur-l'Echez, Bouilh-Devant, Bourisp, Bourréac, Bours, Bun, Buzon, Cadéac, Cadeilhan-Trachère, Caixon, Camalès, Campan, Camparan, Castelnau-Rivière-Basse, Caussade-Rivière, Cauterets, Cheust, Chèze, Chis, Cieutat, Ens, Escaunets, Escondeaux, Escoubès-Pouts, Esquièze-Sère, Estaing, Estensan, Esterre, Estirac, Ferrières, Fréchet-Aure, Gaillagos, Gardères, Gavarnie-Gèdre, Gayan, Gazost, Gensac, Ger, Gerde, Germs-sur-l'Oussouet, Geu, Gez, Gez-ez-Angles, Gouaux, Grailhen, Grézian, Grust, Guchan, Guchen, Hagedet, Hauban, Hèches, Hères, Hibarette, Hiis, Horgues, Ibos, Ilhet, Jarret, Jézeau, Juillan, Julos, Juncalas, Labassère, Labatut-Rivière, Lacassagne, Lafitole, Lagarde, Lahitte-Toupière, Laloubère, Lamarque-Pontacq, Laméac, Lançon, Lanne, Larreule, Lascazères, Lau-Balagnas, Layrisse, Lescurry, Lézignan, Liac, Lies, Loubajac, Loucrup, Louey, Lourdes, Lugagnan, Luquet, Luz-Saint-Sauveur, Madiran, Mansan, Marsac, Marsas, Maubourguet, Mérilheu, Mingot, Momères, Monfaucon, Montgaillard, Montignac, Moumoulous, Neuilh, Nouilhan, Odos, Omex, Ordizan, Orignac, Orincles, Orleix, Oroix, Ossen, Ossun, Ossun-ez-Angles, Ourdis-Cotdoussan, Ourdon, Oursbelille, Ousté, Ouzous, Pailhac, Paréac, Peyrouse, Peyrun, Pierrefitte-Nestalas, Pintac, Poueyferré, Pouzac, Préchac, Pujo, Rabastens-de-Bigorre, Sailhan, Saint-Créac, Saint-Lanne, Saint-Lary-Soulan, Saint-Lézer, Saint-Martin, Saint-Pastous, Saint-Pé-de-Bigorre, Saint-Savin, Saint-Sever-de-Rustan, Saligos, Salles, Salles-Adour, Sanous, Sarniguet, Sarrancolin, Sarriac-Bigorre, Sarrouilles, Sassis, Sauveterre, Sazos, Ségalas, Ségus, Séméac, Sénac, Sère-en-Lavedan, Sère-Lanso, Séron, Sers, Siarrouy, Sireix, Sombrun, Soublecause, Soues, Soulom, Talazac, Tarasteix, Tarbes, Tostat, Tramezaïgues, Trébons, Trouley-Labarthe, Ugnouas, Uz, Uzer, Vic-en-Bigorre, Vidouze, Viella, Vielle-Adour, Vielle-Aure, Vier-Bordes, Viey, Viger, Vignec, Villefranque, Villelongue, Villenave-près-Béarn, Villenave-près-Marsac, Viscos, Visker.

6. **Link with the geographical area**

The causal link with the geographical origin is based on:

☑ reputation

☑ given quality

☐ other characteristics

Summary of the link

The link with the geographical area of the 'Jambon de Bayonne' PGI is based on its specific quality and reputation. That specific quality, namely the rounded shape, the uniform colour of its slices, the tender and succulent texture and the white, firm fat, come from the choice of raw material, the salt used and the expertise of the meat curers and operators within the sector.

The temperate oceanic climate of the Pays de l'Adour, with its hint of southern warmth, is due mainly to the combination of two elements, namely its proximity to the Atlantic Ocean and to the Pyrenees. As a result, this area in the foothills of the Pyrenees experiences mild temperatures and high levels of humidity throughout the year. Nevertheless, the climate can vary dramatically and it has often been observed that the level of relative humidity can drop from 90 % to 20 % in a few hours. This phenomenon is particular to, and typical of, the Adour basin. In order to explain it, geographers refer to the Foehn effect. This is when a warm, dry wind moves downwards along a mountainside, from south to north. When this occurs in Adour, the level of relative humidity drops suddenly, and the temperature usually rises.

One of the specific qualities of the Adour basin lies in the nature of its subsoil, in particular the presence of rock salt. The salt deposits formed 200 million years ago at the beginning of the Mesozoic era. At the time, land subsidence was taking place in the region known today as the Aquitaine basin and it was flooded by the sea. The salt was deposited primarily in the southern half of the Aquitaine basin, specifically in the area of the Adour basin. In areas where the salt is close to the surface, extracting from the salt deposits is relatively easy. This is the case in Dax, Salies-de-Béarn and Bayonne-Mouguerre.

The Pays de l'Adour has its own unique climate, as well as a very dense hydrographic network, the characteristics of which distinguish it from surrounding areas.

Pigs are part of the historical farming tradition in south-west France. Those fattened in this region have always been heavier and fed with local cereals, including maize from the time it was brought over to Europe.

The pigs which can be used to produce 'Jambon de Bayonne' PGI are reared in an area that uses practices that pre-date medieval times. This area is recognised as an area where:

— pigs which are adapted to the production of dry-cured ham (heavier, fatter pigs) are reared;

— a production system combining pigs and cereals is used due to the local availability of cereals, particularly maize.

This process developed in a unique way as it differs entirely from the predominant pig-rearing model found in the west of France.

The area that supplies the pigs has:

— a cohesive geography and climate, which is characterised by sunlight levels and summer temperatures that favour cereal cultivation (particularly grain maize);

— a cohesive economy and population, due to the interrelation between areas that farrow and fatten pigs, as well as historic trade routes that facilitated the supply of ham from areas where pigs are fattened to areas where the ham is dried.

The traditional use of rock salt from the Adour basin to produce the 'Jambon de Bayonne' PGI is also an indicator of expertise. This rock salt, which has been extracted since ancient times from the different deposits in the Adour basin, has been used by meat curers in the region for centuries due to its purity and non-abrasive texture, which distinguishes it from sea salt. It allows for optimal ham curing without altering the product flavour.

The salt is applied in the traditional way. The ham is rubbed with dry salt. Then, in order to gradually extract the juice, it is regularly massaged according to specific expert knowledge and a particular technique.

After the salt from the Adour basin has been applied and the ham has then rested and potentially undergone heat treatment, it then enters the curing phase, before, where appropriate, being matured. The minimum production time for 'Jambon de Bayonne', from salting through to the end of the curing phase and, where appropriate, maturing, is seven months. This minimum duration allows the ham to acquire specific aromas.

'Jambon de Bayonne' PGI is characterised by:

— the uniform colour of its slices, from a light red to dark red colour, slightly marbled to marbled;

— its tender and succulent texture;

— its white fat which is uniform, hard, not greasy and does not smell rancid;

— its distinctive dry-cured aroma;

— no visual defects in the muscle, such as vein defects, leaf fat, or excess fat.

The craft of curing 'Jambon de Bayonne' is part of an old tradition that revolves around the use of specific pork, the extraction – since ancient times – of rock salt from deposits in the ground and the unique climate of the Adour basin.

This area has a climate that is particularly well suited to this preparation process. The climate is at the heart of a tradition of production which was already well established in the 16th century, both in France and in Europe, and which has continued to thrive ever since. The Foehn effect is one of its defining features, and it directly influences the ageing process of the dry-cured ham and the preservation of its tenderness by varying the level of relative humidity in the air and causing the temperature to fluctuate.

Studies which the University of Pau and Pays de l'Adour have carried out, whether historical (Chantal Lopez, 1989), geographical (Jean-Claude Jaffrezo, 1989) or geological (Raoul Deloffre, 1989, and Marie-Hélène Grimaldi, 1989), have highlighted the tradition and regional specificity of 'Jambon de Bayonne' production, which is a defining feature of the local heritage.

Its reputation stems from a combination of elements specific to the geographical area, expertise and culture of the people of this region.

It is the legacy of a craft that has been passed down the generations in farming and rural families. 'Jambon de Bayonne' was the highest-quality product within a family's food supply and farmers put a lot of care into producing it.

Initially, 'Jambon de Bayonne' was nourishment for farmers, but it subsequently became a means of barter in times of need in order to pay tithes and leases. Eventually, with the increasing number of small municipal abattoirs in villages, the production of 'Jambon de Bayonne' became a specialist craft. Pork butchers took over the production.

For over 70 years, artisanal butchers who specialised in curing meat developed a method to produce 'Jambon de Bayonne', leading to production on an industrial scale as seen today. Modern techniques, particularly those involving the use of chilling, enable production to continue all year round. This has led to the evolution and adaptation of ancestral expert knowledge into a modern means of production.

The current production method remains faithful to the traditional method that has always been used.

There are many quotes attesting to the product's renown, including the following:

Froidour, in his Mémoire du Pays de Soule of 1673, states that 'the pigs there are small but so excellent that the best ham in the kingdom comes from Soule, second only to the ham from Lahontan. It is known as Bayonne ham and it is important to note that, although the city is famous and renowned for its ham, hardly any is produced there. Ham from Labourd and Basse Navarre is sold in Bayonne, as well as a small amount of ham from Soule, which is further away.'

In the 18th century, the poet Piron playfully told the Bishop of Bayonne 'I greatly admire the ham produced in your diocese'.

At the beginning of the 19th century, the French traveller Jouy noted in l'Hermite en Province (1828) that 'in Pau, there is a significant trade in famous hams known as Bayonne ham. They are prepared in Saleis where the local spring gives the ham an exquisite taste'.

In the Livre d'Or du Jambon de Bayonne, 1991, Louis Laborde-Balen states that 'legend has it that Bayonne ham dates back to the very beginning of the modern era, when a boar, injured by two hunters, died near a saltwater spring. The following summer, the villagers discovered the boar, which was perfectly preserved at the bottom of the dried spring. The bravest among them tried the meat and found that they enjoyed the taste. Every winter since then, pig meat, and particularly ham, has been stored using salt from Salies de Béarn or other saltworks in the Adour basin'.

Electronic (URL) reference to publication of the product specification

https://info.agriculture.gouv.fr/boagri/document_administratif-20db5027-24c1-4d8c-a4d8-3239a841adb4