C/2026/3202

12.6.2026

Publication of an application for registration of a geographical indication pursuant to Article 15(4) of Regulation (EU) 2024/1143 of the European Parliament and of the Council

(C/2026/3202)

Within three months from the date of 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.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

Designations of origin and geographical indications of agricultural products

'Banski kestenov med'

EU No: PDO-HR-03402 – 13.1.2025

1. **Name(s)**

'Banski kestenov med'

2. **Geographical indication type**

PDO X PGI ☐

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

Croatia

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*

04 – DAIRY PRODUCE; BIRDS' EGGS; NATURAL HONEY; EDIBLE PRODUCTS OF ANIMAL ORIGIN, NOT ELSEWHERE SPECIFIED OR INCLUDED

0409 – Natural honey

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

'Banski kestenov med' is a honey produced by colonies of the Carniolan honey bee (*Apis mellifera carnica* Pollmann, 1879) from the nectar of the sweet chestnut (*Castanea sativa* Mill.) from the Banovina region.

Melissopalynological characteristics

In addition to pollen from the sweet chestnut (*Castanea sativa*), pollen from the following nectariferous plant species may also be present in the pollen spectrum of 'Banski kestenov med': the alder buckthorn (*Frangula alnus*), the false indigo-bush (*Amorpha fruticosa*), the common dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*), lime trees (*Tilia* spp.), species of the daisy family (*Asteraceae*), forest fruit trees (*Prunus* spp.), the black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*), maples (*Acer* spp.), the

[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).

common bird's-foot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*) and, in lower proportions, pollen from other plant species. Pollen from the following non-nectariferous plant species may also be present in the pollen spectrum: ash trees (*Fraxinus* spp.), the cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*), species of the grass family (*Poaceae*), plantains (*Plantago* spp.), maize (*Zea mays*) and docks and sorrels (*Rumex* spp.). When the proportion of pollen from non-nectariferous plant species is excluded from the total pollen count, the share of pollen from the sweet chestnut (*Castanea sativa*) in 'Banski kestenov med' within the remaining proportion of pollen from nectariferous plant species must be at least 85 %.

Organoleptic characteristics

'Banski kestenov med' has the following organoleptic characteristics:

— Appearance

Colour – from light amber to amber.

Clarity – clear.

Crystallisation – slow.

— Odour – moderately to very intense odour of chestnut flowers, wet cardboard and crushed walnut leaves.

— Taste – slightly pronounced sweetness and tartness and moderate to pronounced bitterness.

— Aroma – moderately to very persistent aroma of burnt sugar, sugar syrup, smoke and wormwood.

Physical-chemical parameters

Water content: not more than 18,0 %.

Electrical conductivity: not less than 0,80 mS/cm.

Hydroxymethylfurfural (HMF) content: not more than 15 mg/kg of honey.

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)*

Feeding of the bee colonies is prohibited while the bees are foraging on chestnut flowers. Feeding is, however, permitted in order to stimulate the development of bee colonies in early spring and during the non-foraging period. Feeding must be completed at least 14 days before foraging on chestnut flowers begins. Feeding is also permitted in late summer and early autumn in order to stock up food supplies for the bees for winter. Sugar syrup and/or sugar-and-honey cakes are permitted as feed. The feed may be produced from table sugar originating outside the defined geographical area. The dry matter content that comes from outside the defined geographical area may not exceed 50 % of the total dry matter consumed by the bee colonies over the year. The residual dry matter relates to honey produced by bee colonies from the collected nectar and/or honeydew originating in the defined geographical area. The timeframe for feeding bee colonies has been set to ensure that the feed does not impact the quality of 'Banski kestenov med' or its link with the geographical area.

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

All steps in the production of 'Banski kestenov med' (foraging and extraction) must take place in the defined geographical area.

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

To ensure the quality and traceability of the honey, it must be packaged in the defined geographical area. During transport, unsuitable (high) temperatures may alter the physico-chemical parameters and organoleptic characteristics of 'Banski kestenov med' or may cause the honey to take on undesirable extraneous odours or attract moisture from the air.

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

When placed on the market, all pre-packaging must feature the 'Banski kestenov med' logo. Along with the logo, pre-packaging must also indicate the name of the producer. In addition to the above, each item of pre-packaging must bear a stamp with an identification number. All users of the label who place a product on the market in accordance with this product specification have the right to use the stamp and the 'Banski kestenov med' logo under the same conditions.

The graphic representation of the sign includes a black logo with a transparent background. The logo consists of a black circle, within which there is a stylised spiral-shaped wooden honey dipper and the stylised sword of Count Josip Jelačić. These symbols overlap, thereby forming a visually compact whole. Beneath the circle are the words 'BANSKI KESTENOV MED' in black Cinzel font, with the word 'BANSKI' given in bold so as to further highlight the territorial link with Banovina and the aforementioned Croatian count. The logo and the text form a whole which may not be smaller than 50 x 40 mm.

Figure 1

The 'Banski kestenov med' logo



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

The geographical area of production of 'Banski kestenov med' comprises the Banovina region, including towns (Petrinja, Glina, Hrvatska Kostajnica) and municipalities (Sunja, Majur, Donji Kukuruzari, Hrvatska Dubica, Dvor, Topusko, Gvozd).

6. **Link with the geographical area**

Specificity of the geographical area

Banovina is a region forming part of Sisak-Moslavina County. It lies on the edge of the Pannonian Basin, between the River Sava and the lower stretches of the Rivers Una, Kupa and Glina. It occupies rolling foothills, including the Zrinska Gora mountain, to the south and the basin of the River Sava and its tributaries to the north and north-east. It is criss-crossed by the valleys of many small watercourses. A substantial part of its surface area is forested, particularly around Dvor and Hrvatska Kostajnica. The specificity of the defined geographical area also manifests itself in that most of the region is characterised by well-tended vegetation, a small population, extensive agriculture and large expanses devoid of industry and large economic operators, which ultimately has an effect on conservation of the environment and constitutes an important prerequisite for the development of apiculture. In chestnut stands in the Banovina region, the type of soil encountered most often is deep luvisol, with pH values ranging from 4,77 to 6,57.

In continental Croatia, the sweet chestnut is most often found in mixed or pure forests. Of the total surface area, 7 324,88 ha or 48,8 % of the chestnut stands are found in Sisak-Moslavina County, where the geographical area of production of 'Banski kestenov med' is located. Depending on the microlocality, chestnuts in Banovina begin flowering around 5 June, firstly around Budučina on land facing north-east and lastly at Šamarica around 27 July. Some trees flower for around 10 days. Toponyms associated with beekeeping are significant because they often indicate an area which was formerly rich in melliferous plants or where bee colonies were once located. Toponyms can also be indicative of traditional beekeeping practices having been pursued in a particular area or of some other apiculture-related aspects. Of the toponyms of interest for beekeeping and the production of honey in Banovina, Hrvatska Kostajnica should certainly be mentioned. The name 'Kostajnica' suggests that it derives from the word 'kostanj' (chestnut). This is supported by the fact that hills on both sides of the River Una are home to significant stands of sweet chestnut.

Specificity of the product

Apart from soil characteristics and floral composition, climatic conditions also have a considerable influence on the specificity of 'Banski kestenov med'. On the basis of melissopalynological analyses, the species of melliferous plants from which the bees collect nectar have been determined, proving the link between the honey and the defined geographical area and differences in comparison to chestnut honey from other geographical areas. A large proportion of the samples examined comprised pollen of the alder buckthorn (*Frangula alnus*), the false indigo-bush (*Amorpha fruticosa*), the common dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*), lime trees (*Tilia* spp.), species of the daisy family (*Asteraceae*), forest fruit trees (*Prunus* spp.), the black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*), maples (*Acer* spp.) and the common bird's-foot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*).

Apart from their botanical origin, the electrical conductivity of the samples was also tested. Indicator values ranging between 0,84 mS/cm and 1,80 mS/cm were determined, with an average value of 1,24 mS/cm. A comparison of the chestnut honey with chestnut honeys from other regions made it clear that the range of electrical conductivity values in those other regions was considerably broader, from 1,05 mS/cm to even as high as 2,25 mS/cm, with an average value of 1,61 mS/cm. Besides nectar, honeydew – produced by aphids and scale insects – can also be found in chestnut stands. High average electrical conductivity values are probably a consequence of the proportion of honeydew in the tested honey samples from the other regions. As a matter of fact, the presence of honeydew indirectly affects the look of the honey, i.e. its colour, which is darker than samples of honey from Banovina. The colour of most samples of 'Banski kestenov med', however, ranged from light amber to amber, and they had the odour and bitterness characteristic of the organoleptic profile of chestnut honey, as well as a typical range of electrical conductivity values, all of which highlight its distinctiveness.

Causal link between the specificity of the geographical area and the specificity of the product

'Banski kestenov med' is a product with strong links to the area from which it originates. It draws its specific characteristics from the geographical area, which includes natural forests with a high proportion of sweet chestnut (*Castanea sativa*), the largest such area in Croatia. The chestnut stands flower at different time intervals, depending on the habitats in which they are found within the geographical area of production. Thus foraging lasts for more than a month, owing to variations in altitude and aspect. In addition to this, the pedological characteristics of the soil and weather conditions have a considerable effect on the amount of nectar secreted. Acidic soils provide optimal growing conditions for the sweet chestnut, which has a positive effect on flowering and consequently on the amount of nectar secreted. By taking up water and mineral substances from the soil, the plant incorporates them into sap, the raw material from which nectar is made; this therefore has an impact on the quality of the final product – honey. Besides the type of soil, the secretion of nectar by the sweet chestnut is also influenced by weather conditions, particularly precipitation, which in the Banovina region is distributed evenly across the growing season, but especially at flowering time. As a matter of fact, alternating periods of sunshine with brief showers during the sweet chestnut's flowering time increases the relative humidity of the air, which also has a positive effect on the secretion of nectar. The optimal use of foraging resources makes it possible to produce 'Banski kestenov med' of exceptional quality. This is also evidenced by the honey's distinctive organoleptic profile, physical-chemical parameters and specific pollen spectrum, i.e. the presence of the pollen of alder buckthorn (*Frangula alnus*) and false indigo-bush (*Amorpha fruticosa*) as concomitant plant species, which differentiates 'Banski kestenov med' from chestnut honeys from the other regions where it is possible to produce them.

In addition to relief and climatic factors, significant stands of chestnut, constituting a key floral resource in the defined geographical area, have contributed towards the establishment of a distinctive type of beekeeping. The skills and knowledge of beekeepers in Banovina, in terms of their understanding and application of timely technological interventions to bee colonies and the preparation of the honey for market, guarantee the production of high-quality 'Banski kestenov med'. The knowledge and experience of the beekeepers is apparent in the special attention they pay to choosing appropriate locations for apiaries in light of the topography. Choosing south- and south-east-facing locations which are sheltered from the wind and sufficiently sunny ensures the optimal development of bee colonies. Colonies that develop under such conditions achieve an adequate level of collective activity, which ultimately manifests itself in the ingestion of nectar. Regular monitoring and surveillance of flowering and the ingestion of nectar enables timely extraction, one of the key factors in the production of quality honey which distinguishes honey from this region from the chestnut honey produced in other regions. Specifically, as the result of many years of observing the flowering of the sweet chestnut, local beekeepers are able to determine when these begin to flower and thus place bee colonies at selected locations in a timely manner in order to take advantage of the ingestion of chestnut nectar and in so doing, achieve maximum uniflority, which is consequently reflected in the honey's typical organoleptic properties. 'Banski kestenov med' is characterised by low water and HMF (hydroxymethylfurfural) content. Such water content indicates that the bees have extracted water properly during ripening of the honey and that extraction of the honey has been timed correctly by the beekeepers, thereby influencing the quality of the honey further. Honey with a low MHF content confirms that it is fresh and has not been heated to temperatures above 40 °C, ensuring that its valuable components are preserved. Local beekeepers' focus on preserving quality through the acquisition of knowledge and experience therefore has a direct effect on the chemical composition of 'Banski kestenov med'.

A combination of the above factors, including the high proportion of chestnut forests in the Banovina region, the region's protected environment and favourable micro-climate, beekeeping traditions and the skills and knowledge of local beekeepers directly affect the specific characteristics of 'Banski kestenov med'.

The specificity of 'Banski kestenov med' is based on a long-established tradition of beekeeping, with the result that the link with the defined geographical area is also strengthened by historical, traditional and cultural factors. As a matter of fact, the first written document in which the honey (and consequently also beekeeping in Banovina) is mentioned dates from as early as the year 1211 and refers to the right of a convent church to avail itself of honey. The beekeeper Milan Krizman was possibly the most important contributor towards the promotion of beekeeping in Petrinja. He was a promoter of apiculture and an innovator who built a modern beehive known as a 'krizmanka'. The first association of beekeepers in the Banovina region was the Petrinja Beekeeping Association, founded in 1952 and among those still operating today.

Reference to the publication of the product specification of the geographical indication

https://poljoprivreda.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/dokumenti/hrana/zoi-zozp-zts/Specifikacija_Banski_kestenov_med_kolovoz_2025.pdf