

## OTHER ACTS

## COMMISSION

**Publication of an amendment application pursuant to Article 6(2) of Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin for agricultural products and foodstuffs**

(2009/C 322/10)

This publication confers the right to object to the amendment application pursuant to Article 7 of Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006. Statements of objection must reach the Commission within six months after the date of this publication.

## AMENDMENT APPLICATION

**COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006****Amendment application pursuant to Article 9****'PROSCIUTTO TOSCANO'****EC No: IT-PDO-0217-1494-10.06.2005****PGI ( ) PDO ( X )****1. Heading in the specification affected by the amendment:**

- Name of product
- Description
- Geographical area
- Proof of origin
- Method of production
- Link
- Labelling
- National requirements
- Other (to be specified)

**2. Type of amendment:**

- Amendment to single document or summary sheet
  
- Amendment to specification of registered PDO or PGI for which neither the single document nor the summary sheet has been published
  
- Amendment to Specification that requires no amendment to the published Single Document (Article 9(3) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006)
  
- Temporary amendment to specification resulting from imposition of obligatory sanitary or phytosanitary measures by public authorities (Article 9(4) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006)

**3. Amendment(s):****3.1. Description of product:**

The chemical and chemico-physical characteristics of the product are specified in greater detail and the packaging methods are defined pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 510/2006.

The characteristics of the raw material are described in greater detail in order to indicate the features which must be checked by the inspection body.

The rules are laid down for affixing a metallic seal to the joints, before the start of processing, to ensure the identification and thus the traceability of the product.

In the case of trimming, the amount of meat which may extrude in relation to the top of the femur is specified more precisely to ensure that the hams will have a standard rounded shape making them easy for consumers to identify.

Finished products are branded as a further guarantee of origin and to ensure traceability.

**3.2. Method of production:**

It was considered useful to state that slicing and packaging must be done in the area of production in order to safeguard the reputation of the designated product by guaranteeing not only its authenticity but also its qualities and characteristics. 'Prosciutto Toscano' is appreciated by consumers for being 'mature', lean, with a firm texture and a well defined moistness, providing firm and solid slices. For end consumers these characteristics must be present for all types of 'Prosciutto Toscano' on the market, i.e. the product when sliced and packaged must have the same characteristics as a slice cut from a whole ham. To ensure that these requirements are met for consumers, the method of production of 'Prosciutto Toscano' stipulates that joints intended for slicing and packaging must be aged for two months longer.

The fact that joints intended for slicing and packaging may be kept as boned pieces for unspecified periods in environmental conditions which differ from those laid down could result in the development of characteristics inconsistent with those for which 'Prosciutto Toscano' is known, such as the formation of abnormal mould, unusual protein degradation with a resulting change in the protein breakdown index or even rancidity of the adipose fraction, to the extent that flavours and aromas may be produced which differ from those traditionally appreciated by consumers. Rancidity, which is encouraged by a combination of certain environmental and storage factors (including exposure to

high temperatures and the flow of air in ageing rooms), involves a serious change to the fat content which can turn yellow and become less firm, producing volatile organic compounds giving off a rancid smell. These changes can significantly alter the characteristics of the product in connection with the fat colour, its firmness and its attachment to the surface of the muscle tissue. In addition, the exposure of the meat and the fat to the air before packaging can result in high oxidation of the edible surface, turning the meat brown and drying out the surface of the exposed muscle tissue, or in limp products in the case of excess humidity.

### 3.3. Labelling:

A section is inserted on affixing the logo on the raw material and on the hams which comply with the characteristics laid down in the rules, in order to ensure traceability and monitoring throughout the production chain.

#### SUMMARY

#### COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006

#### 'PROSCIUTTO TOSCANO'

EC No: IT-PDO-0217-1494-10.06.2005

PGI ( ) PDO ( X )

This summary sets out for information purposes the main elements of the product specification.

#### 1. Responsible department in the Member State:

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#### 2. Group:

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Composition: Producers/processors ( X ) other ( )

#### 3. Type of product:

Class 1.2. Meat-based products

#### 4. Specification:

(summary of requirements under Article 4(2) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006)

#### 4.1. Name:

'Prosciutto Toscano'

#### 4.2. Description:

When released to the market, 'Prosciutto Toscano' has the following physical, organoleptic, chemical and chemico-physical characteristics: the top is rounded due to the presence of a ridge of meat which extrudes no more than 8 cm beyond the end of the femur; the weight is about 8-9 kg but never below 7,5 kg; when sliced open, the product reveals pale red to bright red meat with little fat infiltration in the muscle tissue; white subcutaneous fat with pink streaks, lean, with no delamination of the layers which are firmly attached to the underlying muscle tissue.

'Prosciutto Toscano' has a delicate but savoury taste, with a fragrant aroma as a result of the traditional methods of curing and ageing.

The chemical and chemico-physical characteristics may be summarised as follows:

Salt (expressed as NaCl)	%	max. 8,3
Muscle tissue humidity	%	max. 61,0
Protein breakdown index	%	max. 30,0
Nitrates and nitrites in total		max 95 p.p.m

#### 4.3. Geographical area:

Pig herds for the production of 'Prosciutto Toscano' must be located in the regions of Lombardy, Emilia Romagna, Marche, Umbria, Lazio and Tuscany.

'Prosciutto Toscano' is cured, sliced and packaged in the traditional area of production which covers the entire region of Tuscany.

#### 4.4. Proof of origin:

Traceability is ensured by the monitoring carried out by the inspection body throughout the production chain in compliance with Regulation (EC) No 510/2006.

#### 4.5. Method of production:

The method of production requires that the pigs born, reared and slaughtered in the regions referred to in paragraph 4.3 must not weigh less than 160 kg ( $\pm 10\%$ ) and must not be less than nine months old. 'Prosciutto Toscano' comes from fresh joints of heavy purebred pigs or those bred from the traditional Large White or Landrace species.

Immediately after butchering the joints which have been separated from the carcass are refrigerated for at least 24 hours at a temperature of between - 2 and + 2 °C. They are then trimmed. A fresh trimmed joint must not weigh less than 11,8 kg.

Before curing begins, the producer checks that the joints satisfy the requirements and affixes to each joint a metallic seal in the form of a round stainless steel tag with the embossed letters 'P.T.' and the date when curing began, shown by the month (indicated as a Roman numeral) and the year (indicated by the last two digits of the year). The seal is applied in such a way that it cannot be removed when affixed using a suitable machine.

The curing of the joints begins with salting which must occur within 120 hours after butchering. A dry salting process is employed, using salt, pepper and natural aromatic herbs. After salting the joints are left long enough to ensure proper dehydration before being washed with lukewarm water free of any disinfectants. The joints are then dried in special rooms where temperature and humidity are controlled. The final phase of the curing involves smearing the exposed part of the joint with a mix consisting of lard, wheat or rice flour, salt, pepper and natural aromatic herbs. Ageing takes place in premises specially designed to ensure a proper flow of air and a temperature of between 12 and 25 °C. During this time the hams may be ventilated and exposed to light and natural humidity, depending on the climate conditions in the area of production. The time taken to age the hams, from salting to marketing, must not be less than 10 months for hams with a final weight of 7,5-8,5 kg and not less than 12 months for hams weighing more than 8,5 kg.

'Prosciutto Toscano' intended for slicing must be aged for two months longer than the times indicated in the last paragraph, i.e. not less than 12 months for hams weighing between 7,5 and 8,5 kg and not less than 14 months for hams weighing more than 8,5 kg.

At the end of the ageing process, and in the presence of an official from the inspection body, the producer brands the hams which meet the requisite criteria with a logo bearing the words 'PROSCIUTTO TOSCANO DOP'. In order to ensure traceability throughout the various stages of production, the brand may be also include two other numbers to identify any other operators involved in the production chain.

Slicing and packaging of 'Prosciutto Toscano' must occur at the end of the ageing process, and in the area of production referred to in paragraph 4.3, in order to ensure that the different ageing times for sliced ham are complied with and that characteristics relating to the moistness and look of the meat and fat, described in paragraph 4.2, are preserved. The fact that joints intended for slicing and packaging may be kept as boned pieces for unspecified periods in environmental conditions which differ from those laid down could result in the development of characteristics inconsistent with those for which 'Prosciutto Toscano' is known, such as the formation of abnormal mould, unusual protein degradation with a resulting change in the protein breakdown index or even rancidity of the adipose fraction, to the extent that flavours and aromas may be produced which differ from those traditionally appreciated by consumers. In addition, the exposure of the meat and the fat to the air before packaging can result in high oxidation of the edible surface, turning the meat brown and drying out the surface of the exposed muscle tissue, or in limp products in the case of excess humidity.

#### 4.6. *Link:*

The features of a PDO product depend on environmental conditions and natural and human factors. In particular, the properties of the raw material are dependent on the specific designated area. In the area which is the source of the raw material, the development of livestock farming is linked to the widespread cultivation of cereal crops and to working methods which have encouraged pig farming.

The restricted area for the production of 'Prosciutto Toscano' is justified by the conditions of the area indicated in paragraph 4.3. The landscape and geographic features of Tuscany are ideal for the production of high-quality hams. The climate too, very different from that of neighbouring regions, is particularly suitable for ageing the hams. It is thus a climate which is ideal for fostering a successful combination of environment and typical regional products, allowing them to mature in a slow and healthy manner. Consider the region's wine, its olive oil, its cheese and, of course, its ham.

The environmental factors are closely linked to the features of the area of production, with its cool and verdant valleys and its wooded hills which have a decisive influence on the climate and on the characteristics of the finished product. This combination of raw material/product/designation is linked to the socioeconomic development of the area.

#### 4.7. *Inspection body:*

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#### 4.8. *Labelling:*

The protected designation of origin of 'Prosciutto Toscano' must be indicated in clear and indelible lettering, easily distinguishable from any other writing on the label, and must be immediately followed by the phrase 'Denominazione di Origine Protetta' or the letters 'D.O.P.'. Nothing which is not explicitly permitted may be added. However, the use of names, trade names or private marks is permitted, other than those with a promotional purpose or likely to mislead purchasers, as is the indication of the pig farms from which the product comes, provided that the raw material comes solely from those farms. 'Prosciutto Toscano' can be released to the market within a maximum limit of 30 months after the start of the curing process of the fresh joints. 'Prosciutto Toscano' can also be released to the market as a boned product, i.e. sliced or in portions of varying size and weight. For marketing, all these types of product must be packaged in suitable food casings or containers which must be properly sealed. The branding of the product must be visible when whole boned ham is packaged. If portions of the ham are prepared, the brand must be visible on each piece. If the ham from which the portions are taken has not been branded at the end of the ageing process, it must be branded by the producer in the presence of an official from the inspection body before the ham is divided into portions.

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