

SPECIFICATION

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006 on protected geographical indications and protected designations of origin

“ Scottish Wild Salmon ”

EC No:

PDO () PGI ()

1 RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT IN THE MEMBER STATE

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2 GROUP

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Composition: Producers/processors () Other ()

3 TYPE OF PRODUCT

Class

Group 1.7: Fresh fish, molluscs and crustaceans and fish based products.

4 SPECIFICATION

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

4.1 Name:

“Scottish Wild Salmon”

4.2 Description:

Scottish Wild Salmon is the name given to the pelagic fish of the species *Salmo Salar* which are caught at in-river fisheries and coastal fisheries throughout Scotland and up to 1,500 metres off the Scottish Coast.

Fresh Scottish Wild Salmon are bright silver, with a dark blue back and firm, with scales intact. The flesh is firm and deep pink. They have a very fresh fish smell and are in excellent condition throughout the season when they are moist and full of taste. Scottish Wild Salmon is distinguishable from other Salmon types as it has perfect markings, no distortion to its tail, fins or head and has good muscle tone and is firm in texture as a result of the distance travelled by the fish. Scottish Wild Salmon is free from artificial colouring or chemicals.

There is no specific size range as it is a wild product and growth will be affected by the varying conditions. However, wild Scottish salmon would normally be 1.5 kg and above and can grow up to 20 kg. The fish are silver on the outside and have deep pink firm flesh on the inside. They are sold fresh, whole and boxed in ice.

The boxing in ice usually takes place at Fishing Stations prior to sending to markets, and can take place at any fishing station in Scotland.

4.3 Geographical area:

The geographical area is the whole of Scotland, including an area up to 1,500 metres off the coast.

4.4 Proof of origin:

The rights to fish for salmon and freshwater fish in Scotland are privately owned. Fishing for salmon and sea trout without the legal right, or written permission from a person having such a right, is a criminal offence. Fishing for all other freshwater fish without the right or written permission is, in general, a civil offence.

When the catch has been made, fishermen record information including numbers caught, weights, location and fishing method as soon as they reach shore. Catch statistics information is collected by both the Scottish Government and the relevant District Fishery Boards (which are set up under the terms of the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries legislation). This information is recorded on Scottish Government Marine Scotland databases. It is a legal requirement to ensure that owners record and submit details of their catches to both the Scottish Government and relevant District Fishery Board.

The enforcement of the law relating to salmon and freshwater fishing in Scotland is facilitated by the [Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries \(Consolidation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2003](#) as amended.

This information is evidence that the product was caught within the geographical area. Scottish Wild Salmon are sold to fish merchants and fish processors, by a direct deal with the merchant/processor. The fishermen record which processors have bought their fish to further ensure traceability throughout the supply chain. The

fish processors and merchants also keep detailed records of whom they bought from and who they sold the fish to. These records are kept by the processors to comply with EU legislation on the traceability of fish products.

4.5 Method of production:

The Atlantic salmon are anadromous fish which begin life in freshwater, they migrate to the sea and then return to fresh water – the same river where they were born – to breed. Therefore, the flesh is firm due to the fact that they have to swim thousands of miles back to their home rivers in Scotland. The fish are therefore in peak physical condition and are recognised as excellent for eating fresh or smoking to make the famous Scottish wild smoked salmon recognised by many of Europe's top chefs and restaurants.

Salmon spawn in late autumn and winter, in rivers and streams, providing the flow of water is good. Once the eggs have hatched, usually the following spring, they become alevins and feed off their yolk sacs while remaining in the gravel. Following emergence from the gravel they become fry, establish territories for feeding and eventually develop into parr.

After 1, 2 or 3, and sometimes 4 or 5 years, the parr change in appearance and behaviour and migrate downstream in the spring as smolts. A proportion of parr do not develop into migratory smolts; many, particularly male fish, remain in freshwater, become sexually mature, and may take part in spawning.

Once in the sea, the salmon grows much faster, feeding on small pelagic fish such as capelin and sandeels and also pelagic crustaceans. The main feeding grounds are considered to be off western Greenland and in the Norwegian Sea. After one or more years they begin their migration back to where they were born.

The fish that return after only one winter at sea are referred to as grilse. Others that spend two or more winters at sea are known as salmon, and generally weigh 1.5 kg and above, although they may weigh as much as 20 kg. Following spawning, the fish are referred to as kelts, and most will die.

The delicate composition of the fish requires them to be landed promptly. The boats return to their local harbours and from there, after initial packing in ice they are sent to market.

There are various methods of net fishing in Scotland. These are Net and Coble, Cruives and Fixed Engine fisheries.

Net and Coble

The definition in The Salmon (Definition of Methods of Net Fishing and Construction of Nets) (Scotland) Regulations 1992, as amended by SI 1993/257 and SI 1994 111(4), is as follows: "fishing for or taking salmon by net and coble means the use of a sweep net, paid out from a boat, and worked from the bank or shore or from waters adjacent to the bank or shore, whereby the salmon are surrounded by the net and drawn to the bank or shore, provided that-

(i) the net and any warps are not made or held stationary, nor allowed to remain stationary, nor allowed to drift with the current or tide, but are both paid out and hauled in as quickly as practicable and kept in unchecked motion under the effectual command and control of the fisherman, for the purpose of enclosing the salmon within the sweep of the net and drawing them to the bank or shore;

(ii) no stakes, dykes, other obstructive devices or other nets are used in association with the net;

(iii) the water is not disturbed by throwing of stones or other objects, or splashing or other activity in order to drive salmon into the area to be swept by the net;

(iv) the net shall not come within 50 metres of any other such net already being paid out or hauled, until the last mentioned net has been fully hauled in to the bank or shore; and

(v) the net is not designed or constructed for the purpose of catching fish by enmeshing them

Cruives

A Cruive is an old form of fish trap, operated in rivers, and at one time, estuaries, consisting of an enclosure of stakes or wicker-work and sometimes set in a rubble dyke. As developed for salmon fishing they consist of a more-or-less rectangular box-trap, with inscales, set in a stone dyke across a river. The use of cruives in estuaries has been firmly prohibited since the 15th century. Cruives can only be operated under special grant from the Crown.

Fixed Engine

Bag Net, fly net or other stake net

Fixed engines include bag nets, fly nets and other stake nets. Bag nets are fished usually in deep water and are held in position by floats and anchors. Stake nets are usually fished on sandy shores into which the stakes which support the gear are driven.

The definition in The Salmon (Definition of Methods of Net Fishing and Construction of Nets) (Scotland) Regulations 1992, as amended by SI 1993/257 and SI 1994 111(4) is, "fishing for or taking salmon by bag net, fly net or other stake net means the use of a fish trap (including the use of a landing net to remove salmon from such a trap) consisting of one or more fish courts and associated inscales and wings, together with a leader net designed to lead the salmon into the trap; the whole of which is fixed or moored to the shore or seabed; provided that -

(i) no part of the bag net, fly net or other stake net except mooring warps and anchors shall extend seawards beyond 1500 metres from the mean low water mark; and

(ii) no part of the net or trap is designed or constructed for the purpose of catching fish by enmeshing them."

The Regulations also state that, "No monofilament netting shall be used in the construction of any net used in fishing for or taking salmon.", and "Any net used in fishing for or taking salmon shall have a mesh size of not less than 90mm as measured in accordance with regulation 7."

Haaf and Poke Nets

Other fixed engines, used in the Solway Firth, include haaf nets and poke nets. The haaf is fixed within a rectangular frame, and is held in the current by the netsman, who wades in the estuary. The net is lifted when a salmon enters it. Several fishermen may work together in line abreast. Poke nets consist of a series of pockets of net mounted in lines on poles and set across the tide. Fish are trapped in the pockets as the tides recede.

The fisheries operate using traditional methods in rivers estuaries and off the Scottish coast.

The Scottish Wild Salmon are brought aboard from the nets. Once on board, the Scottish Wild Salmon are boxed to maintain quality and freshness.

Back on land the Scottish Wild Salmon are classified by size, boxed and iced, in branded polystyrene boxes then kept in refrigeration until being transported by refrigerated lorry to merchants, fish markets and/or fish processors directly.

4.6 Link:

A celebrated symbol of Scotland since ancient times, the Atlantic salmon begins life in freshwater, heads downstream to the ocean and, when fully grown, returns to the same river to give birth. Scottish river systems support one of the largest and most diverse of the Atlantic salmon resources in Europe, with nearly 400 salmon rivers supporting many hundreds of populations, each of which is genetically distinct. Scotland supports some of the most important commercial and recreational salmon fisheries in the world.

The characteristics of the Scottish Wild Salmon are linked to the geographical area on the basis of the tradition of catching and processing. These methods are well documented traditional fishing practices.

The Scottish Wild Salmon is drawn to the geographical area by its environment, i.e. the conditions available to it. Salmon are native and return to their natal rivers where they spent first 2-3 years of their life. They then have spent between 1-3 years at sea in Arctic waters off Canada and Greenland. Scotland's geology and geography with temperate climate, high quality water and spate rivers contribute to fit healthy fish which contribute to many distinct populations with unique run times covering most of the year. The method of capture is kind to the fish as it by entrapment and they are alive when removed from the water.

The link with the geographical area is that fishing for the salmon takes place when the fish are moving to return to their natal home waters where they were spawned. Scotland is renowned for its clean pristine water and Scotland's water environments

are places of clean, cold lochs and vibrant rivers that provide sources of drinking water, habitat for fish, birds and other animals, a focus for leisure and recreation and important resources for many industries. The use of Scotland's clean and pure waters in the production of Scotch whiskey is world renowned. The wonderful harvest from Scotland's rivers, lochs and coastal waters continue to be one of Scotland's main attractions for many visitors, indigenous diners and enthusiastic cooks. This is essential for Scottish Wild Salmon as the fish will only enter clean waters around the Scottish coastline.

Along with the environment, the characteristics of the Scottish Wild Salmon are linked to the geographical area on the basis of the tradition of catching and processing. These methods are well documented traditional fishing practices. Fishing for Scottish Wild Salmon is a vital part of Scotland's heritage, the skill of locating and catching the fish has been long established in Scotland and has been handed down over the generations. As a result, a number of active Scottish net fisheries remain.

Salmon netting has been in existence in Scotland for hundreds of years. Indeed the salmon has been, and continues to be, an iconic species. Reference can be found to a sweep net fishery on the Tweed around 1160. The earliest actual record of salmon legislation can be found in 1424. In terms of fixed engine fisheries, these were lawful within estuaries until the early 19th century. At its peak, salmon net fisheries probably employed around 3000 people. Sadly, however, most of Scotland's salmon netting stations have been closed in the last 25 years, although a number of active netting stations remain. It is important to note that netting constitutes the only lawful method of harvesting Wild Scottish Salmon, for the enjoyment of consumers.

Essentially, the fishing methods have been unchanged for centuries. This tradition continues; fishing techniques and expert knowledge have been passed through the generations, although modern technology is now used in terms of improved boat engines and power washers for cleaning the nets (as opposed to the use of a hand "switch" – a length of cane with a wire loop bound to the end). The addition of modern technology means that nets can be cleaned more quickly in readiness for changing. Additionally, improved engineering means that engines are reliable, improving the safety of vessel and crew. In the case of Fixed Engines, the distance travelled along the coast, in order to operate their fixed traps, has increased over the decades. The geographical limits of the fish catching operations are all within the 1500 metres of the Scottish coast; this therefore well describes the fish catching area.

Historically the fish, also known as "bars of silver" or the "king of fish" were a valuable product – this continues today. As food, they were sometimes cured (smoked) and exported over large distances. In the days before modern refrigeration methods, some fishing villages had "ice houses" in which the fish were processed. Indeed, there is one such building at Usan Salmon station, near Montrose. Beside the small harbour is a large vaulted mid 19th century icehouse. Salmon, packed on ice, were once sent by sailing ship from here to Billingsgate Market in London. The site was previously used as a saltpan. The icehouse, to this day has a grass roof, which results in a cooling effect in the building when rain fall is subsequently evaporated.

Historically, the main market for Scottish Wild Salmon was Billingsgate in London. Today Scottish Wild Salmon that have been smoked are sold at farmers markets, across the length and breadth of Scotland, as well as the fact that a proportion of

fresh fish is exported abroad. Fish have also been supplied to the Royal household in the past in addition to supplying to both the 2005 G8 summit at Gleneagles, top chefs and restaurants e.g. Harrods, Fortnum and Mason and top chef Richard Corrigan who owns Bentleys Oyster Bar in Piccadilly, London to name but a few.

It is widely regarded that Scottish Wild Salmon has an exceptional flavour and texture. Forman & Field Salmon Smokers in London consider that when looking for the best quality salmon “only wild Scottish salmon has the historic reputation” to match the quality being sought. Scottish Wild Salmon represents the finest of Scottish produce, a fact recognised worldwide by both domestic customers and top chefs and restaurants. Buyers and customers of Scottish Wild Salmon often praise the high quality of the product.

There are also a number of social aspects regarding salmon netting. Each summer, people come to the various netting stations. Most are intrigued and interested in the process and netsmen often find themselves taking time to educate the public on salmon netting. It is also interesting to note that there has been an increased profile in relation to salmon netting recently, as a result of various television programmes and media articles - Landward, North Tonight, Catching the Tide (<http://www.left-luggage.co.uk/catchingthetide.com/Welcome.html>) Indeed, at a time when environmental aspects are so important in the food chain, it can be argued that true Scottish Wild Salmon meet the criteria in full.

Over the centuries fishing has been an important industry for Scotland. Scotland's freshwater fish populations and communities are of international natural heritage value. Despite declines in catches in recent years, Scotland's salmon fishery remains of international importance. They are the basis for fisheries of global renown. Scotland's river systems support one of the largest and most diverse Atlantic salmon resources in Europe. Scotland is among the largest sea fishing nations in Europe with 66 per cent of the landings into the UK and has over 50,000 km of rivers, many of which have wild Atlantic salmon and sea trout, and more than 30,000 lochs and ponds.

4.7 Inspection body:

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4.8 Labelling: