

“ნინოწმინდის თაფლი/NINOTSMINDIS TAPHLI”

Registered in Georgia as a Geographical Indication,
Registration № 21, Registration date: 01/10/2020¹

PRODUCT TYPE FOR WHICH REGISTRATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION IS
REQUESTED:

Class 1.4 - Other products of animal origin – honey.

NAME AND ADDRESS OF APPLICANT: RK "Kody"; Ioane Petritsi St. №2, 0800,
Akhaltsikhe, Georgia; email: skakody@gmail.com; mobile: +995593903060.

1. NAME: “ნინოწმინდის თაფლი/NINOTSMINDIS TAPHLI”

2. PRODUCT DESCRIPTION:

“ნინოწმინდის თაფლი/Ninotsmindis Taphli” is a food product made by honey bees (*Apis mellifera caucasica*) from flowers of plants of the Javakheti Plateau, the territory situated within the borders of Ninotsminda Municipality. “ნინოწმინდის თაფლი/Ninotsmindis Taphli”, made from the plants of the valley of the Subalpine and Alpine zones, is collected in the period of June-July. It is polyfloral honey and the content of pollen in it is distributed in the following proportions:

- white clover (Lat. *Trifolium repens*)- more than 55% ,
- borage (Lat. *Borago officinalis*) , burdock (Lat. *Arctium lappa*), *thistle* (Lat. *Cirsium*), no more than 30% in total;
- other - 15%.

¹ The list of Georgian AOs and GIs - https://www.sakpatenti.gov.ge/en/state_registry

The harvest can be taken 2-3 times from one beekeeping point in said period, due to which honey can be of various colours, from almost colourless to light amber, in rare cases, chestnut.

“ნინოწმინდის თავლი/Ninotsmindis Taphli” has the following pronounced characteristics:

- Smell: characteristic of honey, from low to medium, without any strong tones;
- Aroma: floral, boiled fruit;
- Taste: moderately sweet, with a honeycomb tone, of moderately pronounced aroma intensity.

According to consistence, “ნინოწმინდის თავლი/Ninotsmindis Taphli” can be viscous, creamy, fully or partly crystallized.

“ნინოწმინდის თავლი/ Ninotsmindis Taphli” is characterized by natural tendency to be crystallized, which is caused by its purity and quality, so it can be sold in liquid or solidified (crystallized) form.

During crystallization “ნინოწმინდის თავლი/ Ninotsmindis Taphli” is transformed into white or ivory creamy, fine-grained, creamy or solid mass. It contains more than 72% of inversed sugars and has low indicator of "Diastase number" – 8-10, in Schade Scale. The permissible amount of water in honey shall be no more than 19.5%, and electrical conductivity – no more than 0.8 ml/cm.

The content of water-insoluble substances shall be no more than 0.06g/100g, acidity shall not exceed 6.2 meq/1000g honey. HMF (Hydroxymethylfurfural) – no more than - 12 mg/kg.

3. GEOGRAPHICAL AREA:

“ნინოწმინდის თაფლი/Ninotsmindis Taphli” production area is the territory of Ninotsminda Municipality.

(Ninotsminda Municipality is situated on 1950-2200 m above sea level. Its Southwestern border coincides with the Georgian-Turkish border, and the Southern – with the Georgian-Armenian border. Tsalka Municipality borders it from the North, Akhalkalaki Municipality – from the West, and Dmanisi Municipality – from the East. Area of Ninotsminda Municipality covers 1353.9 km².²

4. LINK WITH GEOGRAPHICAL AREA:

4.1. SPECIAL ENVIRONMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS

Ninotsminda Municipality is situated in South Georgia, on Javakheti volcanic Plateau, on 1950-2200 m above the sea level.

Ninotsminda Municipality is characterized with plateau continental climate: the winter is cold and characterized with a small amount of snow and the summer is cool. The temperature of the coldest month – January is -11°C, and of the warmest – August is +13°C. Annual sum of precipitations is 733 mm. The River Paravani with its small tributaries flows in the municipality. Territory of GI “ნინოწმინდის თაფლი/ Ninotsmindis Taphli” is known for abundance of lakes: Paravani, Madatapa, Khanchali Lake, Saghamo Lake, Bughdasheni lake, etc. There are a lot of groundwaters and wetlands covering area of 4000 ha. Some of the lakes and wetlands are protected within Javakheti territory.

In Ninotsminda Municipality collection of nectar and pollen by bees begins in June and continues until September. The following natural phenomena take place at that period:

² http://ninotsminda.ge/portal/alias_Ninotsminda/tabid_3491/default.aspx

- a. sharp contrast between daily and night temperatures – hot days and cold nights, which facilitates formation of nectar aromas and taste qualities.
- b. daily heat causes lake water evaporation, and at night when temperature falls down the evaporated water is condensed; due to this, the valley is covered with dew at dawn leading to nectar formation in honey plants.

Javakheti National Park was created in March 2011. It includes the territory located between the administrative borders of Akhalkalaki and Ninotsminda municipalities, and its area is 14.206.83 ha. The National Park territory is protected and farming, use of pesticides, hunting and fishing are prohibited there.

Flora of Ninotsminda Municipality is rich and manifold as a result of special natural conditions. Most part of the territory is without forest and covered with mountain and meadow-valley plants. Water and bog plants are spread around the lakes and boggy hollows. Subalpine and Alpine meadows are situated on more than 2000 m above the sea level. Flora of this place is characterized with rare endemic varieties: only wetlands are characterized by 474 varieties, united in 235 genera and 62 families. Javakheti Plateau is rich in 171 endemic and conventionally endemic varieties, which indicates high biodiversity and especially natural conditions of the region.

There are the following honey plant varieties in Ninotsminda Municipality: sedum (*Sedum caucasicum*), gladiolus (*Gladiolus dzavacheticus*), birdsfoot trefoil (*Lotus caucasicus*), lady's mantle (*Alchemilla georgica*, *Alchemilla subsplendes*), white clover (*Trifolium repens*), cruciferae (*Brassicaceae*), greater burdock (*Arctium lappa* L.), leguminosae (*Fabaceae*), largest masterwort (*Astrantia maxima* pall), mint (*Lamiaceae*), pink family (*Caryophyllaceae*), giant scabious or yellow scabious (*Cephalaria gigantea*), thistles (*Cirsium simplex*), centaurea (*Centaurea macrocephala* Muss), yarrows (*Achillea sedelmeyeriana*), melilot (*Melilotus offi-*

cinalis (L.) pall), Javakheti lucerne (Medicago dzhawakhetica), blueweed (Echium vulgare), etc.

All the above-described natural phenomena, soil, protected territories, nectar formed from diverse flora and endemic plants, its aromas create the special environment where unique “ნინოწმინდის თაფლი/Ninotsmindis Taphli” is produced. In the process of identification of the link with the geographical area, organoleptic analysis shall be taken into consideration, visual, taste and smell identifications and impressions are directly linked with the geographical area of the origin of honey.

4.2 REPUTATION

Honey produced in Ninotsminda Municipality is well-known from times immemorial for Samtskhe-Javakheti population, and it is traditionally recognized in the region. Famous Georgian Turkologist, researcher of the "*Great Deftor of Gurjistan Vilayet*", professor Mikheil Svanidze, in his book "Agriculture of South-Western Georgia of the 16th Century" (page 101), notes: "Beekeeping was very advanced in Samtskhe-Saatabago, as well (the territory of the present-day Ninotsminda Municipality was called Samtskhe-Saatabago Akhalkalaki Liva Akshehiri region in the 16th c.). Development of beekeeping here was encouraged by favorable climatic factors and rich nourishing bases of local flora – fruit trees and other honey plants. Regarding beekeeping in Samtskhe-Saatabago Prince Vakhushti wrote – "bees and various kinds of high quality honey are in abundance" (Vakhushti, "Description of the Kingdom of Georgia", page 745); French traveler G. Chardin also noted the same (G. Chardin, "Travels to Persia and other Eastern Countries", page 270)". According to Mikheil Svanidze's research: beekeeping was developed in the 16th century, in 702 villages of 711 villages of Samtskhe-Saatabago, where 91576 beehives were placed, wherefrom 686820 kg honey was produced annually. On average 3.6 kg honey was produced in one household. We are interested in the data of Samtskhe-Saatabago Akhalkalaki Liva Akshehiri region, which are

as follows: "beekeeping was practiced in all 45 local villages, where 3239 beehives were placed, and 48585 kg honey was produced annually. Household quantity was 605, and honey production per household was 5.3 kg. Akshehri Region included the territories of present-day Akhalkalaki and Ninotsminda municipalities and it is described in "Akhalkalaki Javakhetisai" as follows: "Akshehri Region included Akhalkalaki Plateau, from Javakheti Range to Mtkvari Canyon. According to area, this was the largest region in Javakheti with Numerous villages".³

In 2021 “ნინოწმინდის თავლი/Ninotsmindis Taphli” was awarded the silver medal in Quality Awards nomination at the international exhibition of honey in London - “London Honey Awards 2021”.⁴

5. HONEY PRODUCTION:

The beehives for “ნინოწმინდის თავლი/Ninotsmindis Taphli” production shall be placed in Ninotsminda Municipality area, on places safe from bee infectious diseases.

Beehives transportation is permitted from other municipalities to Ninotsminda in June-August, and from Ninotsminda to the other municipalities – in February-May. When beehives are placed in “ნინოწმინდის თავლი/Ninotsmindis Taphli” area, to avoid mixing honey obtained in another region with “ნინოწმინდის თავლი/ Ninotsmindis Taphli”, the following requirements shall be met: 1) Hahnemann grid shall be placed in each beehive between nest-case and product (honey) case to avoid laying eggs by the queen bee in the honeycombs of the product case; 2) All frames full of honey in the product cases of beehives transferred to Ninotsminda Municipality from another region, obtained in another

³ http://www.dzeglebi.ge/statiebi/istoria/axalqalaqi_javaxetisai1.html

⁴ <https://www.londonhoneyawards.com/awards-results-2021/cooperative-rk-kondy/>

geographical area, shall be replaced with dry (empty) frames (honeycombs) and honey-product shall be squeezed only from these honeycombs; 3) The movement for any purpose of honey-frames from nest-case to product-case by beekeeper is prohibited.

Honeycombs removal from beehives and transportation to the workshop shall be executed without their pollution.

The workshop where honey is squeezed shall be equipped and shall satisfy the sanitary-hygienic requirements defined by the legislation. At the workshop, beeswax shall be removed from waxed honeycombs filled with honey. Honey shall be squeezed, filtered, homogenized and placed in special vessels intended for food product storage.

„ნინოწმინდის თავლი/Ninotsmindis Taphli“ shall be packed only in glass jars. Each consignment (lot) of obtained honey shall satisfy all requirements of these specifications.

6. CONFIRMATION OF ORIGIN

Business operator interested to use GI “ნინოწმინდის თავლი/Ninotsmindis Taphli” is obliged to:

1. Produce honey within the perimeter of the borders of Ninotsminda Municipality;
2. Before squeezing honey, fill out a declaration about the number of local beehives, indicating the time, quantity and exact location of each one, as well as the amount of obtained honey, including honey which can be qualified as GI “ნინოწმინდის თავლი/Ninotsmindis Taphli”;
3. Ensure the visit of a representative of cooperative "Kody" to the beehives location, show him the workshop with its equipment, submit documents about its quality, compliance and safety, and notes made in the journal;

4. Each business operator is obliged to prepare an annual declaration about his own honey reserve. Data about the origin of all types of honey, its quantity, delivery and putting in the trade network shall be entered in the registration journal.

The results of product analysis and organoleptic tasting are also used for to confirm the origin.

After the confirmation of the origin and compliance of “ნინოწმინდის თაფლი/Ninotsmindis Taphli”, a written permission shall be issued for the use of Geographical Indication “ნინოწმინდის თაფლი/Ninotsmindis Taphli” wherein specific consignment (lot) and amount of honey shall be indicated.

7. CONTROL

The internal control of “ნინოწმინდის თაფლი/Ninotsmindis Taphli” compliance with specifications shall be carried out by cooperative "Kody", and external control – by the LEPL National Food Agency of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia.