

**Publication of an application pursuant to Article 50(2)(b) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs**

(2015/C 224/09)

This publication confers the right to oppose the application pursuant to Article 51 of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council <sup>(1)</sup>.

PRODUCT SPECIFICATION OF A TRADITIONAL SPECIALITY GUARANTEED

**‘ПАСТЪРМА ГОВЕЖДА’ (PASTARMA GOVEZHDA)**

**EU No: BG/TSG/0007/01255 – 25.8.2014**

**BULGARIA**

**1. Name(s) to be registered**

‘Пастърма говежда’ (Pastarma govezhda)

**2. Type of product**

Class 1.2. Meat products (cooked, salted, smoked, etc.)

**3. Grounds for the registration**

3.1. *Whether the product:*

- results from a mode of production, processing or composition corresponding to traditional practice for that product or foodstuff
- is produced from raw materials or ingredients that are those traditionally used.

‘Pastarma govezhda’ results from the traditional method used in the production processes of salting, maturing and drying during which complex microbiological, physico-chemical and biochemical processes occur in the meat ingredient. During drying certain parameters are maintained: air temperature and humidity creating favourable conditions for the development of the country-specific micrococci (*M. varians*) and lactobacilli (*L. plantarum*, *L. casei*). These processes help achieve a good structure and pleasant aroma and taste in the finished product.

3.2. *The name:*

- has been traditionally used to refer to the specific product
- identifies the traditional character or specific character of the product

The name ‘Pastarma govezhda’ is specific in itself because it has a centuries-long history and is known throughout the country. Due to its popularity the name has entered into common use without the geographical region influencing the product’s quality or characteristics.

The word ‘pastarma’ in the name ‘Pastarma govezhda’ is of Turkic origin and means salted and pressed dried meat (*Entsiklopedichen rechnik na chuzhdite dumi v balgarskia ezik* (Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Foreign Words in Bulgarian), MAG 77, Sofia, 1996). That method of processing and preserving meat was brought to the territory of what is now Bulgaria in the 7th century AD by the Proto Bulgarians, who belonged to the Turko-Altai language family.

**4. Description**

4.1. *Description of the product to which the name under point 1 applies, including its main physical, chemical, microbiological or organoleptic characteristics showing the product’s specific character (Article 7(2) of this Regulation)*

‘Pastarma govezhda’ is a specific dried raw meat product with the taste and aroma of mature beef without any spices and without foreign flavours.

It is a pressed meat product from uncomminuted fresh beef and auxiliary ingredients produced through salting, drying and pressing, and is suitable for direct consumption.

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 343, 14.12.2012, p. 1.

#### Physical properties – shape and dimensions

'Pastarma govezhda' is in pieces of a flattened oblong shape, with no specific dimensions.

The flattened form specific to the product is achieved by several pressings in wooden-panel presses, whilst drying.

#### Chemical properties

- water content does not exceed 50 % of the overall mass;
- cooking salt: 3,5-4,5 % of the total weight;
- nitrites (residual amount in the finished product): not more than 50 mg/kg;
- pH not less than 5,4.

#### Organoleptic properties

##### External appearance and colour:

- The outer surface is smooth, pressed muscle tissue of a grey-brown colour, while the fat is cream-coloured. A fine coating of white sausage mould is accepted.

##### Cross-section:

- The muscle tissue is dark brown to brown-red, with a darker hue at the edges, whereas the fat is cream-coloured.

Consistency: dense and elastic.

'Pastarma govezhda' may be marketed whole or sliced, vacuum-packed, in cellophane or in modified-atmosphere packaging.

#### 4.2. Description of the production method of the product to which the name under point 1 applies that the producers must follow including, where appropriate, the nature and characteristics of the raw materials or ingredients used, and the method by which the product is prepared (Article 7(2) of this Regulation)

The following raw materials and auxiliary ingredients are used for the production of 'Pastarma govezhda' finished product:

##### Meat

- 100 kg fresh beef round, shoulder or fillet with pH 5,6-6,2, well-formed with gristle removed, in pieces with no specific dimensions.

Cooking salt: 3-6 kg

or

Salting mixture: 3-6 kg of cooking salt, 40 g of antioxidant, i.e. ascorbic acid (E300), 100 g of potassium nitrate (E252) or 85 g of sodium nitrate (E251), 500 g of refined granulated sugar.

Twine: permitted for use with food.

##### Production method:

The meat is boned, leaving the individual muscle groups intact. The meat is cleaned of blood, sinews or fasciae and formed in oblong flattened pieces with no specific dimensions.

The formed pieces are salted with salt or salting mixture, as per formulation. The salted pieces are tightly arranged in clean containers suitable for maturation. They are placed in a cold store with an air temperature of between 0 °C and 4 °C. After 3 to 4 days, the arrangement of the pieces is reversed (the top and bottom pieces are swapped) and they are left for another 3 to 6 days under the same conditions until they are evenly salted. After salting, the pastarma is immersed in plain cold water until the meat develops a pleasant salty taste. When the process is complete, a hanging loop made of twine is applied to each piece and the pieces are hung on wooden and/or metal frames (rods) arranged on wheeled sausage racks. The pieces are not allowed to come into contact with one another. They are left hanging on the rack to drain for up to 24 hours at an air temperature not exceeding 12 °C. When drained, they are placed in natural or air-conditioned drying chambers. Drying takes place at an air temperature of 12-17 °C and a relative humidity of 70-85 %. During drying, complex physico-chemical, biochemical or

microbiological processes occur and the raw meat becomes a ready-to-eat product. During drying, the pastarma is pressed several times in order to develop a denser consistency and smooth surface. Before they are pressed, the individual pieces must be sorted according to thickness. Initial pressing takes place when the pieces of pastarma have dried slightly and a slight crust can be felt on their surface. Usually, 2-3 pressings take place, the first being 3-4 days after draining. Pressing lasts between 12 and 24 hours. The whole drying process lasts for 25-30 days – depending on the size of the pieces of meat – until a dense elastic consistency is achieved.

#### 4.3. Description of the key elements establishing the product's traditional character (Article 7(2) of this Regulation)

In 1930, Prof. G. Dikov claims in the textbook *Higiiena na mesoto* (Meat hygiene) that in Bulgaria beef has been processed into pastarma through salting and drying from time immemorial. Over Bulgaria's thousand-year history 'Pastarma govezhda' embodies the wisdom of Bulgarians, who are practical, yet demanding with regard to food. That is why this product has a salty taste and the genuine colour and smell of meat; it is long-lasting and keeps easily.

In his book *Iz stopanskoto minalo na Gabrovo* (From Gabrovo's economic past) (1929) Dr P. Tsonchev elaborates on the technological use of carcasses of bovine animals in the region 150 years ago. 'On average 70 kg of pastarma can be produced from an ox of 250 kg...'

The handcrafted production of 'Pastarma govezhda' in the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century was typically carried out seasonally in natural drying chambers in the mountainous regions where the weather conditions were suitable. The traditional production method characterised by the drying process is what has made the product a Bulgarian speciality. During drying, certain parameters are maintained: air temperature and humidity, creating favourable conditions for the development of the country-specific micrococci (*M. varians*) and lactobacilli (*L. plantarum*, *L. casei*), which give this product its characteristic taste (Valkova, K. *Tehnologia na mesnite produkti* (Meat products production methods), Plovdiv, 2005; Boshkova, K., *Mikrobiologia na mesoto, ribata i yaytsata* (Microbiology of meat, fish and eggs), Plovdiv, 1994). Due to its popularity and the advent of air-conditioned drying chambers which maintain the natural environment drying parameters, the production of 'Pastarma govezhda' has spread to all regions in the country and become industrialised, while the quality characteristics and the recipe of the product have been preserved intact right up to the present day.

The first production and trade standards for 'Pastarma govezhda' were published in 1942 by the Supreme Institute of Veterinary Hygiene and Control of Animal Products. In describing the production process Dr M. Yordanov and T. Girginov interpreted the jargon used in the past: 'drying and pressing are repeated until the product is completely ready — the traditional producers used the word "baked".'

The composition and the quality requirements for 'Pastarma govezhda' were standardised for the first time in 1955 in Bulgarian State Standard BDS 2014 55 (Beef and buffalo-meat pastarma). Rules and standards for the technological process ensuring this high-quality product have been established. The production method for 'Pastarma govezhda' was described in *Sbornik tehnologicheski instruksii po mesnata promishlenost* (Collected articles on the technological instructions in the meat industry) (1958), *Proizvodstvo i plasment na mesni produkti* (Production and marketing of meat products) (1963) and *Sbornik tehnologichni instruksii za proizvodstvo na mesni proizvedenia* (Collected articles on the technological instructions for the production of meat products) (1980), the composition and method of preparation having been kept unchanged over the years. In his memoirs Dr Chilingirov, a long-serving specialist at the Rodopa meat factory in Shumen in the 1960s, stated: 'The main traditional production method has been fully preserved despite the modern technical equipment and air-conditioned chambers'.

---