# APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION OF DESIGNATION OF ORIGIN / GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION<sup>1)</sup> FOR AN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCT OR FOODSTUFF

## I. Applicant:

## 1. Name or first name and surname:

Kółko Rolnicze w Szydłowie [Machinery Ring in Szydłów], Spółdzielnia Producentów Owoców "DOBRYSAD" w Szydłowie ["DOBRYSAD" Fruit Producers Cooperative in Szydłów] and Stowarzyszenie Producentów Owoców w Szydłowie [Fruit Producers Association in Szydłów].

## 2. Seat or residence and address:

Kółko Rolnicze w Szydłowie, ul. Polna 1, 28-225 Szydłów Spółdzielnia Producentów Owoców "DOBRYSAD" w Szydłowie, ul. Rynek 27, 28-225 Szydłów Stowarzyszenie Producentów Owoców w Szydłowie, ul. Rynek 2, 28-225 Szydłów

## 3. Mailing address:

Spółdzielnia Producentów Owoców "DOBRYSAD" w Szydłowie, ul. Rynek 27, 28-225 Szydłów phone: 501569101 fax: 041 35 45 275 e-mail: biuro@dobrysad.com.pl

## 4. Person acting on behalf of the applicant:

Kazimierz Zarzycki – President of the "DOBRYSAD" Fruit Producers Cooperative in Szydłów Stanisław Wojterski – President of the Machinery Ring in Szydłów Zbigniew Laskowski – President of the Fruit Producers Association in Szydłów

## 5. Group:

The group consists of producers – farmers associated in three organisations: the Machinery Ring in Szydłów, the Fruit Producers Cooperative in Szydłów and the Fruit Producers Association in Szydłów. Currently, these organisations include 88 producers.

## **II. Specifications**

## 1. Name:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1)</sup> Delete as appropriate.

'Śliwka szydłowska'

# 2. Application for registration of:

Please mark [X] if the applicant is seeking to register the name referred to in point 1 of the specifications as a designation of origin or geographical indication.

- (1) designation of origin
- (2) geographical indication

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# 3. Category:

Please specify the category to which the agricultural product or foodstuff belongs). Class 1.6. Fruit, vegetables and cereals, fresh or processed

# 4. Description:

'Śliwka szydłowska' is an unpitted or pitted prune which has undergone the process of drying and smoking in the manner described in point 7.

The prune's shape depends on the variety and may range from oblate to prolate. The fruit is characterised by its uniform, elastic flesh and has a very pure and very intense taste and smoked aroma. The prune is also characterised by its very wrinkled but shiny skin with a dark blue sheen.

The size of 'śliwka szydłowska' depends on the variety of the plum used and the weight ranges from 50 to 160 prunes per kg of fruit. 'Śliwka szydłowska' is characterised by a high water content that at the time of sale is between 25-45%.

# 5. Geographical area:

'Śliwka szydłowska' is produced in the Szydłów gmina located in the Staszów poviat, in the Świętokrzystkie Voivodeship.



Outline map of Poland

Outline map of the Świętokrzyskie Voivodeship



Pock Rudie Rudie Banniny Banni

Outline map of the Szydłów gmina against the background of the Staszów poviat

Outline map of the Szydłów gmina

The maps come from the Szydłów gmina office website: http://www.szydlow.pl/index.php?id=opis/polozenie

## 6. Proof of origin:

- 1. The production of 'śliwka szydłowska' is subject to the supervision and control system described below. Products to be labelled with the 'śliwka szydłowska' PGI must fully meet each of the following conditions:
  - (1) they have been produced in the geographical area specified in point 5 in accordance with the described production method and have the characteristics specified in the description;
  - (2) their producers have undertaken in writing to comply with the specifications;
  - (3) their producers have provided the information listed below to one of the following three organisations: Kółko Rolnicze w Szydłowie [Machinery Ring in Szydłów], Spółdzielnia Producentów Owoców "DOBRYSAD" w Szydłowie ["DOBRYSAD" Fruit Producers Cooperative in Szydłów] and Stowarzyszenie Producentów Owoców w Szydłowie [Fruit Producers Association in Szydłów].
- 2. Producers that wish to use the PGI shall report this information to one of the aforementioned organisations. They shall provide information on the area and location of their plum orchards. Changes to this information should be reported by 1 July of a given year. Producers who want to use the PGI for the first time should report this to one of the aforementioned organisations by 1 July of a given year at the latest.
- 3. If the willingness to use the PGI or the location of new orchards from which raw material is obtained is reported after the deadline, the PGI may be used only starting from the following year. The aforementioned organisations should at all times maintain an up-to-date list of entities interested in producing 'śliwka szydłowska' and the current location of the plum orchards.
- 4. Each producing 'śliwka szydłowska' must have at least one drying facility and keep a register with records regarding: the origin of the raw material, the quantity of the

product made, and information regarding its intended use or sale. A given drying facility can only be assigned to one producer.

- 5. This information should be kept for a period of at least three years.
- 6. If the control body finds any discrepancies occurring even at a single stage of the production chain, the product will not be allowed to be marketed under the PGI.

Producers must comply with the obligation to meet the conditions specified in point 6(1)(1) from the moment of filing the application for registration with the European Commission. Producers must start complying with the obligation to meet the conditions specified in point 6(1)(2)-(3) no later than three months from the first publication of the application for registration in the Official Journal of the European Union.

## 7. Production method:

#### Raw material

Only cultivars of the blue plum (*Prunus domestica L. ssp domestica*) are used for the production of 'śliwka szydłowska'. The following plum cultivars are intended for drying: Stanley, Amers, Węgierka Dąbrowicka, Empres, Damacha, Oneida, Jojo, Top, Valjevka, President, and Damacha. The fruit of these varieties have desirable characteristics for drying and smoking, including a high sugar content and a relatively low water content.

Ripe plums produced on farms located in the Szydłów gmina are used as raw material. Depending on the variety, the harvest takes place from August to October. Depending on the variety, the weight of one fruit ranges from 20 to 70 grams. The production and harvest of fruit comply with the code of good agricultural practice.

In order to ensure that the raw material used for production is of adequate quality, it should be harvested at the right time. The harvest time is not fixed, however, the fruit should be harvested in the period between "harvest ripeness" and "consumption ripeness" (summerautumn). Once harvested, the fruit is sorted and prepared for further use. Each producer decides themselves when to harvest, based on their knowledge and experience in this regard. It is the specific skills of fruit growers that make them select the right fruit at the right time.

Fruit obtained in such conditions and having the above characteristics is adequate raw material to be dried and smoked to obtain the final product, i.e. 'śliwka szydłowska'.

#### Segregation of raw material

The harvested fruit is subjected to preliminary manual segregation in order to obtain the highest possible quality of raw material intended for the production of 'śliwka szydłowska'. Fruit intended for the production of 'śliwka szydłowska' must be healthy, without signs of rotting or mechanical damage and it must be free of visible damage caused by insects, mites or other pests. It must also be free of any other damage, impurities or other unspecified organisms which would make it unfit for consumption.

## **Drying facilities**

The raw material obtained in the manner described above must be subjected to drying and smoking in special traditional Szydłów drying facilities.



*Photo 1. Drying facility In the lower right Photo 2. Open drying facility with one tray corner, the descent to the hearth can be seen. pulled out* 

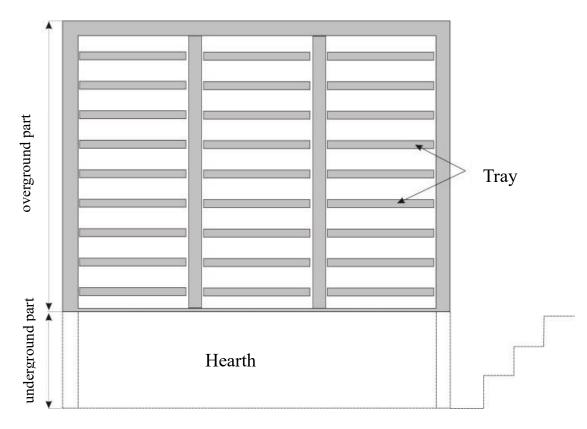
A drying facility is a quadrangular building with dimensions adapted to the needs of the producer, and in particular to the size and number of trays. In the vast majority of cases, the walls and roof of a drying facility are made of brick, while the opening is closed with wooden, usually double, door (Photo 1), opening outwards (Photo 2).



*Photo 3. This complex of drying facilities at one of the producers is placed under an additional roof (a canopy)* 

*Photo 4. Open drying facility with trays pulled out* 

The shape of a drying facility resembles a wardrobe. The doors open to reveal usually three vertical racks supporting openwork trays (such tray is called *'laska'*) which can be slid out like drawers (Photos 2, 4, 5). These trays are made of wood. The lowest tray is no lower than 50 cm from the bottom of the hearth, which is below ground level (Photo 1, Figure 1).



*Figure 1. Simplified plan of a typical drying facility – front view* 

A drying facility may not be more than 3 metres high. Only those drying facilities whose design enables smoking and drying plums with smoke and dry air, and not only with dry air, are used in the production process.



Photo 5. Dried fruit on trays

Photo 6. Table on which trays are placed to load raw material and sort and unload dried fruit

In front of a drying facility there is a special table on which the trays are placed to facilitate loading the raw material or sorting and unloading dried fruit (Photo 6). A table is one of the mandatory parts of a drying facility.

#### **Arranging fruit**

Raw material should be prepared for drying by arranging the fruit on wooden openwork trays mentioned above. When arranging the fruit, further selection of the raw material used is made. The fruit is laid out on the trays by hand. It should be arranged in such a way as to allow the air and smoke to reach each plum easily. Depending on the size of the fruit, different numbers of layers of plums are placed on each tray. A single layer is usually up to 12 cm thick.

#### **Drying and smoking**

Plums placed on trays in drying facilities are dried and smoked by means of hot air and the smoke from hardwood burned in a hearth under the trays. The mixture of hot air and smoke passes through the trays and the fruit placed on them. Gravitational air and smoke circulation is used to that effect. The wood used in the production process comes from oak, hornbeam, beech or fruit trees. The use of other types of wood is permitted, but resinous wood (from conifers) is strictly forbidden. The wood used for plum drying does not have to come from the geographical area defined in point 5. The temperature at which the plums placed on the trays are dried and smoked should be 45-90°C. The entire drying and smoking process takes about 48 hours on average, but this time may vary depending on the size of the fruit, the temperature maintained in the drying facilities and external atmospheric factors, notably temperature and humidity.

#### **Turning the fruit**

When being dried and smoked, the fruit must be turned. The trays are removed from the drying facility and the fruit is turned by hand to ensure that it is evenly dried and smoked. This operation is performed several times depending on the size of the fruit and the extent of smoking and drying required.

#### Selecting the fruit

The evenly dried and smoked fruit is collected from the trays. The fruit is collected and sorted by hand. Each producer determines whether the prunes satisfy the criteria laid down in the product description, and whether they are adequately dried and smoked. Each prune is checked separately. Prunes that satisfy the requirements are then collected, while the rest is put back into the drying facility.

#### **Possible pitting**

Prunes produced in the manner described above and sold under the name 'śliwka szydłowska' may be pitted or unpitted. No specific requirements regarding pitting are in place. However, this operation should be carried out very carefully, and the way in which it is done must not lead to an undesirable change in the product's characteristics.

In plums with pits, the presence of stalks is permissible, and in dried plums without pits, pit residues are permitted.

## 8. Link with the geographical region:

#### Natural link

The link between the product and the area concerned results from both soil and climatic conditions and is related to the skills of local fruit growers – producers of 'śliwka szydłowska'.

The area from which the fruit used to produce 'śliwka szydłowska' is obtained is confined to the area of the Szydłów gmina (108 km<sup>2</sup>). The gmina is located within two geomorphological units: the Szydłowskie Foothills (northern part) and the Połaniecka Basin (southern part). The Szydłowskie Foothills are a transitional form between the Świętokrzyskie Mountains and the Połaniecka Basin, which can be seen in the gmina relief: undulating in the north, changing into lowly undulating in its central part and ending with a flat plain in the south.

This area is characterised by poor soils which are, however, very rich in lime (Miocene limestone). The average annual precipitation in this area is usually 500-700 mm. A low level of precipitation in the summer months is also characteristic of the area, so is a relatively high amount of sunshine. The growing period lasts from 200 to 215 days.

This relatively low level of rainfall and the fact that plums require an increased level of calcium in the soil mean that plums grown in this area produce fruit with firm flesh, high sugar content and excellent taste.

Fruit produced by trees growing on this soil are distinguished by a characteristic intensive bloom. This bloom is visible and its presence is easy to identify, but it is very nondurable As a result of changing weather conditions, e.g. as a result of rainfall or wind, the bloom can be irreversibly wiped off the surface of the fruit.

Due to the high quality of the raw material obtained in this area, plums account for approximately 80% of all local fruit crops, covering around 900 ha. It should be noted here that in 2004, plum orchards accounted for 6.7% of all orchards in Poland. The area concerned is therefore characterised by significant, above-average density of plum orchards. Plums used as the raw material from which the product is obtained can also come from outside the geographical area where 'śliwka szydłowska' is produced.

#### Human factor

Obtaining the adequate raw material is only the first step on the way to getting a unique product, i.e. 'śliwka szydłowska', as the raw material must also be subjected to drying and smoking in special traditional Szydłów drying facilities. By carrying out this entire process, including various complex activities requiring professional knowledge and experience, a unique product, i.e. 'śliwka szydłowska', is obtained. The production method used in this area makes it possible to distinguish this product from those obtained in neighbouring regions. The design of local drying facilities and the local method of drying and smoking

differ from those used in other parts of Poland and in the neighbouring regions. The method of preparing plums used in the Szydłów gmina is not used in the neighbouring areas or in other regions Poland.

Skills of local fruit growers and producers are related to, among others, knowledge of:

- time to harvest and the selection of plums of the adequate quality used as raw material
- introduction of a drying and smoking method not found anywhere else, using both unique tools (a special drying facility, trays) and requiring special knowledge of the entire process these skills are related to:
  - the method of arranging plums on trays;
  - $\circ$  the selection of wood used throughout the smoking and drying process;
  - o smoking and drying times and the level of maintained temperatures;
  - the principles of turning, visual assessment and selection of fruit;
  - separate assessment of each plum in order to ensure the adequate quality, properties and the required extent of smoking and drying of the product.

The unique drying facilities used until present day to obtain this product are the most straightforward evidence that this method has been preserved. There are around 400 drying facilities in the area of the Szydłów gmina. Considering that the area defined in point 5 covers 108 km<sup>2</sup> and that its population in 2004 was 5,118, there was on average one drying facility per 13 inhabitants and there were 3.7 drying facilities per km<sup>2</sup> in that year. This undoubtedly testifies to a very close link between this product and this area. The number of drying facilities is one of the elements that, among other things, distinguishes the described area from the neighbouring areas.

The oldest, almost 60-year-old drying facility is located in Szydłów on the estate of the late Mr Leonard Skotnicki, by the defensive city wall in a wild plum orchard (Photos 7-11). It is dilapidated and is no longer used to dry plums. The building is made of brick and the preserved trays are identical to those used today. A lower annex with an inlet to the hearth below the ground has also been preserved. This is where firewood was stored and placed to the hearth. Around the building there are still relics used in the drying facility, e.g. wooden trays (Photo 10).



Photo 7. The oldest (no longer used) drying facility in Szydłów – side view



Photo 8. The oldest drying facility in Szydłów – view from above. In the lower annex there was a descent to the hearth. Wood was also stored here to dry.





*Photo 9. The oldest drying facility in Szydłów Photo 10. There are relics and remains of the – view from the front of the drying facility to drying facility around – such as this decayed the drawers – trays tray.* 



Photo 11. The drying facility is located in an abandoned wild orchard by a defensive wall.



Photo 12. 50-year old drying facility located on Mr Własysław Mazur's estate (still in use)

Another very old drying facility (about fifty years old) is located on Mr Władysław Mazur's estate in Szydłów and is still in use (Photo 12).

#### **Historical link**

The history of production, drying and smoking of plums in Szydłów dates back at least to pre-war times. In the reprint of the press article entitled "Szansa dla miasteczka" [Chance for the town] published in the "Słowo Ludu" newspaper of 25 November 1988, there is information about the production of 'śliwka szydłowska' and about the problems related to the purchase of this product: As far as memory can tell – Szydłów has been famous for its dried plums. In the autumn, the town smelled of smoke and fruit. Mr Janusz Jaskólski, director of the local Cultural Centre, says that the people of Szydłów learned the skill of drying plums from the Jews. It is a real art, indeed. You have to have special hardwood and look after at all hours. Before the war, plums from Szydłów were valued in Łódź and Warsaw

and people made good business on them. Based on the information that "before the war there were a hundred Jewish families living in Szydłów", it can also be estimated when the people of Szydłów could have acquired the skills of making 'śliwka szydłowska' at the latest. Additional information confirming that this product was widespread in this region is related to the purchase of dried plums and also to problems with their sale. According to the aforementioned "Słowo Ludu": (...) I got rid of plums, says Mr Stefański. – I cut them out because the collection point did not take plums at all. And they are beautiful here (...) and (...) two years ago, 'damascenes' were so abundant that after drying – people said – the Vistula could have been blocked with them (...).

In order to confirm the history of this product, an ethnographic survey was conducted in January and February 2007 in the Szydłów gmina. Those interviewed were between 48 and 87 years old and had lived in Szydłów for 32-87 years. The respondents were asked when they first encountered drying plums in the gmina. According to the results, it was between 32 and 77 years ago. The respondents specified the months in which plums were dried in the past (September, October) – this period has now been extended to include August and November.

As in the past, the raw material is still obtained from home gardens and commercial orchards. Years ago, plum drying involved heating the fruit placed on single trays in earthen trenches, in which a fire was lit, and wood from fruit trees or other deciduous trees was used for it to burn. Then, fruit that had already dried was sorted by hand and the rest was left to dry.

Since earthen trenches and wooden trays placed above them were not durable, producers were forced for practical and economic reasons to build permanent drying facilities and place trays one above the other in them like drawers. Such drying facilities started to be built in the 1950s. The adopted drying method significantly improved the quality of the products. They were so unique and of such high quality that a purchase system for these products was developed. There is a lot of information confirming its efficient operation Poland, including the Szydłów gmina, in the 1960s.

Receipts issued by various collection points (Photos 13, 14, 15, 16) can serve as examples. Thus, we can learn that on 1 December 1964, one of the fruit growers from Szydłów delivered 2,000 kg of dried plums to the collection point. He was issued invoice No. 1280. As the price was PLN 13 per kilogram, he was paid PLN 26,000. Another invoice from 8 December of that year (No. 1281) amounts to PLN 12,480 and was issued for the delivery of 960 kg of dried plums by a farmer from Szydłów. There are also invoices from 1967 confirming the sale of dried plums: invoice No. 1440 from 29 November 1967 and invoice No. 3930. It should be noted that the preserved invoices were pre-numbered forms – only one invoice could be issued with a given number at a given collection point. Considering, for example, invoice No. 3930, it can be inferred that the scale of production and purchase in this area was significant.



Photo 13. Invoice No. 1280 dated 1 December 1964



*Photo 14. Invoice No. 1281 dated 8 December 1964, confirming the sale of dried plums* 



Photo15. ReceiptNo.1440dated29Photo16.InvoiceNo.3930dated29November1967, issued in ŚremNovember1967, issued in Trzebnica

#### **Plum Festival**

'Śliwka szydłowska' is linked with the Szydłów gmina so strongly that a special event is organised there to promote this product. In 2006, the 9<sup>th</sup> Szydłów Plum Festival was held. One of the attractions of the festival is a demonstration of plum drying on traditional Szydłów trays (Photos 17 and 18), which was also clearly emphasised on the poster inviting to the event (Photos 19-21). The guests of the Plum Festival can taste such freshly dried plums (Photo 18).



Photo 17. Drying fruit using the traditional method on trays during the Plum Festival in Szydłów



*Photo 18. Plums dried in this way are a great attraction for visitors.* 

An account of this event can be read, for example, in "Echo Dnia – Echo Powiśla" of 25 August 2006:

#### Plum Festival – our fruit growers had something to boast about

Modern Szydłów tempts visitors with dried plums, plum brandy and magnificent monuments. Today, the town on the Ciekąca River is the largest plum basin in Poland, and the local fruit growers have something to boast about – they are considered the best producers of this fruit.

Last weekend, the 9<sup>th</sup> edition of the Plum Festival was held. The Festival has become a permanent item in the timetable of local events. And it is no wonder that local fruit growers decided to establish it, because for years, plums have been the only source of income for many of them. That is why they wanted to pay tribute to the queen of Szydłów orchards in a special way.

Demonstrations of drying and smoking plums on trays have always been an integral part of Szydłów Plum Festival. Information about such demonstrations can be found on posters inviting to this event.



Photo 19. Poster inviting to the 9<sup>th</sup> Plum Festival



Photo 20. Poster inviting to the 8<sup>th</sup> Plum Festival



## 9. Control:

- 1. COBICO Sp. z o.o., ul. Grzegórzecka 77, 31-559 Kraków
- 2. BioCert Małopolska Sp. z o.o., ul. Lubicz 25a, 31-503 Kraków
- 3. TUV Rhienland Polska Sp. z o.o., 02-146 Warszawa, 17-tego stycznia 56, phone: 22 8467999, fax: 22 868 37 42
- Świetokrzyski IJHARS, 25-558 Kielce, ul. Zagnańska 91 phone: (041) 362-69-(64-65) fax: (041) 362-64-10
- 5. Centrum Jakości AgroEko Sp. z o.o., ul. Baśki 2,05-126 Nieporęt
- 6. PNG Sp. z o.o., 26-065 Piekoszów, phone: 41306 40 00 fax: 22 41 306 48 (ext. 11-14)
- 7. Polskie Centrum Badań i Certyfikacji w Warszawie, ul. Kłobucka 23A, 02-699 Warszawa

#### **10. Labelling:**

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# **11. Specific requirements introduced by applicable regulations:**

#### 12. Additional information:

None

#### 13. List of documents attached to the application:

Please provide a list of materials and publications referenced in the application:

"Szansa dla miasteczka" in: "Słowo Ludu" of 25 November 1988 Purchase invoice No. 1280 dated 1 December 1964 Purchase invoice No. 1281 dated 8 December 1964 Purchase invoice No. 1440 dated 29 November 1967, issued in Śrem Purchase invoice No. 3930 dated 29 November 1967, issued in Trzebnica "Święto Śliwki – nasi sadownicy mieli się czym pochwalić" [Plum Festival – our fruit growers had something to boast about] in: "Echo Dnia – Echo Powiśla" of 25 August 2006 Poster inviting to the 9<sup>th</sup> Szydłów Days – Plum Festival (19-20 August 2006) Poster inviting to the 8<sup>th</sup> Szydłów Days – Plum Festival (20-21 August 2005) Poster inviting to the 7<sup>th</sup> Szydłów Days – Plum Festival (28-29 August 2004)