



Geographical Indication Product Database - Step 1-

Korab Kackaval

SOURCE :

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Institution : SEEDEV

Partner: AGRIDEA

Date : 30.08.06

DESCRIPTION :

1. NAME OF PRODUCT : *Korab kackaval*

2. COUNTRY AND REGION IN THE COUNTRY: Macedonia, cheese of the mountain Korab

3. TYPE OF PRODUCT : (including the possible substitutes and imitations of the product)

Korab kackaval is a hard cooked sheep cheese produced in the region of the Korab mountain. It can be more or less ripened but the usual period of maturation is of three months. It is the highest quality cheese of Macedonia and is sold at an expensive price, around 15 € per kilogram. Other kackaval are produced all around the Balkans but to the Macedonian population, Korab kackaval recovers a very high reputation.

4. DESCRIPTION OF THE PRODUCT AND ITS AREA (including its specific characteristics, conditions of production, main differences with the substitutes) :

Korab kackaval has a cylindrical shape with a diameter between 20 and 30 cm and a height between 10 and 15 cm. It is round and flat, with a smooth rind and the inside is compact and homogenous without holes. The taste is quite strong and can be very piquant if the cheese is old (more than three months of maturation). It is produced in a very traditional way by only two dairies which remain from the agrokombinats system in Yugoslavia. It is produced up in the pastures and contributes to the activity of some remote rural area. The specific characteristics of the pastures give specific features to the final product, which can be mainly found in the taste of the cheese. The maturation is also accomplished outside in altitude.

5. LINK WITH THE GEOGRAPHICAL AREA (tradition, know how, reputation, soil, climate, etc.):

The kackaval cheese originates from Bulgaria where it is known since the sixteenth century. Since this time, its fabrication has spread out to several countries of the Balkan peninsula, Caucasus and the oriental Mediterranean basin like Lebanon, Tunisia, Israel and Cyprus. It probably spread out with the influence of the ottoman empire. Today kackaval is one of the main cheeses in Macedonia together with Sirene and Bieno sirene

We are referring to one specific region where kackaval is known to be of very high quality and almost a luxury product in Macedonia, on the local and national market. The geographic name refers to the mountain Korab which is the highest of Macedonia on the border with Albania and which is also very famous in Macedonia. Apparently, the people used to produce it locally before the Yugoslavian system supported several cooperatives which took geographic names on which they built their reputation. Those remaining today are the only one to supply the market with Korab Kackaval. The flocks are staying in the region only during the season of production of the cheese (march-august). The cheese masters originate from a specific village on the border between Macedonia and Bulgaria, which is known to have a strong tradition of cheese making.


6. PRODUCTION SYSTEM / SUPPLY CHAIN (some data about the number of producers, processors, market structure..) :

In the border region with Albania the average number of sheeps per farmer is from 50 to a hundred and more. Nevertheless, the producers we are talking about and who are the only one to produce and to put on the market Korab are former cooperative which still own important flocks, around 4 000 per cooperatives, two being concerned here. The cheese yield is around 100 kg of milk for 20 kg of cheese. Korab kackaval is always sold matured. Because of the low number of production units, the quality of the cheese seems to be regular and the production is already standardised.

The chain is short:

Only one cooperative is producing Korab kackaval and two others are producing Bistra kackaval which is a similar cheese with a very close quality, also produced in the area, a little bit southern. Therefore and because of a reduction of the production these last years, the total volume of production of high quality kackaval in the west part of Macedonia does not exceed 5 tons. The managers of those cooperatives did not managed to keep the markets they had in Macedonia and abroad and to find new ones.

The cooperatives are encountering big difficulties to maintain and improve their infrastructure, to maintain their livestock and their markets. The lack of infrastructure leads to an important loss, as the milk could be collected

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among smaller farmers and processed into kackaval, with an higher added value for small farmers and the start of a diversification for the cooperatives.

7. MARKET AND REPUTATION (size, price premium, attractiveness, growth) :

For Korab kackaval, the market is not only domestic and national but can also be export oriented. No resellers are present locally, the only thing the cooperatives managed to do is to keep some of the direct traditional markets such as luxury restaurants in Macedonia or members of the government and civil servants who used to have the advantages of the state bureaucracy. Cheese shops are also mentioned. The average price is of 15€/per kilogram.

7. APPLICANT / HOLDER (IF ANY) :

NONE

RELEVANCE: Why is this case important for research in general and for SINER-GI in particular ?

This product shows that a high quality local product can reach a premium price without any local protection. Nevertheless, it is obvious that the production is threatened and faces difficulties to survive. The protection of the traditional way of production is at stake in this case but a PDO process is certainly not a priority as the economic conditions in Macedonia do not yet allow this production to be deconcentrated.

CATEGORY :

☐ Origin Product

☒ GI product

☐ Recognized GI