



Geographical Indication Product Database
- Step 1-

Arbroath Smokies

SOURCE :

Author :
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Institution :
University of
Edinburgh

Date : 28-08-06

DESCRIPTION :

1. NAME OF PRODUCT : Arbroath Smokies
2. COUNTRY AND REGION IN THE COUNTRY: Scotland.
3. TYPE OF PRODUCT : (including the possible substitutes and imitations of the product). Hot-smoked, headed, gutted, unfiletted haddock. Generic smoked haddock, made from fillets, is very widespread in the UK.
4. DESCRIPTION OF THE PRODUCT AND ITS AREA (including its specific characteristics, conditions of production, main differences with the substitutes): Weight 250g-300g. Colour: copper-brown on outside, flesh inside creamy white. Flavour: mellow overtones of salt and smoke. In the traditional method, the fish are gutted, beheaded and dry salted for 2 hours. They are tied in pairs and hung over wooden rods. The salt is washed off and they are left to dry and harden for 5 hours. The rods are placed in smoke pits and hot-smoked for 45 minutes over oak or beech, covered with layers of Hessian. Present production area is the coastal corridor plus inland area up to eight kilometres from Arbroath Town Centre.
5. LINK WITH THE GEOGRAPHICAL AREA (tradition, know how, reputation, soil, climate, etc.): First developed in Auchmithie, a fishing village north of the town of Arbroath, north east Scotland, with a high proportion of residents of Norse descent. The village has unusual characteristic of being situated high on cliffs above the harbour. Residents developed technique of fish smoking whereby half whisky barrels, or 'smoke pits' were set on ledges in the cliff face and the fires regulated by making good use of the natural upward draught of the cliff faces. Fish were salted and dried and hung in pairs across poles, Hessian sacks were used to regulate the smoke. At the end of the 1800s, some Auchmithie residents moved to Arbroath, building square, brick smoke pits in their back gardens. Reputation and production in the town grew, thereafter the product became linked with Arbroath.
6. PRODUCTION SYSTEM / SUPPLY CHAIN (some data about the number of producers, processors, market structure..) Some producers still smoke in the traditional way, using small brick pits, the largest producer uses a large, computer operated kiln. The Spink family name (Norse descent) is common to many producers, emphasising local traditions and continuity.
7. MARKET AND REPUTATION (size, price premium, attractiveness, growth): One large producer with a turnover approaching £500k for this product, plus 12 smaller producers. Aimed at premium market, with local retailers and internet sales (including exports) dominant for smaller producers. Large producer supplies major supermarket chains, but only since PGI status gained and new smokehouse constructed.

APPLICANT / HOLDER (IF ANY) : is the holder of the PGI. Arbroath Fish Processors Association.

RELEVANCE : Why is this case important for research in general and for SINER-GI in particular ? Illustrates the motivations for applying for PGI status and the role of different marketing channels in the negotiations for the designation.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION:

Mason, L. Traditional Foods of Britain: an Inventory. Prospect Books, Devon.

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/foodrin/foodname/UKingdom/arbsm.htm>



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<http://arbroath-smokie.co.uk>

<http://www.arbroathsmokies.net>

<http://thescotsman.scotsman.com/index.cfm?id=363452004>

CATEGORY :

Origin Product

GI product

✓ Recognized GI