PDO AND PGI AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS: A 14.2 billion euro turnover for over 800 products

In 2007 PDO and PGI agricultural products had an estimated wholesale value of 14.2 billion euros. This is the result of a study carried out by the European Commission’s Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development.

The study, carried out in 2008, concerns the 820 products listed in the European Register of protected designations of origin and protected geographical indications at that time (excluding wines and spirits but including beer).

It shows that the turnover of these PDO and PGI products rose steadily between 2005 and 2007, although there was no increase for PDOs in 2006.

In addition, it is estimated that part of the production of 30% of PDO and PGI is exported outside the European Union, to the tune of 700 millions euros. The study shows a rise in PDO and PGI exports, both in volume (+ 9% between 2005 and 2007) and value (+ 17% in the same period).

Certification systems

Private and national systems for certifying the quality of agricultural products and foods ensure that the product has the characteristics and has been produced in accordance with the production method defined in the specification.

These systems cover a wide range of measures applied at different stages of the food supply chain. They can operate at business-to-business level or at business-to-consumer level. Some of them use logos, but many do not, especially at business-to-business level.

In the EU, private certification systems for agricultural products and foods cover compulsory production standards as well as requirements concerning environmental protection, animal welfare, organoleptic characteristics, fair trade and so on.

The systems are also managed by a variety of different bodies: farmers, public authorities, non-governmental organisations, interest groups or retailers.

The Commission is planning to draw up guidelines in order to harmonise these systems and ensure that consumers are not misled.

For more information on the European Union’s quality policy: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/quality/index_en.htm
Cheese accounts for a third of total PDO/PGI turnover: 8% of the cheese produced in the EU is protected. Names entered in the register include Grana Padano, Comte, Queso Manchego and Feta.

Almost 5% of the beer consumed in Europe is PGI beer (Münchener Bier, Českobudějovické Pivo, etc.).

The main meat products are dry, salted products such as Prosciutto di S. Daniele and Schwarzwälder Schinken.

Fresh meats are in fourth position: the most important products (in terms of turnover) are Scotch Beef, Welsh Lamb, Ternera de Galicia and some types of French poultry.

The main countries in terms of value of PDO/PGI production are Italy (33% of the total), Germany (25%), France (17%) and the United Kingdom (8%). Next come Spain with 833 million euros (6%), Greece with 606 million euros (4%) and Austria with 123 million euros (1%).

However, the number of names a country has in the register does not correlate with turnover. Portugal, for example, has many names in the register, mainly fruit and vegetables, but the products are of low economic value. The United Kingdom, on the other hand, has a very high turnover of PDO/PGI products, because of its meat and fish.

Most of the protected products from countries that joined the European Union in 2004 or later were registered after 2007. The figures therefore include only a small part of the turnover for these products. In 2008, however, 28 geographical indications had been registered for these countries.

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