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SINGLE DOCUMENT

'London Cure Smoked Scottish Salmon'

EC No: [for EU use only]

PGI (X) PDO ( )

1. NAME(S) [OF PDO OR PGI]

'London Cure Smoked Scottish Salmon'

2. MEMBER STATE OR THIRD COUNTRY

United Kingdom

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCT OR FOODSTUFF

3.1. Type of product [listed in Annex XI]

Class 1:7. Fresh fish, molluscs, crustaceans and products derived therefrom

3.2. Description of product to which the name in (1) applies

London Cure Smoked Scottish Salmon is the name given to salmon cured and smoked using only a combination of rock salt and oak smoke. Both superior grade farmed and wild salmon can be London Cured. In terms of farmed salmon, London Cure uses only superior grade salmon from Scotland. Superior grade salmon is a first class product without substantial faults or defects. The product must have an undamaged skin with sheen and no significant loss of scales. There must be no open sores or bruising/damage to the belly or musculature. There must be no melanin spots in the musculature. The belly membrane must be firm and intact. The fish must be a natural streamlined shape. The salmon is a consistently orangey/pink colour has a lustrous and smooth texture. When smoked, the aroma balances the scents of smoke and salmon in equal parts – neither overpowers the other. With regard to wild salmon, again sourced from Scotland, the fish must be stiff alive (i.e. it must be very firm indicating that it is freshly caught), have red gills, bright eyes and shiny scales. Wild salmon varies in colour from dusky to rose pink and has a creamy texture which is denser and heavier than farmed salmon. When smoked, it has an aroma of smoke and fish in equal parts.

The name London Cure can apply to whole, untrimmed sides, trimmed sides and slices cut lengthways down the fish (banquet sliced) or cut through the fish (D-cut). There are no minimum or maximum sizes of fish. The flavour of London Cure Smoked Salmon is mild and delicate. The aim of the London Cure is to subtly enhance the flavour of the finest quality salmon using only rock salt and a light smoke ensuring that the predominant taste is of salmon.

3.3. Feed (for products of animal origin only) and raw materials (for processed products only)

Feed N/A for this application.

Raw materials - Fresh whole Scottish salmon

3.4. Specific steps in production that must take place in the identified geographical area

Hand Filleting of the raw salmon fillet prior to smoking

The whole salmon is split into two fillets before the curing process takes place. The salmon is hand split to yield a far better quality fillet of salmon which is unbroken. Penny shaped holes (between 1-3 inches in diameter) are cut by hand in the skin of the sides of salmon to allow even penetration of salt and smoke in the next steps of the process. When smoking London Cure salmon it is essential to leave the rib cage and pin-bones in. Like meat being cooked, the product is better smoked on the bone.

The Dry Curing Process

Before salmon is smoked it has to be salted – this begins the curing process. The fresh salmon fillets are placed on salting racks and sprinkled with rock salt for up to 24 hours depending on their size. During this time they lose 10% of their weight. This process yields a product with a salt level of just 3-4% which allows you to taste the salmon.

The Smoking & Drying Process

Once fillets have been cured they are rinsed and placed in the kiln where they can be either hung up or laid on racks. The fish is smoked and air-dried for a maximum of thirteen hours in oak smoke. The cured fillets lose at least a further 10% of their weight during this process. A hard crust is formed by the warm air flow. This is known as the pellicle.

The Slicing Process

Before slicing the pin bones and pellicle are removed by hand. The fish is checked by the slicer to ensure no defects are present. The salmon is then carved to the customer's specification. Being hand carved, the slices are slightly uneven: hand-carving results in a greater surface area on the product so more flavour emanates compared to a product which is machine-sliced and too smooth.

3.5. Specific rules concerning slicing, grating, packaging, etc. of the product the registered name refers to

Before slicing the pin bones and pellicle are removed by hand. All London Cure Smoked Scottish Salmon is hand-sliced to produce a consistently high quality product.

3.6. Specific rules concerning labelling of the product the registered name refers to

None

4. CONCISE DEFINITION OF THE GEOGRAPHICAL AREA

The London Boroughs of Tower Hamlets, Hackney or Newham.

5. LINK WITH THE GEOGRAPHICAL AREA

Salmon smoking in London started in the late 1800s when Eastern European immigrants who settled in London's East End used it as a way of preserving fish at a time when refrigeration was basic. The smoking of fish was commonplace in Eastern Europe where it was done to prepare for long Winters. Fish was smoked and salted to keep it edible for extended periods of time. Immigrants to the UK continued this tradition. Cold smoking of salmon is a process requiring skill: the

salmon is cured in salt and then exposed to a cool smoke, away from a direct heat source. Originally intended to supply the immigrant population with a product with which they were familiar, smoked Scottish salmon soon became popular with the native community and eventually became a traditional British delicacy. The Jewish population of the UK increased from 46,000 in 1880 to about 250,000 by 1919. They lived primarily in the large industrial cities, especially London, Manchester and Leeds. In London, Jews lived principally in the Spitalfields and Whitechapel areas, close to the docks, and hence the East End became known as a Jewish neighbourhood. When the Jews arrived from Eastern Europe they brought their own cuisine and the need to supply them with traditional food products saw the introduction of the first smokehouses in the East End.

East London smokers originally imported salmon from the Baltic, not realising that wild salmon was available from Scotland each summer. Having discovered the Scottish fish at Billingsgate market, they realised it would be easier to use the native fish and the quality of the finished product tasted far superior. The quality of the Scottish salmon combined with the light smoke of the London Cure is fundamental to the increase in popularity of Smoked Salmon with the wider community. The light smoke applied to the London Cure allowed chefs to use it on their menus and it became extremely popular across the western world. Historically Scottish Wild Salmon (now awarded PGI status) was sent to Billingsgate Market from at least the 19th Century onwards. Scottish salmon has a worldwide reputation for excellence and the London Cure relies on exceptional raw materials to produce a superior smoked salmon. Salmon is historically a fish prized for it's exceptional flavour, and Jews applied the curing recipes they had used with other fish such as herring to this more luxurious fish. Salmon yielded a cured fish like nothing people had ever experienced. The smooth, silky texture, delicate flesh and subtle salty taste made cured salmon a delicacy that is still appreciated today.

In it's pre-war heyday salmon smoking was practised by nine firms across the East End of London, including Barnett's of Frying Pan Alley, E1 and B&A Brittan of Lamas Road, Leyton. Different to the other styles of curing (At that time Scotland was smoking fish such as kippers with a heavy smoke) the London Cure is a mild, delicate cure designed so that the consumer can taste the quality and freshness of the fish by using a controlled delicate smoke. It was produced predominantly for the local Jewish community of East London who purchased it in small quantities for the Sabbath and special occasions. Historically the most sought after smoked salmon was fatty wild salmon from near the belly of the fish, (just like the famous fatty Toro tuna preferred by sushi chefs). Wild fatty salmon had a reputation as the best. The smoked salmon producers of the East End operated a delicatessen style service allowing customers to choose exactly where in the salmon their order was sliced from. Indeed Lance Forman remembers customers coming to Forman's in the 1960's at the famous Ridley Road Market to purchase their bespoke slices of wild salmon. Specificity of the product

The specificity of London Cure Smoked Scottish Salmon is attributable to the light smoking process. The method of production for London Cure smokes the salmon to preserve it without leaving a heavily smoked flavour. From its origins, London Cure Smoked Scottish Salmon enabled fish to be preserved whilst maintaining its quality and freshness. Today, this quality and freshness sets the London Cure apart from other mass produced smoked salmon. London Curers use the finest quality salmon which arrive at the smokehouse ideally within 48 hours of harvest (to a maximum of 5 days). The fish is cleaned, split and trimmed entirely by hand. The fillets of

salmon are then salted by hand with bones left in to enhance flavour. Years of experience ensure that a carefully controlled amount of smoke is added – a perfect blend of air-drying and dehumidification with precise quantities of smoke produced by friction burning oak logs. As it is processed by hand, care can be taken to ensure that London Cure salmon always has the chewy pellicle removed (except when sold untrimmed) and when sliced, perforated cellophane is used to interleave the salmon allowing it to breathe and to make it easy to remove from the packaging without tearing the delicate slices. At all steps of the process London Cure Smoked Scottish Salmon is appraised and reappraised by skilled employees ensuring that only the finest quality smoked salmon is delivered to customers. The attention to detail in the artisan process means that the finished product is fresh without an overly smoky taste.

The skill of salmon smoking and slicing has long been established in the East End, and these artisanal skills have been handed down through four generations. The knowledge built up over years of smoking salmon in East London allows the London Curer to produce a consistently high quality product by touch and eye.

The salmon are all split, de-headed, filleted and notched (penny shaped holes cut into the skin of the salmon) by hand, requiring exceptional knife skills. Once split and filleted, the salmon fillets must be inspected to ensure all fillets are up to the standard required. The inspector must check all fillets for blood spots or cancerous indicators. These are rejected at source and placed in the reject bin. Each fillet is then cured by hand – the person applying the salt cure must ensure just the right amount of salt is added to each fish, and that the length of time for which the salmon is cured is appropriate for the size of each fillet. The flesh of the fish stiffens and firms as it dries. As there is little physical change in the appearance of the salmon, it is only the experience of the team leader that ensures the right amount of salt is be added for the correct amount of time. Too much salt, or leaving the salt on for too long leads to increased salt levels in the finished product. Fish are grouped together by size and weight when salting to ensure that all fish end up with the correct salt levels. Salmon that is too salty, or not salty enough is rejected. Once smoked for the required length of time, the smoked side of salmon is trimmed by hand, and the trimmer must make sure that the pellicle is completely removed as it is hard, chewy and not pleasant to eat. The 32 pin bones are then deftly removed by hand using fish bone tweezers. To do this successfully, the pin bone must carefully be pulled along its own axis (not straight up) in order to avoid damaging the delicate flesh of the salmon. The salmon is then hand carved to produce an uneven surface which releases more flavour. Using their eye and knife skills, salmon carvers can slice salmon to specific thicknesses and weights, providing a uniform product to the consumer. Carving is done either long ways from head to tail (banquet sliced) or across the body of the fish (D-cut). Quality control in the form of visual inspection means that every slice of smoked salmon is examined before leaving the factory to ensure each slice is without defect (no skin, pellicle or bone remains).

The characteristics of London Cure Smoked Salmon are linked to the geographical area on the basis of tradition, reputation, the smoking process (largely unchanged since 1905) and the skills of those involved in that process. These skills have been passed down from generation to generation.

The history of Salmon smoking came to London started in the late 1800s with the arrival of Jewish Eastern European immigrants, who settled primarily in the large industrial cities, such as London, Manchester and Leeds. In London, Jews lived principally in the Spitalfields and Whitechapel areas, close to the docks, and hence

the East End became known as a Jewish neighbourhood. The introduction of the first smokehouses in the East End came about as a way of preserving fish at a time when refrigeration was basic. Although it started out as a product that had a means to an end – the preservation of fish for winter months - London Cure Salmon became sought after by consumers as a luxury product due to its delicate flavour.

As late as the mid 1970s there remained about a dozen salmon smokers in London's East End. The last remaining London Cure smokers adhere to the traditional approach to create London Cure Smoked Salmon, retaining all the traditional skills associated with salmon smoking and believe in maintaining artisan skills before they are lost for good.

This application seeks to preserve traditional salmon smoking methods, the reputation of the London Cure, the skills of those who produce the salmon and the London Cure recipe itself which remains unchanged since 1905.

Britain at the beginning of the Twentieth Century was known for it's good but plain cuisine. The one stand out exception to this was Smoked Salmon, which is now a quintessentially British staple. Due to the advent of salmon farming in the 1970's the availability of smoked salmon increased making it more widely available to the community as a whole. As a result Smoked Salmon features widely on the menus of British restaurants and households alike. The mild London Cure has always enjoyed a reputation for quality and it is widely regarded that London Cure Smoked Scottish Salmon has an exceptional flavour, a fact recognised by customers both domestically and internationally. Fortnum and Mason have been buying London Cure Smoked Scottish Salmon for over 80 years. Other customers of the London Cure include the House of Lords, the House of Commons, Wiltons and The Savoy. Mark Thatcher, Executive Chef at the House of Lords considers London Cure Smoked Scottish Salmon to be "Unique and highly regarded by our diners... it is hand prepared in London and far superior to generally traded mass-produced smoked salmon products offered by others." In 2009 Mayor of London, Boris Johnson describes London Cure Smoked Scottish Salmon as "incomparable".

Reference to publication of the specification

(the second subparagraph of Article 6(1) of this Regulation)

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/388544/london-cure-smoked-scottish-salmon-spec.pdf