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SINGLE DOCUMENT

Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin for agricultural products and foodstuffs*

'West Wales Coracle Caught Sewin'

EC No:

PGI (x) PDO ( )

1. NAME

'West Wales Coracle Caught Sewin'

2. MEMBER STATE OR THIRD COUNTRY

United Kingdom

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCT OR FOODSTUFF

3.1. Type of product

Class 1.7: Fresh Fish, molluscs, and crustaceans and products derived there from.

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

West Wales Coracle Caught Sewin is the name given to fish of the Salmo trutta species, which have been caught using the ancient Welsh traditional method of coracle fishing.

Fresh Coracle Caught Sewin are bright silver, with black spots. The flesh of a Sewin is firm with good muscle tone and has a fresh fish smell. The colour of the flesh is a distinctive light pink colour, although this may vary slightly as sewin will only feed when at sea and the colour of its flesh will be affected by its diet which may include Mysids and shrimp. It has a unique (soft and clean) fresh flavour.

The size of the fish varies due to its wild nature. However because of a restrictive net mesh size of 10 cms, the minimum size for West Wales Coracle Caught Sewin would be 70g as any fish smaller in size would escape through the net.

West Wales coracle caught Sewin has perfect markings, is quite round and thick set. The fork of its tail is usually square or convex. The wrist of the tail is broad and it is difficult to pick up the fish by its tail alone.

West Wales Coracle Caught Sewin is distinguishable from other sea trout types due to its firm and dense texture. It should be free from distortion to its tail fins or head.

West Wales Coracle Caught Sewin are primarily sold whole and mostly freshly caught, although the sewin may be sold frozen.

3.3. Raw materials (for processed products only)

N/A

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* Replaced by Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 November 2012 on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs

3.4. Feed (for products of animal origin only)

N/A

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

West Wales Coracle Caught Sewin must be caught using the ancient traditional method of coracle fishing during the salmon season which varies according to which of the 3 rivers in West Wales are being fished.

- On the Tywi the sewin season is 1st March-31st July
- On the Teifi the sewin season is 1st April – 31st August
- On the Taf the sewin season is 1st March – 31st July

3.6. Specific rules concerning slicing, grating, packaging, etc.

N/A

3.7. Specific rules concerning labelling

N/A

4. CONCISE DEFINITION OF THE GEOGRAPHICAL AREA

The River Tywi, the River Taf and the River Teifi all located in West Wales.

5. LINK WITH THE GEOGRAPHICAL AREA

5.1. Specificity of the geographical area

The water in the Taf, Tywi and Teifi Rivers situated in the West of Wales is of a very high quality and is regularly monitored and recorded by the Environmental Agency. The sources of all 3 rivers are either deep in the Cambrian or Preseli Mountains and all three rivers have a very rural catchment area dominated by grassland and forestry. There is a distinct lack of industry in the area. Both the Tywi and Teifi rivers have been classed as Special Areas of Conservation under the European habitats Directive. The pollution levels in the three rivers are very low, and they have been awarded grade 'A' status, which demonstrates that the rivers have '*natural ecosystems and make very good salmonid and cyprinid fisheries'.* The high quality of the river water contributes to the fact that West Wales Coracle Caught Sewin should have perfect markings and no distortion to its head, fins or tail.

Coracle fishing is an ancient way of fishing for migratory fish. It is an old craft and skill recorded in the 11th Century (and earlier), that has survived into the 21st Century. Although coracles were once used extensively throughout Wales, they are now restricted to three Principle Rivers – the rivers Taf, Tywi and Teifi all in West Wales. Coracle fishing is exclusive to these rivers and has been in existence for over 300 years. Coracles are small oval shaped vessels designed with a plank across the middle to form a seat. They are hand-made from ash and willow and are constructed like baskets. Each coracle carries one fisherman and is steered by a singlehanded scull. Coracle fishing involves a pair of coracles working together, with a net suspended between them. Fishing using this method takes place mainly at night to prevent the sewin seeing the shadow of the coracle or the net coming towards them, as they return to their spawning ground. Coracle fishing is highly regulated with

guidelines only allowing coracle fishing within specific tidal areas of the three specific West Wales Rivers. All coracle fishermen have to be licensed and the use of the coracle nets is also covered by legislation.

5.2. Specificity of the product

West Wales Coracle Caught Sewin is a wild fish caught by the ancient and skilful Welsh tradition of coracle fishing which nowadays is exclusive to the rivers Taf, Teifi and Tywi in West Wales.

West Wales Coracle Caught Sewin are migratory fish which have the ability to live in Fresh water (rivers) and Salt waters (sea).The Sewin spawn in fresh water and live for the first few years in the Teifi Taf and Tywi rivers in West Wales. In early spring each year, they return to the sea to feed and grow. After approximately 2 years, they will return to the three West Wales Rivers of their birth to start the cycle all over again. Muscle tone would be more developed in these wild sewin in comparison to farmed brown trout because of the significant distance that the wild sewin cover. The superior muscle tone results in a denser texture and firm flesh.

Coracle fishing involves skill and precision steering and navigation whilst controlling the position of the net and remaining buoyant. Knowing which tidal spots to fish and the ability to be able "to read" the river is critical and involves taking factors such as the flow of the river, its depth (depending upon flood water) the tide and wind conditions all into consideration.

The skill of the coracle fisherman is accentuated by the fact that coracle fishing mainly takes place at night under nocturnal conditions to prevent the fish seeing the shadow of the coracle or the net coming towards them.

The Sewin travel to its spawning ground along the beds of the river following the contours of the river. This knowledge has been accrued by the coracle men over centuries of fishing. Coracle fishing is only permitted in the specific tidal areas of the rivers Taf, Tywi and Teifi. The lines of demarcation are stated in the fishing bylaws. The net is trawled on the bed of the river using small pieces of lead weight. The net will only catch fish in the depth of first 18 inches from the bed of the river. Any fish above that level will escape capture because the sewin would then be swimming above the net. The cork line helps to keep the head of the net in a forward arced position and the two coracles will keep the mouth of the net open. A key skill associated with coracle fishing and net making, is the unique leading system which is the number and weight of lead weights attached to the coracle nets. The leading system is complex and is based on the Fibonacci series of numbers in nature.(1 x 3 pieces of lead, 4 x 2 pieces of lead, 6 x 1 piece of lead) It is usually taught through practice and is a skill passed down through the generations.

5.3. Causal link between the geographical area and the quality or characteristics of the product (for PDO) or a specific quality, the reputation or other characteristic of the product (for PGI)

Coracle fishing is a cottage industry in West Wales that dates back to the 1800's and coracle making is a skill that has been passed down from one generation to the next. Traditionally the coracles are hand-made from ash and willow and are constructed like baskets. Although the design and method of making the coracles has remained unchanged for centuries, developments in modern materials now include the use of calico, canvas and fibreglass in their production

There are 2 main types of coracle which have been specifically engineered to suit the individual tidal characteristics of the 3 rivers. The Tywi Coracle has a streamline design (because the river is wider and the coracle needs to be streamline in order to cross the river quicker;) and the Teifi coracle which has a more stable design necessary for fishing in the rougher faster flowing waters of the river Teifi.

The high quality of the water in these three rivers, contributes to the fact that West Wales Coracle Caught Sewin should have perfect markings with scales intact and no distortion to its head, fins or tail. The fork of its tail is usually square or convex. The wrist of the tail is broad and it is difficult to pick up the fish by its tail alone. As most sewin is sold whole and freshly caught it should have a fresh fish smell.

The PGI application for West Wales Coracle Caught Sewin is a quality product based upon the sewin being caught by the ancient Welsh tradition of coracle fishing, within the Sewin season. Although coracles were once used extensively throughout Wales, they are now restricted to three Principle Rivers – the rivers Taf, Tywi and Teifi all in West Wales. Coracle fishing is exclusive to these rivers and has been in existence for over 300 years. West Wales Coracle Caught Sewin is a quality product and is synonymous with food heritage and food culture in the area.

West Wales Coracle Caught Sewin is a quality product that is used by many top chefs and gastronomes and regularly appears as a named ingredient on their menus.

Andrew Luck – local chef to the River Tywi

"As a chef, it is exciting for me to see the first West Wales Coracle Caught Sewin of the season come in fresh from the coracles of West Wales. West Wales Coracle Caught Sewin is a great fish for chefs to use, not just for its unique fresh flavour and dense texture – but for the story it tells and the history and tradition behind it.

It's a pleasure to have on the menu and to know exactly where this quality product has come from. West Wales Coracle Caught Sewin is a superior fish and when smoked or cooked it can show its true diversity."

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Reference to publication of the specification

(Article 5(7) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006[*])

https://whitehall-admin.production.alphagov.co.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/256322/wwcc-sewin-spec.pdf

[*] Replaced by Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 November 2012 on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs