Ref. Ares(2017)717147 - 09/02/2017

SINGLE DOCUMENT

'The Vale of Clwyd Denbigh Plum'

EC No:

PDO (X) PGI ( )

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

'The Vale of Clwyd Denbigh Plum'

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 1.6 Fruit, vegetables and cereals fresh or processed

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

'The Vale of Clwyd Denbigh Plum' ***Prunus domestica Linnaeus "Denbigh Plum"*** is the name given to the Denbigh plum grown in the designated geographical area of the Vale of Clwyd in Denbighshire in North Wales from where the plum originates. The Denbigh plum is the only plum variety native to Wales.

'The Vale of Clwyd Denbigh Plum' has the following characteristics:

- Medium sized (50-65mm) diameter when ripe.
- Distinctly egg shaped but quite broad on the top shoulder.
- Orangey-red in colour with yellow patches when the plum begins to ripen, but darkening to a rich purple red, strewn with golden speckles when ripe and the fruit naturally becomes darker as the tree ages.
- The plums are covered with a wax bloom (visible whitish bloom) the longer they remain on the tree.
- Flesh is firm and of a rich yellow with greenish amber tint. Until the fruit is quite ripe the flesh clings to the stone but when fully ripe the flesh only partially adheres.
- The skin is soft and delicate and to avoid damage and bruising the fruit should be handled with great care.

The fruit can either be sold and eaten fresh as a dessert plum or sold to be used for culinary purposes. If required for culinary purposes the plums are harvested mid-August before they are ripe and when they are firm to touch. If required as a desert plum the fruit is allowed to remain and ripen on the tree and harvested in late August/early September when the fruit is just starting to soften when gently squeezed. This enables the fruit to fully develop its depth of flavour. At this stage the plums are a rich purple red colour with a naturally soft and juicy flesh which is sub acid and a little sweet. When cooked the depth of flavour intensifies and the natural

sweetness of the plum is enhanced. The texture of the fruit melts in the mouth if eaten when warm.

The ‘Vale of Clwyd Denbigh Plum’ has a long growing season which gives the plum more time to fully develop its flavour. It is this depth of flavour and sweetness which makes ‘The Vale of Clwyd Denbigh Plum’ unique.

Most of ‘The Vale of Clwyd Denbigh Plum’ are sold fresh in local markets or alternatively the fruit can be frozen or dried or processed into a puree and used as an ingredient to make produce such as preserves.

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

-

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

'The Vale of Clwyd Denbigh Plum' must be grown in the identified designated area from trees obtained from grafting or budding by commercial tree nurseries from known specimens originating from the designated area, or from local origin. The ‘Vale of Clwyd Denbigh Plum’ must NOT be derived from trees grown from seed. As pollination cannot be controlled, trees grown from seed contain genetic variation and therefore cannot be guaranteed to grow to “type”.

Pruning; - all pruning if required should be carried out manually.

Pest and Disease Management/Manuring and Spraying; - the benign physical and climatic conditions of the Vale of Clwyd enable the plum to primarily be grown with minimal human intervention and without the use of pesticides, fungicides or soil additives . However Good Agricultural Practice should be carried out to monitor both soil fertility via routine soil analysis and pests and disease levels so that spraying can be applied if required.

Harvesting; - Plums are harvested manually. This normally takes place 2-3 times over a 10-14 day period during August and September. The exact time of harvesting will depend upon a variety of factors including weather, age of tree, location, and the intended market of the fruit.

It is imperative that harvesting takes place in dry weather and as the fruit has a very soft and delicate skin they must be carefully picked by hand by their stems to avoid damage and bruising.

If required, short term on-farm cold storage (2-5 degrees centigrade) can be used; this must be carried out within the designated area.

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

-

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

-

4. CONCISE DEFINITION OF THE GEOGRAPHICAL AREA

The 'Vale of Clwyd Denbigh Plum' is grown in the designated geographical area of the Vale of Clwyd in Denbighshire North Wales which encompasses the following wards;-

- Aberwheeler,
- Bodfari,
- Cefn Meiriadog,
- Clocaenog,
- Cyffylliog,
- Denbigh,
- Efenechtyd,
- Henllan,
- Llanbedr Dyffryn Clwyd,
- Llandyrnog,
- Llanelidan,
- Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd,
- Llangynhafal,
- Llanrhaeadr yng Nghinmeirch,
- Llanynys,
- Nantglyn,
- Rhuddlan
- Ruthin,
- St Asaph,
- Trefnant ,
- Tremeirchion Cwm
- Waen.

And the ward of Llansannan.

5. LINK WITH THE GEOGRAPHICAL AREA

The Denbigh Plum originates in in the Vale of Clwyd and is the only plum variety native to Wales. The unique environmental and geographical factors in the Vale of Clwyd provide the perfect conditions for these native plums to thrive, and contributes to the specific characteristics of the fruit.

The Vale of Clwyd is a river valley region in North Wales, largely sheltered by surrounding hills including the Clwydian range on the eastern side which runs in a transverse direction from south-east to north-west and is only exposed to the north wind where it opens outward at the coast. The hills provide shelter from the prevailing westerly winds and often cold easterlies. This relatively sheltered environment is essential for plum production as it helps reduce damage to both the blossom and the developing plum.

The Vale of Clwyd represents the most extensive area of Grade 1 and Grade 2 land in Wales. This land has some of the most naturally fertile soils in the UK providing all the nutrients that the plums require. The plums thrive on the naturally free draining medium textured deep soils found in Vale of Clwyd, with the unique

limestone geology underlying new soft red Triassic sandstone. The natural occurrence of lime produces lime rich soils (with high pH), which is a requisite for the growth and development of 'The Vale of Clwyd Denbigh Plum' trees enabling the trees to have been grown in this region for centuries.

Historically this region with its fertile soils has had a tradition and reputation for the production of an array of soft fruit production including plums, all of which would have been exhibited at the Vale of Clwyd Horticultural shows, which were famous annual events since the 1850's. By the late 1890's, Denbighshire (which is the main county in the Vale of Clwyd) was the largest county area of soft fruit in Wales. The history of plum production has marked the local area, with streets and houses in Denbigh named after 'The Vale of Clwyd Denbigh Plum'. One local property which has been in the same family for over a hundred years has an orchard which still produces 'The Vale of Clwyd Denbigh Plum' for the commercial market.

The knowledge and skill required for growing 'The Vale of Clwyd Denbigh Plum' in the designated area has developed over time. Specific human skills associated with the growing of this fruit which have been passed down from one generation to the next, including: planting and establishment of the plum trees, pruning and tree management, when to harvest, and handling the fruit.

The skin of 'The Vale of Clwyd Denbigh Plum' is very soft and delicate compared to more commercially produced plums; this necessitates the fruit should be handled with great care to avoid damage and bruising. Fruit pickers are trained to handle the fruit as little as possible and to pick the fruit by hand by their stems. As a result, freshly picked plums often have a whitish bloom (which protects the fruit) still visible on the fruit.

The Vale of Clwyd benefits from its own microclimate which is affected by the moderating influence of the Gulf Stream and favours the growth of these plums. Plums are among the earliest fruits to blossom and a frost free site is essential to achieve regular cropping as frost poses a severe threat to blossoming trees.

The Denbigh Plum has, unlike most other plums a natural resistance to fungal disease which enables it to remain remarkably disease free despite the warm/damp climate. The Vales climate is also cooler in comparison to other plum growing areas. This provides 'The Vale of Clwyd Denbigh Plum' with a long growing season which gives the plum more time to fully develop its flavour. It is this depth of flavour and sweetness which makes 'The Vale of Clwyd Denbigh Plum' unique.

The close proximity of the sea and the river Clwyd that runs through the valley not only moderates extreme temperatures but also provides a source of natural irrigation which in combination with the natural high water table in the Vale of Clwyd, satisfies the high moisture requirements of the deep rooted plum trees preventing the need for artificial irrigation.

"The Vale of Clwyd Denbigh Plum" has managed not only to survive but to thrive in the natural conditions found in this area with minimal human intervention. This sheltered, flat, fertile and lime rich area's unique microclimate with its moderate temperatures natural irrigation system and probability of frost free days during the plum blossoming period, provides the ideal growing conditions for 'The Vale of Clwyd Denbigh Plum' and contributes to their specific and unique characteristics.

Until recently, production of 'The Vale of Clwyd Denbigh Plum' had largely died out. However in recent years it has experienced a resurgence, bringing together communities in the designated area, and has resulted in the annual 'The Vale of

Clwyd Denbigh Plum' Feast, which is attended by over 2000 visitors. This festival showcases the fresh fruit, and the array of products in which it can be used.

The famous Welsh celebrity Chef, Bryn Williams, has become the patron of 'The Vale of Clwyd Denbigh Plum' and it is featured in his recipe book, "the Love of Veg." 'The Vale of Clwyd Denbigh Plum' is recognised throughout Wales and the rest of the UK for its excellence, and is actively sourced by local catering establishments, and has also been nominated by the Slow Food Movement for an Ark of Taste award.

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/571281/vale-clwyd-denbigh-plum.pdf