## Product Specification for ‘Fenalår fra Norge’

**1. Name**

‘Fenalår fra Norge’



**2. Description of ‘Fenalår fra Norge’**

'Fenalår fra Norge' is salted, dried and matured, and sometimes smoked, leg of lamb and mutton of Norwegian origin. 'Fenalår fra Norge' comprises the varieties Traditional and Matured. 'Fenalår fra Norge' includes whole thigh with bone, whole thigh which is partially boned, whole thigh where the leg is completely removed, as pieces of the whole thigh and sliced.

The whole item is shaped like a thigh of lamb or sheep. There are no formal requirements for the form but hooves and sirloin leg is generally completely or partially removed. Partially boned item is usually shaped like a club where the tenderloin bone and thigh bone are removed while the leg bone is retained as a "handle". A boned item can be sold as whole pieces or slices. Whole pieces are usually oval pear-like shape or they may be pressed into a form such as a square. Slices are generally thin (0.6-1.2 mm), oval or nearly square.

'Fenalår fra Norge' has a round meat flavour with no to noticeable characteristics of sheep. 'Fenalår fra Norge' should have a cured and non-deviant smell and a mild salty taste. The Mature variety must have a salt content less than 7%. The Traditional variety must have a salt content less than 9%. Marinated or spiced thighs will take the taste from the particular spices used. There are no restrictions on the spices, herbs and berries that may be used. Rosemary, garlic, pepper, thyme, berries and honey are common flavourings.

'Fenalår fra Norge' should have an even, reddish colour, tender and medium-firm to firm consistency, and it should be mould-free. The meat should not have a dry edge, and the fat should have a light golden colour.

There are no formal requirements for maturation, but there is a requirement for the degree of drying. The Traditional variety must have a minimum 30% desiccation and the Matured variety must have a minimum 35% desiccation. Normal drying and maturation time is 3-6 months for Traditional

and 5-9 months for Matured. As a general rule, 'Fenalår fra Norge' shall be sold with an $a_w$ lower than 0.90.

The regular smoking method is cold smoking with beech wood chips. In some cases, juniper used instead of beech.

Normal weight for the entire thigh after drying is 1.4 to 2.1 kg for lamb. For adult animals, the similar weight will be 2.0-4.2 kg.

**3. Geographical area**

'Fenalår fra Norge' shall be produced, processed and refined in Norway, here defined as the Kingdom of Norway with the exception of Svalbard and Jan Mayen. The area (mainland) constitutes 84% of the area of the Kingdom of Norway.

**4. Proof of product origin**

For 'Fenalår fra Norge', origin is ensured by tracing at all levels from living animal to end product. The raw material for 'Fenalår fra Norge' shall be leg of lamb or mutton born, raised and slaughtered in Norway. All living animals shall be labelled with individual numbers in accordance with applicable regulations, and the individual number shall be linked to the primary producer number. This makes it possible to trace the animal back to being born and raised in Norway.

The individual number and primary producer number shall follow the carcase, and later the leg, to the 'Fenalår fra Norge' producer, for example through the carcase label. The individual leg is also to be labelled with a barcode or other label so that it is clear what kind of 'Fenalår fra Norge' can/should be produced from the leg.

Upon arrival to the processing plant an initial inspection is to be performed in order to ensure the correct quality of the ingredient. This is to be documented.

On each batch of legs it should also be documented that the process specifications are followed, and that all legs are fully traceable back to the primary producer. 'Fenalår fra Norge' sold whole shall be fully traceable, while 'Fenalår fra Norge' sold sliced are to be traceable at batch level.

The final product is to be labelled with information on the producer.

**5. Production method**

*Ingredients:*

The raw material for 'Fenalår fra Norge' shall be leg of lamb or mutton born, raised and slaughtered in Norway. Both fresh and frozen/thawed legs can be used, but frozen/thawed legs should not be older than 12 months.

All sheep breeds common in Norway can be used. Common breeds are Norwegian white sheep, Dala sheep, Norwegian pelt sheep and Old Norwegian short tail landrace, and crosses between the different races can be used. There are no requirements regarding the age of the animal. The most prevalent is to produce 'Fenalår fra Norge' from lamb, i.e., animals under the age of 12 months. The usual slaughter age of lambs is 7- 8 months. 'Fenalår fra Norge' can also be made from adult animals with usual slaughter age between 1-5 years.

Slaughter periods are generally regulated by the production cycle of Norwegian farmers. In practice more than 90% of all lamb slaughtering takes place in September to November. The animals are then gathered in from grazing and the year's lamb production is taken out for slaughter, while the

livestock is fed through the winter. For adult animals some amount of slaughtering occurs during the winter, usually January to March.

To obtain satisfactory quality during production of 'Fenalår fra Norge', it is crucial to sort the raw material, thighs must have a pH measured in flat steak between 5.5 and 5.8. During the process, thighs must be massaged and pressed for traces of blood. This is often manual labour, but mechanical presses can also be used. During production, the temperature should be under 7 degrees Celsius. To achieve salt-curing, it is essential to allocate enough time for distributing the salt before starting the drying process. The drying process must take place in a suitably moist climate at the proper temperature. Each thigh must be manually checked to monitor the drying process and to pick the thighs at the proper degree of drying.

When freezing lamb thighs, they are frozen to temperatures below -18 degrees Celsius. Thawing frozen thighs takes place in controlled temperatures below 7 degrees Celsius. During thawing, the thighs shed some liquid. Thighs that have been frozen need a somewhat shorter salting time than fresh legs to achieve the correct salt level.

We are otherwise not aware of frozen thighs having any other characteristics than fresh thighs, it is not known whether there are differences in texture or flavour between 'Fenalår fra Norge' which are made from fresh thighs and those made from frozen thighs.



*Salting:*
Before salting the legs should have an even, low temperature (< 7 °C). Pressing or massaging of entire legs to squeeze out blood residues and synovial fluid before salting is recommended for Traditional and a requirement for Matured 'Fenalår fra Norge'. The legs are to be sorted into groups according to weight or salted individually in order to ensure the correct amount of salt and sensory quality of the final product. Injection salting is not permitted.

*Distribution of salt:*
The legs are to be kept cool (< 7 °C, however) until the meat is salted through.

*Washing:*
When the salt is distributed, the legs are to be cleaned of salt and surface pollution.

*Drying:*
'Fenalår fra Norge' is to be dried until the correct percentage of shrinking is achieved, at least 30% for Traditional and 35% for Matured. This normally takes between 3-6 months for Traditional and 5-9 months for Matured.

*Final inspection:*
Each lot is to be inspected for shrinkage, and subject to sensory testing for consistency, smell and taste, as well as chemical testing for salt content and water activity ($a_W$ ). Salt and $a_W$ for a lot is considered the average of the samples from the lot.

In entire legs the control piece is to be cut from the widest, meatiest part, as perpendicularly as possible to the femur, from the ball joint or knuckle towards the shank. The piece closest to the ball joint is to be tested chemically, while the piece closest to the shank is to undergo sensory testing. The piece includes rump steak, stewing beef and silverside. The lump of fat at the knuckle and the outer layer of fat are to be removed before analysis. In bone-free 'Fenalår fra Norge' one should endeavour to take a sample as described above, otherwise a piece is to be cut from the middle for sensory analysis, while the chemical analysis is to be made on an aggregate sample consisting of the middle piece and an end without heel.

As a general rule, 'Fenalår fra Norge' shall be sold with an $a_w$ lower than 0.90. If an $a_W$ higher than 0.90 is chosen, food safety must be ensured through hazard analysis and risk assessment of the production process, and one should consider labelling the end product as a refrigerated product.

**6. Proof of link**

The application for registration of a protected geographical indication is based on reputation.

'Fenalår fra Norge' is a unique product from Norway, both with regard to the designation and the production method. A common definition is: "Cured leg of mutton and lamb". The designation has not been found to have been used in other countries. With regard to the production of products with similar process technology, there is only small and scattered production elsewhere. On the Faroe Islands and on Iceland they have a long and living tradition for products similar to 'Fenalår fra Norge'. The processes are somewhat different from the most common methods in Norway, and the products 'Hangikjøt' (Iceland), 'Skerpikjøt' (Faroe Islands), and 'Fenalår fra Norge' are so different that they must be said to belong to three different product groups.

There is a long tradition of extensive sheep farming in Norway. This can be attributed to the cool climate as well as the topography of Norway, with much grassland and steep land. In the European context Norway could be defined as 90% mountain region. There is a tendency that cattle is more prevalent in flatter and more fertile areas, while sheep farming increases in mountainous and steep coastal landscapes, along the West coast and in Northern Norway. This has contributed to relatively more sheep farming in Norway than in other countries. The climate has also influenced the conservation method for leg of lamb. Norway has a cool climate, which is dry or windy, or both. The climate has made Norway better suited for drying meat and fish, and this could explain this long and widespread tradition.

A long and continuous tradition of production of the product in Norway can be documented. In 1555 Olaus Magnus writes about mutton that "Northerners eat mutton meat, like nearly all other meats, raw all year after it has laid in brine, been smoked and dried in fresh air, raw all year, and this meat can get old".[i] In 1831 Maren Elisabeth Bang writes about the salting of carcases, and sometimes smoking and hanging in an airy place.[ii] In 1902 Hulda Garborg writes about «All the salty and dry meat being generally used».[iii] However, we can reasonably assume that the tradition is considerably older than this. Many indirect sources say that the product was most likely produced during the Viking era (800–1050 AD). Findings of sheep bones dated to about 3000 BC (the Neolithic period) make it logical to assume that leg of mutton could have been dried already at this time.

The production of 'Fenalår fra Norge' is a local tradition in all four regions in Norway and is associated with all of Norway. Until the end of the 1900s it was common among Norwegian farmers to produce the product for their own use. The knowledge and expertise on making 'Fenalår fra Norge' has been handed down through generations. One has therefore gained great expertise on how production should be adapted to local conditions, such as temperature, humidity and wind conditions. The accumulated knowledge of selecting the right quality of mutton thighs, how to massage the thighs, the know-how of salting- and drying process to get the mild salty taste, and the right consistency, are all important factors for the renowned quality of 'Fenalår fra Norge'.
This knowledge has now been transferred to industrial production, but is still linked to the utilization of geography and climate.

The long and extensive tradition for 'Fenalår fra Norge' in Norway has given this food a solid reputation in Norway.

A consumer survey conducted in January 2016 (see attachment) confirms the high awareness of 'Fenalår fra Norge' and that the product has a strong and positive reputation . The consumer consider 'Fenalår fra Norge' as a high quality product and as a unique and traditional Norwegian product. 'Fenalår fra Norge' is most often used during holidays such as 17 May (the National Day) or Christmas, and in the summer when the weather is warm.

The 'Fenalår fra Norge' tradition is based on the use of Norwegian ingredients and processing and finishing in Norway. The reputation of 'Fenalår fra Norge' is based on this tradition, which means that the reputation is associated with the use of Norwegian ingredients and that the processing and refining take place in Norway. With its unique designation and production method the reputation of 'Fenalår fra Norge' has a strong link to Norway.

Due to the long, widespread tradition of using Norwegian raw materials, the consumer is likely to be misled if 'Fenalår fra Norge' is made from imported raw materials. It is therefore important that 'Fenalår fra Norge' is made from Norwegian raw materials.

**7. Control body**

The Norwegian Food Safety Authority
Address:
Felles postmottak
P.O.Box 383
2381 Brumunddal
Norway

The Norwegian Food Safety Authority (NFSA) is a governmental body, operating in a national basis, whose aim is to ensure that food and drinking water are as safe and healthy as possible for consumers.

NFSA are responsible for all legislation within the production and distribution of food. This includes business activities within primary production, food industries, grocery stores, all kinds of food catering and some import, such as import of animals, food and plants.

NFSA also perform risk-based inspections and verifications including verifications of the requirements for the use of a protected designation.

**8. Specific labelling rule for the product in question**
NA

**Applicant group:**
Fenalår fra Norge SA
Norway

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[i] Magnus, 1555:776
[ii] Bang, 1831:122
[iii] Garborg, 1902:20

Attachments:
Consumer survey from 2016
Labels 'Fenalår fra Norge'
Papers
Google search