

PRESIDIUM Acceptance Form

Name of product in English, in local language and in any relevant dialects:

Traditional 'Limburgse stroop' – fruit treacle from Limburg (region in the South of the Netherlands)

English: Limburg 'stroop'

Dutch: (Traditionele en ambachtelijke) Limburgse stroop

Limburg dialects: sjroap, zeem, kruutje and ziepnaat.

Product category:

Fruit product – condiment

Brief Description:

History

The “traditionele en ambachtelijke Limburgse stroop” has a very long (several centuries) history. A history of mostly small farmers and monasteries in order to preserve an excess of fruit for the winter time. Originally the fruit was processed into ‘stroop’ to preserve the fruit that was gathered in the region and to create a highly caloric bread condiment (spread) to be stocked for and used during the winter. An average family in the region had as much as 50 kgs. of ‘stroop’ in storage and each village had at least one local producer. At the beginning of the 20th century the production of ‘stroop’ progressively became more industrial and this trend increased after World War II. As a result of industrialisation and urbanisation traditional fruit orchards in Limburg were gradually disappearing. This meant that local fruit varieties were also doomed to vanish, as well as the craft of producing ‘stroop’. The efforts of a group of enthusiastic local people, who collected old recipes and learned the old skills, has made it possible to keep alive the art of producing ‘stroop’, with new artisan production facilities having been set up in the area. Old equipment has been restored and it is now used by most of the producers. Currently there are four producers of “traditionele en ambachtelijke Limburgse Stroop” (see list below).

The product

“Traditionele en ambachtelijke Limburgse stroop” is generally less sweet. This typical regional character has several grades, depending on family recipes and in general the use of more apples. The ‘Limburgse stroop’ is mostly made of 60% pears and 40% apples. Another traditional ‘Limburgse stroop’ is made of 75% apples and 25% of sugar-beets and is called Rinse Stroop. The stroop produced in Belgium is somewhat sweeter and it has a higher percentage of pear.

Local orchard in Limburg provide the most important ingredients for the production of ‘stroop’: traditional apple varieties (*among others Schaapsneus, Gronsvelder Klumpke, Eysdener Klumpke, Goudreinet, Keuleman, Rode Sterappel*) and old pear sorts (*among others Herfstpeer van Geulle, Legipont, Brederode, Bongerspeer, Suikerpeer*).

The preparation of “traditionele en ambachtelijke Limburgse stroop” requires a correct balance in the use of apples and pears, the use of copper kettles that have to be in direct contact with an open fire (whereas industrial producers use steel kettles heated by hot water steam injection or steam), the use of fruit juice that is only roughly filtered (this causes more

“body” and a stronger taste) and an uninterrupted production process, without adding any other ingredients.

The production of “traditionele en ambachtelijke Limburgse stroop” requires a perfect balance between ingredients and techniques: fruit selection, cooking conditions of the fruit are crucial. After that the cooked fruit has to be pressed and filtered. Then the copper kettle is filled with the juice of the fruit. The strength of the heat has to be carefully monitored. The recipe to create a final product with the correct structure and taste includes a balanced mix of different apples and pears, each with their unique taste and different percentages of fruit-sugars, pectin and acids. The artisan producing ‘stroop’, a “stroopstoker”, must keep these criteria in mind while processing the apples and pears that are available to him/her at the moment of production, anytime between September and November. Given this artisanal approach and the use of different fruit sorts. Each batch of “Traditionele en ambachtelijke Limburgse stroop” always has a slightly different taste.

The production process

The bottom of a copper kettle is covered with a small layer of water. The kettle is then filled with layers of pears and apples, then covered with cloth and heated. The heat creates steam on the bottom of the kettle and this causes the fruit to change its structure within 4 to 6 hours. At this stage of the production process the “stroopstoker” must continuously check the fire, in order to ensure that its intensity varies during the different stages of the cooking process. The fruit pulp generated by the cooking process is then transferred to a wooden press. The pulp has to be placed in layers, with cloth in between. The pressed juice is then roughly filtered and transferred to a copper kettle, where it cooks for several hours (4 to 15, according to volume, heat of the fire and different family recipes), until it is reduced to approximately 15% of the original weight of the fruit. The experienced “stroopstoker” can check the correct density of the stroop by lifting the stirring rod and letting the ‘stroop’ flow slowly in a “V-shaped” drip. Once ready, the ‘stroop’ is immediately put into jars. Good ‘stroop’ can be kept in storage for many years.

Artisan production of “traditionele en ambachtelijke Limburgse stroop” requires observing the following rules:

1. Correct choice of fruit varieties to be used – preferably from traditional orchards and specific biologically grown varieties for ‘stroop’ in more modern orchards
2. Correct choice of the right harvesting time – i.e. when the fruit is properly ripe
3. Correct “management” of the heating
4. Use of copper kettles on an open fire
5. Pressing of the fruit after cooking and filtering of the juice
6. Cooking of the juice until correct viscosity
7. An uninterrupted production process from fruit to ‘stroop’
8. No additions to the ‘stroop’

The important thing about the “traditionele en ambachtelijke Limburgse Stroop” is that regardless of the general production method, the final product always has a distinctive and unique taste. It will be possible to taste the differences during the annual tasting session/presentation that will be organized by the Presidium ‘Limburgse Stroop’.

Traditional area of production:

The Southern Limburg region of the Netherlands and bordering areas in Belgium (Limburg and Land van Herve) and Germany (Rheinland)

Is the product produced in the traditional production area?

Yes

Production volumes of the four ‘Traditionele en ambachtelijke Limburgse Stroop’ producers:

Hans en Julienne Franssen

started production in 1991; the figures of the recent years:

2007

Four “stooksels” (production lots) of each 75 kg, in total 300 kg. of ‘stroop’ (treacle)

150 kg with 60% pears and 40% apples ; 75 kg with 80% pears and 20% apples and 75 kg with 70% pears, 20% apples and 10% plums

2008

Same quantities - 300 kg of ‘stroop’

150 kg with 60% pears and 40% apples , 150 with kg 70% pears and 30% apples

2009

Same quantities - 300 kg of ‘stroop’

75 kg with 60% pears and 40% apples , 150 kg with 70% pears and 30% apples and 75 kg with 55% pears, 30 apples and 15% quince

2010

Five ‘stooksels’ – 375 kg of ‘stroop’

225 kg of ‘stroop’ with 60% pears and 40 % apples; 75 kg with 80% pears and 20% apples and 75 kg. with 70 % pears and 30 % apples

Roy Eussen

continued production in 1996, as successor of the family tradition

In the last three years about 2200kg/year: ca. 30 “stooksels” (production lots) of each 75 kg ‘stroop’. The composition is always 60% pears and 40% apples

Coen Eggen, e.c.

started production in 1983

2007

Three lots, each of 90 kg, with 60% pears and 40 % apples

2008 - 25th production year

Three lots, each of respectively of 90, 90 and 140 kg. and with 60% pears and 40% apples.

2009

Three production lots, each of respectively 90,90 and 100 kg. The composition of the first two lots was 60% pears and 40% apples. The composition of the third lot was 50% pears and 50% apples.

2010

Three lots, resp. 90, 120 and 160 kg, using 60% pears and 40 % apples

Mart Vandewall

started production in 1977

Campaign 2007-2008, 54 production lots

3369 kg - with 60 % pears and 40% apples, 1634 kg with 80% pears and 20% apples, 1458 kg Rinse, 75% apples en 25% sugar beets

Campaign 2008-2009, 63 production lots

3579 kg 60% pears and 40% apples, 1757 kg with 80% pears and 20% pears, 1864 kg Rinse, 75% apples and 25% sugar beets

Campaign 2009-2010, 57 production lots,

3600 kg with 60% pears and 40% apples, 1917kg with 80% pears and 20% apples, 1486 kg Rinse 75% apples and 25% sugar beets.

Campaign 2010-2011, 56 production lots

3500 kg with 60% pears and 40% apples, 1700 kg with 80% pears en 20% apples, 1254 kg Rinse, 75% apples and 25% sugar beets.

Main production areas of the “Traditionele en ambachtelijke Limburgse Stroop”

The main production area is South Limburg (NL), with the bordering areas of the Pay d’Herve (territory between Liège and Aachen) and the Belgian province Limburg (mainly Haspengouw) and adjacent region in Germany (Rheinland). The Dutch producers have a working relationship with these areas. Especially with some Belgian colleagues.

Additional activities

The producers are strengthening and expanding their activities.

Is the product also produced for the market?

Yes

Name and address of any relevant contact or producer:

- Coen Eggen/Ambachshoes, Kelmonderstraat 51, 6191 RD Beek, tel. 046 4376472, gcceggen@xs4all.nl
- Roy Eussen, Postadres: Rue de Remersdael 94, B 4852 Hombourg, België, 0031651608979, info@hombourgeois.eu
- Familie Hans en Julienne Franssen-Kerckhoffs, Koulen 12, 6343 CJ Klimmen, 043-4592296, j.a.m.j.franssen@hetnet.nl
- Mart Vandewall, Dorpsstraat 140, 6251 ND Eckelrade, 043-4081841, m.vandewall@planet.nl

Name of person responsible for nominating the product:

Sándor Schiferli

Does a Presidium Coordinator exist?

Name of the Coordinator Henk Hoogakker – Stichting Slow Food Euregio Maas Rijn

Address Maria Wijngaard 12

ZIP code 6001 BK Weert – The Netherlands

Telephone +31-495-550076

Fax + 31-495-550077

E-Mail henk@hoogakkerpr.nl

Is there currently an association representing producers / breeders?

Name of the association: Stichting Slow Food Euregio Maas-Rijn

Address: P.O. box 10234 , Weert

ZIP code : 6000GE

Telephone: =31 6 53 19 89 29

Fax:

E-Mail: henk@hoogakkerpr.nl

Does a written production protocol exist adopted by all producers?

Yes

What are the Presidium targets? (price, market-value, publicity or others)

The creation of a Presidium for the “Traditionele en ambachtelijke Limburgse stroop” has the objective to protect the traditional/artisanal production techniques and to maintain the taste and quality of the traditional product. Authenticity, small scale production, strengthening of the local social and cultural tradition and craftsmanship are key concepts related to the production of “traditionele en ambachtelijke Limburgse stroop”.

The objectives of the Presidium are:

1. to preserve artisanal knowledge and skills,
2. to document the context of the process
3. to warrant the craft (production criteria and requirements) and its tradition and continuity (also in terms of materials used)
4. to strengthen/increase the production of ‘stroop’ within the agreed criteria.

Related objectives are the promotion of small scale agriculture and the (re)planting of traditional local orchards and fruit sorts and the strengthening of the economic and environmental values of South Limburg.

What does the Presidium need to develop optimally?

Qualified technical assistance

Yes

Promotion of the product

Yes

Increasing local retail sale

Yes

Versie 14/04/10

Increasing sales outside the production area

Yes

Improvement of tourism

Yes

Other

Improvement of small scale agriculture

Contact details of nominator:

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