

QUALITY SCHEMES FOR FOODS AND TRADITIONAL FOOD KNOWLEDGE

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Abstract

The European Union has developed certification schemes for the quality of food products, offering consumer guarantees, protecting regional culinary specialties and supporting the use of traditional shredding techniques. At the national level, in Romania, there are other schemes and characteristics that producers need to comply in order to obtain the certification. Nowadays there is much emphasis on food safety, as the globalization phenomena is more and more increasing and the food chain is more complex. This paper aims to provide an overview on the European quality schemes for foods regulation as well as Romanian national schemes and also to emphasize the need of traditional foods knowledge development.

Keywords: Traditional foods, traditional foods knowledge, European Union, local foods, food safety.

Introduction

In 1992, The European Commission has developed certification schemes for the quality of food products, offering consumer guarantees, protecting regional culinary specialties and supporting the use of traditional shredding techniques. According to an analysis by Euractiv, EU Southern EU Member States are seconded to the production of certified food at the continental level under these various quality schemes. Romania is again predictable at the end of the European ranking with regard to certified products - 4 in number. The situation is primarily due to the Romanian authorities and not to the requirements imposed by the European Union.

For a long time, *Magiun Topoloveni* was the only Romanian product certified at European level but unprotected in Romania neither by State Office for Inventions and Trademarks, nor by Consumer Protection, which allowed competition to ignore the high quality standard of the product. At European level, Italy, France, Spain hold 50% (European Union, 2018) of all certified products. As the registration process is still on going and it takes time, traditional food knowledge process should be encouraged between the producers in order to ensure that the national food identity would not be lost.

Considering the above, the paper is presenting the current situation of quality schemes products in the European Union and also, the current Romanian national schemes for foods and the importance of its the knowledge transfer.

1. Literature review

The history of local foods is very rich and meaningful in the patrimony of a region or country, being considered representative for a group of people. France was the first country where it was decided to differentiate the products according to the region in which they are produced, doing so in order to determine soil and climate quality differences for Bordeaux wine and Roquefort cheese. On August 31, 1666, the Parliament of Toulouse introduced a decree

specifying that only Roquefort residents have the exclusivity to produce the product: "There is only one Roquefort cheese, and it is produced in Roquefort ever since in the caves of this city " (Cambra Fierro and Villafuerte Martin, 2009). Thus, the first traditional product of protected origin was founded. As regards the history of the legal regulation of local foods and geographical indications level, the protection initiated in 1992 by the European Union anchored in Regulation (EEC) No. Council Regulation (EEC) No 2081/92 on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin for agricultural products and foodstuffs. Later, in 2004 Toronto Food Policy Council implemented a programme *local foods* movement that aimed to promote small farmers and their natural products.

As the globalisation is spreading more and more and fast-foods can be found worldwide, fir traditional foods is becoming more and more challenging to resist in time. For this, in 2008, Jessica Christine Kwik, in a thesis Traditional food knowledge: Renewing Culture and Restoring Health and Jaffe, J. and M. Gertler, in 2006 in the paper "Victual Vicissitudes: Consumer Deskillling and the (Gendered) Transformation of Food Systems" emphasizes the importance of traditional food knowledge and explains why this instrument can help communities to transmit the knowledge from one generation to another.

2. Quality schemes at European Union level

Through the second pillar of the CAP, different forms of funding are created for farmers to support their participation in quality schemes and the organic production and labelling system. The European Union has created two categories of quality products: those related to a geographic region or territory and those relating to a particular production method Quality schemes are regulated by *REGULATION (EU) NO. 1151/2012 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL OF THE COUNCIL* of 21 November 2012 on systems in the field quality of agricultural and food products and *REGULATION (EC) NO. THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION*, Of 15 January 2008 concerning the definition, designation, presentation, labelling and protection of geographical indications of beverages spirit drinks and repealing Council Regulation (EEC) No 1576/89.

Based on the above regulations foods are classified in below schemes (European Union, 2018):

DOPs and PGIs are indicators that guarantee the quality and traceability of the product in order to maintain a quality standard, to protect the reputation of local and producers' products.

Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) - may be the name of a region, a specific place, or a country used to describe an agricultural or food product.

The product must be:

- Originating in this region, specific place or country;
- Quality or characteristics are due to the geographical environment with its natural and human factors;
- Raw materials used must come only from the defined geographical area;
- Production, processing and preparation must take place only within the defined geographical area;



Source: European Union Quality Schemes, 2018

Figure 1. Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) logo

Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) may be the name of a region, a specific place, or a country used to describe an agricultural or food product.

The product must be:

- Originating in that region, specific place or country;
- Have a specific quality, reputation or other attributes attributable to geographical origin;
- The raw materials used may also come from outside the defined geographical area;
- Certain operations of the production process such as packaging, freezing, storage, etc. can take place outside the defined geographical area;



Source: European Union Quality Schemes, 2018

Figure 2. Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) logo

DOP PGI similarities: the two apply to the same types of products, they are geographical names, the origin of the name is related to the geographical area, region, specific place or country, the same procedures, the same protection.

DOP PGI differences:

1. Link to the geographical area:

In the case of DOP, the quality or characteristics of the product are due to the geographical environment with its natural and human factor but in the case of PGI, the product must have a specific quality, reputation or other attributes attributable to the geographical origin

2. Origin of raw material:

In the case of PDO - the raw materials used must come only from the defined geographical area but in the case of PGI - raw materials used can also come from outside the defined geographical area.

3. Getting the product:

In the case of DOP - production, processing and preparation must take place only within the defined geographical area but in the case of PGI - certain operations of the production process such as packaging, freezing, storage, etc. may take place outside the defined geographical area.

PDO and PGI systems provide for the protection within the European Union of names that guarantee and increase the value of the products concerned. The European Commission data show that around 20% of trade in PDO or PGI products is cross-border, with certification having an important economic role. In fact, the fact that a manufacturer obtains a protected designation of origin or a protected geographical indication for a product which it manufactures implies that the intellectual property is protected throughout the Community but also that it enjoys increased visibility for commercial purposes in the form of the name, as registered, a logo and reserved terms "protected designation of origin" or "protected geographical indication" and their acronyms, "DOP" and "PGI".

At the opposite end, there is a **Traditional Specialty Guaranteed, TSG**, which certifies one thing: the product was made according to a traditional recipe for the country. Both work and ingredients can come from a much larger area. If we make an analogy and assume that the Romanian cow would be a recognized European product, the STG logo would guarantee it is a product made after a local recipe, but it would not indicate the variant, so it could be plum brandy, pear, hard or badly fortified with alcohol, aged or not in a barrel of mulberry tree.



Source: European Union Quality Schemes, 2018

Figure 3. Traditional Specialty Guaranteed, TSG logo

Once a traditional recipe has been registered, European bodies provide a similar protection to that offered by OSIM (State Office for Inventions and Trademarks) locally, that is to say, it guarantees copyright to those entitled to use them. Unauthorized use of these names and trademarks may be the basis for a criminal trial.

3. Other schemes

3.1 Mountain product

The quality term 'mountain product' it highlights the specificities of a food product, made in mountain areas, facing difficult natural conditions. It is regulated by EU regulation 665/2014 on the conditions of use of the optional quality term 'mountain product'. Recognizing this is an advantage that can be used for farmers as well as consumers as this it enables to market the food product better but it also ensures certain characteristics to the consumer.

Specifications: raw materials comes from mountain areas. For processed products, the manufacturing process should take place in montane areas as well (European Union, 2018).



Source: European Union Quality Schemes, 2018

Figure 4. Montane product logo

3.2 Product of EU's outermost regions

Agriculture in the EU's outermost areas face difficulties due to the remoteness, including very difficult geographical and meteorological conditions. To ensure greater awareness of the agricultural products from the European Union outermost regions (the French Overseas Departments), also a dedicated logo has been created.



Source: European Commission, Agriculture policy, 2018

Figure 5. Product of EU's outermost regions logo

4. Overview on foods certified on quality schemes European Union

At European Union level there are 1410 food products certified on PDO, PGI and TSG schemes since the regulation is in place. France, Spain and Italy are the countries that have the highest number of certified foods. Together, they managed to register 735 traditional/local foods of the 1410 total (European Union, 2018). Majority of them are small and medium sized farms or enterprises that are family owned. This type of businesses are the accelerator for food industry.

Table 1. European Quality schemes for food products - number of certified foods

Type	Product Category	Total
PDO	Class 1.1. Fresh meat (and offal)	42
	Class 1.2. Meat products (cooked, salted, smoked, etc.)	36
	Class 1.3. Cheeses	189
	Class 1.4. Other products of animal origin (eggs, honey, various dairy products except butter, etc.)	34

Type	Product Category	Total
	Class 1.5. Oils and fats (butter, margarine, oil, etc.)	115
	Class 1.6. Fruit, vegetables and cereals fresh or processed	150
	Class 1.7. Fresh fish, molluscs, and crustaceans and products derived therefrom	13
	Class 1.8. Other products of Annex I of the Treaty (spices etc.)	36
	Class 2.4. Bread, pastry, cakes, confectionery, biscuits and other baker's wares	4
	Class 2.5. Natural gums and resins	2
	Class 3.1. Hay	1
	Class 3.2. Essential oils	3
	Class 3.4. Cochineal (raw product of animal origin)	1
	Class 3.6. Wool	1
PDO Total		627
PGI	Class 1.1. Fresh meat (and offal)	120
	Class 1.2. Meat products (cooked, salted, smoked, etc.)	141
	Class 1.3. Cheeses	46
	Class 1.4. Other products of animal origin (eggs, honey, various dairy products except butter, etc.)	12
	Class 1.5. Oils and fats (butter, margarine, oil, etc.)	18
	Class 1.6. Fruit, vegetables and cereals fresh or processed	228
	Class 1.7. Fresh fish, molluscs, and crustaceans and products derived therefrom	33
	Class 1.8. other products of Annex I of the Treaty (spices etc.)	21
	Class 2.1. Beers	21
	Class 2.4. Bread, pastry, cakes, confectionery, biscuits and other baker's wares	73
	Class 2.6. Mustard paste	2
	Class 2.7. Pasta	9
	Class 3.2. Essential oils	1
	Class 3.5. Flowers and ornamental plants	3
PGI Total		728
TSG	Class 1.1. Fresh meat (and offal)	3
	Class 1.2. Meat products (cooked, salted, smoked, etc.)	13
	Class 1.3. Cheeses	6
	Class 1.4. Other products of animal origin (eggs, honey, various dairy products except butter, etc.)	3
	Class 1.5. Oils and fats (butter, margarine, oils, etc.)	1
	Class 1.6. Fruit, vegetables and cereals, fresh or processed	1
	Class 1.7. Fresh fish, molluscs and crustaceans and products derived therefrom	3
	Class 1.8. Other products of Annex I of the Treaty	4
	Class 2.1. Beer	6
	Class 2.3. Confectionery, bread, pastry, cakes, biscuits and other baker's wares	14

Type	Product Category	Total
	Class 2.4. Pasta, whether or not cooked or stuffed	1
TSG Total		55
Grand Total		1410

Source: DOOR-Database of Origin and Registration Agriculture quality, 2018, <http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/quality/door/list.html>.

On the PDO the highest number of certified foods are the *Chesses* (189) and *Fruit, vegetables and cereals fresh or processed* (150), most of them can be found in France from the total of 627. On PGI, there are 228 foods certified for class *Fruit, vegetables and cereals fresh or processed* and 141 for *Meat products* class from the total of 728. Regarding TSG, from 14 foods were registered under Bakery class and 13 on meat products from the total of 55.

5. Overview on Romanian quality schemes

Since 724/2013 regulation was applied, 648 foods were registered nationally, most of them belong to *Meat and meat products class* (241), the second place is occupied by *Milk and milk products class* (141). In Romania, the county with the highest number of certified foods is Brasov, 91, of which 32 in Bran village. Almost 50% from the total were certified in 2014, after the new regulation was applied.

Table 2. Number of certified products under 724/2013 regulation

Number of certified products						Grand Total
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	
Types						
Others		2				2
Beverages	5	15		1		21
Meat and meat products	117	79	25	9	11	241
Milk and milk products	78	46	1	11	5	141
Fruits-Vegetables	44	13	21	10	19	107
Bread and bakery products	38	41	6	5	19	109
Fish	15	7	2		3	27
Grand Total	297	203	55	36	57	648

Source: Author calculation from Romanian National Register of Traditional foods 2018, www.madr.ro.

Premium industrialised foods: Recited receipts under Order 394/2014

In 2014 order 394/2014 was applied in order to certify Romanian recited recipes that were manufactured industrially, in the contrast to traditional foods that were still at a high quality.

The purposes of this Order, the terms used are defined as follows:

- Romanian consecrated recipe - represents the Romanian food produced with respect to the composition used more than 30 years before the date of entry into force of this order;
- the composition of the product - all the ingredients that make up a product food;
- technical documentation - data and documents underlying the certification of a product food obtained according to a Romanian recipe: product name, description the raw materials and ingredients used, the established recipe, the technological scheme,

- description of the technological process, description of the quality indicators: sensory, physicochemical, microbiological; specific elements on product packaging and labelling food; storage and transport conditions; procedures and methods of control;
- d) food code - product category code number, a product code and food business operator 00-00-00;
- e) certified food obtained according to a Romanian recipe - a document issued by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development certifying that the food conforms to the Romanian recipe;
- f) The National Registry of Reciprocal Recipes, hereinafter referred to as R.N.C.R. - register managed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, which contains: the name of the food business operator, the identification and contact details of the food business operator the name of the certified food, the number of the certificate in the R.R.C.;

There are 145 recipes certified in the period 2014 to October 2018, highest number for meat products, 74 and milk products 40, by different operators.

Table 3. Number of recited recipes registered under 394/2014

Category	Number of recited recipes
Meat products	74
Bakery products	26
Milk products	40
Other foods	1
Products obtained by processing fruits and vegetables	4
Total	145

Source: Author calculation from Romania National Register of Recite receipts 2018, www.madr.ro.

Mountain products under Order 52/2017

For the purposes of this Procedure, the terms used are defined as follows:

- a) The mountain area - the area delineated according to the National Development Program Rural 2014-2020;
- b) Mountain product - a product intended for human consumption, in which: raw materials and feed for farm animals are mainly derived from mountain areas;
- In the case of processed products, processing also takes place in Areas Mountain;

There are 97 foods registered as *mountain product* in Romania, most of them milk and milk products, 70 products, fruits and vegetables are on the second place, 18 in number.

Table 4. Number of montane products certified under order 52/2017

Category	Number of montane products certified
Meat and meat products	4
Milk and milk products	70
Fruits- vegetables	18
Honey	1
Beekeeping products	2
Fish products	2
Grand Total	97

Source: Author calculation from Romanian National Register of Montane products 2018, www.madr.ro.

The Environmental Protection Agency Vrancea through the Project - Products that respect their bears and their habitats, has initiated an important step in promoting traditional products that are "bear friendly". This approach is supported and funded by the European Commission. The bear-friendly products are products coming from a Natura 2000 area, the area where brown bear protection measures are applied and also the producers use technologies that do not affect the environment and habitat of the brown bear. These products will receive a label with the inscription: A product that respects their bears and their habitats. In this way, the interest of the consumer will increase this to the benefit of all the parties involved.

6. Traditional foods knowledge

Since there is the possibility of protecting the local foods by the law from the false, transmitting the knowledge to next generations is easier to be done. Traditional food knowledge (TFK) arises from the need of preserving the cultural heritage and can be defined as cumulative teachings and also experience gained from the process that means sharing food ways from one generation to another. Traditional food knowledge also can be used in order to develop the rural areas and create value added to them (Kwik, 2008).

The role of traditional food knowledge in the healthy communities is hidden away from the economic measurement as it is very often not a part of the classic or formal economy. Nonetheless, TFK contributes to and also connects food elements of the both ecological and social areas of a community. Identifying this role is very important in order to ensure TFK can continue and not be marginalized and lost.

TFK it is a cultural expression which can manifest itself on each and every scale: from consuming to the production of the traditional agricultural systems. Also, in between these two levels, there are activities at the family farm and community-level which is where TFK transmission to younger generations occurs.

Worldwide, there is a growing awareness in regards to the fact that intangible cultural heritage is very fragile and difficult to recreate if experienced practitioners are not able or encouraged to pass on their skills in the specific area and knowledge. UNESCO has a high number of conventions to spread the current loss of this cultural heritage (UNESCO 2007). Jaffe and Gertler affirm that there is a gap in knowledge that they refer to as consumer de-skilling. They are pointing that there is a growing gap between consumer's perception and the information that is actually possessed and processed by the actors in the food chain.

This can be translated to a growing gap in power and also a growing capacity on the part of the manufacturers and retailers in order to manipulate tastes and behaviours (Jaffe and Gertler 2006).

Jaffe and Gertler point that customers are not able anymore to select for quality or to ensure nutrition. The process of de-skilling also occurs at preparation skills which prevents the ability of eating foods that may be less subject of manufacturing process and more affordable. It is also very important to acknowledge the current growing gap in the areas related to production and distribution as this phase dictate on the local food environment (Szczepaniak and Tereszczuk). The cause, in each of these phases is subject to structural factors that are linked with the global food system and societal shifts that occurred in the last century.

The rise of the so-called “creative food economy” (Kwik, 2008) of entrepreneurs selling ethnic food and other niche cuisines indicates an opportunity for the rising of diversity of ‘minority’ cultures to be included in the formal economy of urban centres (Donald and Blay Palmer 2006). Gabaccia also notes that migrations produced the new “communities of consumption” and they generated small businesses in order to serve their taste for the distinctive foods.” In European developed countries such as Italy, France, Spain, Germany and Portugal number of products certified are incomparable higher than the eastern countries less developed as the traditional foods benefit from measurement of support also knowledge transfer. In Romania TFK is losing more with each generation as the young are not interested that much in learning food processing and the government is not encouraging the transfer.

Conclusion

Despite their benefits for the local economies and for the human health as well, only recently local and traditional foods benefit from law protection, funds and support from the governments.

Local foods can be an instrument that can revive the rural areas due to their value added created. In Romania, this type of products is intended for narrow niches, for that part of the population that can afford to pay this higher price. Countries such as Italy, France and Spain are the leaders in this area and they occupy 50% of the European traditional foods market. Due to the globalisation, traditional foods might be lost in time if measurements are not taken worldwide, European, national, local and individual. Maybe the most important measure can be taken locally can be encouraging the producers to transfer their knowledge further.

Traditional foods knowledge contributes to a set of both social and ecological benefits for the health of communities, improve food security, enhanced capacity and greater biocultural diversity. The continuity of traditional foods knowledge transmission it is threatened by its diverse nature among cultural communities and also because of the food system changes that are focused more on commodity consumption rather than on healthy foods and social and cultural reproduction. Traditional foods knowledge fills some of the gaps in the food system and addresses the particular needs of immigrants so that they can find aspects of identity and familiarity even far from their country of origin.

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