SINGLE DOCUMENT

'ម្រេចកំពត' (Mrech Kampot) / 'Poivre de Kampot'

EC No: [for EU use only]

PGI (X) PDO ( )

1. NAME(S)

‹‹ម្រេចកំពត›› (Mrech Kampot) / ‹‹Poivre de Kampot››

2. MEMBER STATE OR THIRD COUNTRY

Cambodia

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCT OR FOODSTUFF

3.1. Type of product

Class 1.8. Other products of Annex I to the Treaty (spices etc.)

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

‹‹ម្រេចកំពត›› (in the region of origin's language, Khmer) / ‹‹Poivre de Kampot›› (in French) refer to the berries of two varieties of the species *Piper nigrum L.*; specifically, the Kamchay and the Lampong (or Belantoeung), locally known respectively as "small leaves" and "big leaves" varieties, grown in the area defined in Section 4.

There are four different types of ‹‹ម្រេចកំពត›› / ‹‹Poivre de Kampot›› depending on the time of harvesting and the processing they receive afterwards:

- Green pepper: is the unripe fruit of the pepper plant, harvested when still young in the plant. It can be marketed and consumed either fresh (presented in clusters) or in brine or vinegar (presented either in full berries or clusters).
- Black pepper: harvested when the berries start to turn from green to yellow, they are afterwards dried. It can be presented in full berries or ground.
- Red pepper: is the dried product of fully ripe berries. It is presented in full berries.
- White pepper: produced from red or ripe berries and by a subsequent process of soaking. It is presented in full berries.

The characteristic of the product lies in its strong (but not "burning") pungency, not aggressive but developing progressively in mouth. Beside the spicy character, its aromatic intensity gives to ‹‹ម្រេចកំពត›› / ‹‹Poivre de Kampot›› its particular quality.

The grains of pepper show ideal physical conditions in terms of size and density.

The physical and organoleptic characteristics of the product are the following:

Type	Form	Size & Density	Color	Smell	Other

Black pepper	Dried berries	∅ ≥ 4 mm Density ≥ 570 g/l	Dark black, black, brown black or grey black.	- The smell of grain is medium burning. - After grinding, the smell of powder pepper is very burning and long-lasting.	Tolerance[1]: Deviations of 5% in the size of the berries and 2% in the color of the berries are allowed. Not allowed defects: - Plant waste - Dust - Mushroom - Receptacle[2] of 5%.
	Ground pepper	Powder with small fragments of berries	Dark grey with black points		
Red pepper	Dried berries	∅ ≥ 4 mm Density ≥ 570 g/	Brown red or dark red.		Not allowed defects: - Plant waste - Dust - Mushroom - Receptacle of 1%
White pepper	Dried berries	∅ ≥ 3 mm Density ≥ 600 g/l	Grey white with little yellow or light brown spots. It must be natural color. No substance must be added to change the color.		Not allowed defects: - Plant waste - Dust - Mushroom
Green pepper	Whole cluster of fresh berries	Clusters of at least 10 grains. Each grain ∅ ≥ 3 mm.	Dark green.	- Herbal green pepper aroma - There is no burning smell when it is grain. - When it is ground, the smell is strong burning but easy to lose.	Not allowed defects: - Plant waste - Dust - Mushroom
	Berries or whole clusters in brine or vinegar	Clusters of at least 10 grains. Each grain ∅ ≥ 3 mm.	Still green. It must not change to brown.		

[1] Percentage of berries not complying with size and color criteria.

[2] Receptacle is an anatomical part of the grain of pepper; a small stem growing in the middle of the flower and berry. The receptacle is a kind of debris that is removed during the harvest season in order to obtain clean berries.

As regards the specific characteristics of the different types of ‹‹ម្រេចកំពត›› / ‹‹Poivre de Kampot››:

- The green pepper variety has a fresh citrus flavor and is less spicy than the dried varieties.
- Black pepper has a deeper, stronger and vaguely floral flavor with hints of flower, eucalyptus and mint. It can range from mildly sweet to intensely spicy.
- Red pepper is sweeter and less spicy than the black variety, but its flavor is more rounded. It delivers a powerful fruity aroma.
- In white pepper the outer skin of the fruit is removed after the process of soaking, this gives the product a different taste which carries notes of fresh grass and lime.

The product is marketed in sealed packagings (of different materials and sizes) bearing the indications specified in section 3.6.

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

Not applicable.

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

All the production steps must take place in the geographical area, which include:

- The crop management operations.
- Harvesting the berries.
- The drying process (which applies to black, red and white pepper).
- The soaking (which applies only to white pepper).
- Sorting the berries.
- Pickling (which applies only to green pepper in brine or vinegar).

Hence, fresh green ‹‹ម្រេចកំពត›› / ‹‹Poivre de Kampot›› must be produced within the geographical area.

And black, red, white and pickle green ‹‹ម្រេចកំពត›› / ‹‹Poivre de Kampot›› must be produced and processed, by means of soaking or pickling, within the geographical 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

The packets and containers of the product shall bear the name ‹‹ម្រេចកំពត›› or ‹‹Poivre de Kampot››. The name may be accompanied by its translation into the official language of the territory where the product is marketed (e.g. Kampot Pepper for English speaking countries), in a font size at least as big as the biggest other letters in the packaging. The expression “Protected Geographical Indication” shall be depicted close to the name ‹‹ម្រេចកំពត›› or ‹‹Poivre de Kampot›› that may be accompanied by a translation.

The packaging must be marked with an individual batch number (provided to ensure the traceability of the product).

The labeling shall also include, clearly visible, the following indications:

- The collective logo in the corresponding language:



or



- The national logo for Cambodian Protected Geographical Indications (depicted below).



Optionally, it may also include the logo of Protected Geographical Indication (or alike) of other countries or regions where the «ម្រេចកំពត» / ‹‹Poivre de Kampot›› enjoys a recognition of this kind.

4. CONCISE DEFINITION OF THE GEOGRAPHICAL AREA

The geographical area consists of the following districts located in southern Cambodia:

- Kampong Trach, Dan Tong, Toeuk Chhou, Chhouk and Kampot City, all of them in the province of Kampot.
- Kep City and Damnak Chang Aeur, in the province of Kep.



5. LINK WITH THE GEOGRAPHICAL AREA

A causal link exists between both the reputation and the quality of the specific product and its geographical origin.

- Reputation:

Pepper production in Cambodia is mentioned in documents as old as the reports of the Chinese explorer Tchéou Ta Kouan in the 13th century.

However, it was at the end of the 19th century that the province of Kampot witnessed a real "pepper fever" with the arrival of the French colonists. At the beginning of the next century the production of this spice in Kampot intensified reaching up to 8000 tons per year. In the middle of the 20th century the production of Kampot pepper, which stabilized at around 3000 tons per year, was of exceptional quality. By that time, the name of Kampot had become strongly associated to pepper, and the product was well-known especially in France and the rest of Europe. Kampot pepper was highly appreciated for its quality, particularly among the chef's community in France and Europe.

The history and notoriety of Kampot pepper is well documented and illustrated in the book «Kampot, miroir du Cambodge. Promenade historique, touristique et littéraire» (Editions YOU-FENG, Paris, 2003) by Luc Mogenet, who talks about pepper cultivation that brought Kampot prosperity toward the end of the 19th century; in the 1920's, almost all of the pepper consumed in France came from that region of Indochina, according to this author.

References to the history of Kampot pepper between the 19th and 20th centuries can be found in many publications of that time, such as: «Paris-match» (nº 969-977 of the year 1967), «Connaissance des arts» (Societe Francaise de Promotion Artistique, nº 189 of the year 1967), the «Bulletin du comité des travaux historiques et scientifiques» and the «Bulletin de la Section de géographie» (Imprimerie nationale, 1915), the book «Un hiver au Cambodge: chasses au tigre, à l'éléphant et au buffle sauvage» (Edgar Boulangier, Mame 1887), the «Bulletin économique de l'Indochine» (vol. 6, 1903), etc.

After a dramatic stop in the production of Kampot pepper due to the Khmer Rouge regime and the civil war that took place in the country, at the end of the 20th century, with the relative calm restored in the country after the elections of 1998, the production of this spice in the area resumed and the product quickly recovered its former glory.

Producers' families of Kampot and Kep came back to their ancestral land. Coming from several generations of pepper producers, they naturally cleared the land left abandoned and started cultivating pepper again using the traditional methods inherited from their ancestors.

In April 2010, Kampot pepper was registered as a Geographical Indication in Cambodia, this one being the first local product to get such a status.

The restart of the production of Kampot pepper in this new era has attracted the attention of the media, both nationally and internationally.

Several documentaries praising the quality of the product, and telling about its specificity, have been produced and broadcasted worldwide; e.g.: the BBC's TV

show ‹‹Rick Stein's Far Eastern Odyssey›› (programme 1), the documentary «Nouveaux produits, nouvelles habitudes: révélations sur nos assiettes» emitted by the French TV channel M6 within the programme «Zone Interdite», also the show «Les petits plats du Grand Mékong» of TÉLÉRAME dedicated a programme to the pepper from Kampot, etc.

Furthermore, Kampot pepper is nowadays mentioned, and described as a pepper of the finest quality, in many tourism and culinary-related guides, e.g.: «Lonely Planet Cambodia» (by Lonely Planet, Nick Ray, Greg Bloom. 2014), «Consumed: Food for a Finite Planet» (by Sarah Elton. 2013), «Gordon's Great Escape Southeast Asia: 100 of my favourite Southeast Asian recipes» (by Gordon Ramsay. 2011), «The Rough Guide to Cambodia» (by Beverley Palmer, 2013), etc.

All this proves that the ‹‹ម្រេចកំពត›› / ‹‹Poivre de Kampot›› enjoys a reputation that it is attributable to its geographical origin.

- Quality of the product due to its geographical origin:

On the other hand, the specificity of the product, that lies in its strong (but not "burning") pungency and its aromatic intensity, is related to the specific conditions of the area and the local production methods.

Good drained soil and high average rainfalls are conditions needed for the production of a high quality pepper. The provinces of Kampot and Kep have a climate with heavy and regular rainfalls; the wet season lasting longer than the dry season. Therefore, not only the average rainfall is high in the defined area (higher than 2,000 mm annually) but also well distributed along the year, what has a direct influence on the quality of the product, specifically on its aroma and its balanced pungency. On the other hand, the topography of the area allows most of the plantation plots to be located on the hills (elevated land) or the mountain foots and, thus, increasing the drainage capacity of the soil.

As regards the human factors, two specific techniques of the pepper growing process used by the farmers of the defined area can be identified:

- The raising of soils to elevate the pepper plantation and digging an irrigation canal around the plantation to ensure good drainage.

- The regular inputs of new soil.

These techniques aimed at ensuring good drainage of the soil also contribute to the production of a pepper with intense aroma and balanced pungency.

On the other hand, the regular inputs of new soil as well as other measures taken in the plantation (i.e. wide space between the poles, ensuring shade for young plants) contribute to the production of pepper with good density and size.

Reference to publication of the specification

http://cambodiaip.gov.kh/TemplateTwo.aspx?parentId=34&menuid=74&childMasterMenuId=74&lang=en