

Branding and Protection of Food Products with Geographical Indications on the Example of Drniš Smoked Ham

Aleksandra Krajnović

University of Zadar, Department of Economics, Croatia
akrajnov@unizd.hr

Mladen Rajko

University of Zadar, Department of Economics, Croatia
mrajko@unizd.hr

Nevena Matić

University of Zadar, Department of Economics, Croatia
nmatiac@unizd.hr

Abstract. Native food products are associated with specific geographical indication and they belong to the higher price category because they contain added value and contribute to an increase in producers' income, the development of the identity and distinctiveness of the region or country of origin. Products with a protected designation are protected from any misuse, imitation or unauthorized use of such designations. Drniš ham is protected with the designation of geographical indication. Drniš ham is obtained by the traditional production process which involves ham processing, dry salting, pressing, washing, smoking, air-drying and ripening. The primary goal of this research is to determine if there is an interest in protecting and branding Drniš ham, and to establish what benefits are expected from that. In June 2013, data were collected by using the questioning method on an intentional sample of experts. The scope of the research covered manufacturers of Drniš ham with Protected Geographical Indications, representatives of the City of Drniš and the rest of the community, the Tourist Board of Drniš, as well as representatives of Šibenik-Knin County and the Croatian Chamber of Economy. Based on the research, it was determined that 75% of respondents considered the branding of Drniš ham „very important“ and 25% „important“. Branding of Drniš ham would bring the greatest benefit to ham manufacturers and the local community and it would lead to the creation of new jobs, increase the price of ham and the number of pig breeders, and contribute to the development of tourism, promotion and creation of a good image of the Drniš territory. Besides branding and protecting the Drniš ham, this paper also provides a review of the protection and branding of Krk ham and Istrian ham.

Keywords: Drniš ham, geographical indications, branding, protection, production

1 Introduction

The subject-matter of the research of this paper refers to the importance of the method and the system of branding and protection of food products with a protected geographical indication on the example of Drniš ham, with a brief reference to the protection of Krk ham and Istrian ham. This designation contributes to the commercial value of the product, protects it from any misuse or imitation, increases the possibility of selling it at higher prices, and conveys the cultural identity of its region of origin. Furthermore, the paper discusses the current examples and problems in the protection of food products. Likewise, it presents Drniš and the production of Drniš ham, and indicates the aspects of its branding and protection.

The goals of the research of this paper are:

- Define the concept of food product with a protected geographical indication

- Explore the methods of protection of food products with protected geographical indication
- Investigate the current examples and issues in the protection of products
- Explore the possibility of protection of Drniš ham
- Determine whether there is a need for branding of Drniš ham and explain the reasons for such statement

The main hypothesis states: Native food products are not sufficiently protected in the Republic of Croatia and the branding and protection of native food products have not been implemented properly.

The sub-hypothesis states: Should Drniš ham be branded, its branding and protection would produce multiplier effects for its manufacturers, the tourism and the development of recognition of Drniš area.

The research questions asked to respondents during the preparation of this paper are: What is a food product with a protected geographical indication and how is it protected? How many products with a protected geographical indication are there in Croatia? Is there an interest in protecting and branding Drniš ham? What is the importance of the branding of Drniš ham? Is it probable that Drniš ham will experience the same issues as prošek and teran? Should Drniš ham be branded, will the price of the ham rise; will that contribute to the recognition of Drniš area; create added value for Drniš area; contribute to the tourism development in Drniš area; improve the conditions and increase earnings for manufacturers? Who should be in charge for the branding of Drniš ham and at what level should it be carried out? What are the biggest barriers to branding? Who will benefit most from the branding?

In terms of composition, the paper is structured in six sections. The introduction is followed by a section discussing the topic of brand and branding. The second section deals with the EU agricultural and food quality policy, as well as the characteristics of the European policy. Furthermore, it discusses the harmonization of the Croatian legislation and policy in the field of food products with the European Union and outlines the laws of the Republic of Croatia on food products. The third section outlines the characteristics of the protection of food products in the Republic of Croatia. It cites the institutions in charge of agricultural products and foodstuffs, which is followed by an analysis of the registration process for food products. Likewise, it specifies the protected agricultural products and foodstuffs in Croatia and discusses the current issues in the protection of food products. The next section considers Drniš and Drniš ham, describes the manufacturing of Drniš ham, and indicates the aspects of branding and protection of Drniš ham. The following section presents the results of the research, which should provide an answer as to whether the hypotheses of the research are accepted or rejected. This is followed by the closing sections of the paper – the discussion and the conclusion.

The methods used for the preparation of this paper are the conducted research, and the analysis of scientific articles, books and other data. The collected data were processed by using the synthesis method. The data were collected in June 2013 with the research method using a survey questionnaire on an intentional sample of experts/connoisseurs including 20 respondents. The scope of the research covered manufacturers of Drniš ham with protected geographical indication, representatives of the City of Drniš and municipalities in the wider Drniš area, the Tourist Board of the City of Drniš, Šibenik-Knin County and the Croatian Chamber of Economy.

2 Brand and Branding of Food Products

What is a brand? Many experts have offered numerous definitions of brand, but it is mainly a psychological category, a personal perception of something, a “something more”. As stated by Popesku and Gajić (2009), one of the most popular words in the business world, the marketing department of every company or institution, but also in everyday life is ‘brand’. The American

Marketing Association adopted the definition of brand formulated by David Aaker – a brand is defined as a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers and differentiate them from those of the competition. A brand is a product or a service with an additional dimension that differentiates it in a certain way from other products and services intended to satisfy the same need. (Premović, Damjanović, 2009)

Keller et al. (2012) stated that branding is a technique used by the food industry to create a recognizable image to attract consumers and boost sales of the product. A brand is a „promise“ which implies that the quality level of the product will meet the customer expectations (Golijanin D., 2010). Grewal et al. (2004) argued that providing customers with outstanding value is the only reliable way to achieve customer satisfaction and loyalty. On the other hand, in case of a poor quality product, the consumer will certainly replace such product with a product of another manufacturer. Researches have revealed that consumer satisfaction is the basis for the creation of loyalty and the improvement of the producers' financial performance.

3 EU Agricultural and Food Quality Policy

The EU protects by legislation particular product names which are linked to territory or to a production method. Purchasing an EU quality labeled product guarantees not only its quality but its authenticity (buyers can be sure that they are not buying an imitation product). Consumers and the food trade are increasingly interested in the geographical origin of food and other characteristics. The EU recognizes this and has developed three 'quality logos'. Two of these have a strong geographical element; the third relates to traditional production methods. Each logo varies in the strictness of specifications that products must meet, but all share the common goal of furthering authenticity and sustainability. The regulation on Protected Geographical Indications and Protected Designations of Origin for agricultural products and foodstuffs, which is intended to protect the names of products whose specific character is determined by their geographical origin (protected designations of origin or PDOs, and protected geographical indications or PGIs) was designed so that products of this kind may live up to the expectations of consumers in two ways. Firstly, because many such products possess exceptional qualities of taste, flavor, etc. and, secondly, because the local methods used to produce them create a bond of trust between the consumer, the product, the place where it originates and the people living there who develop it. A clear advantage of the EU's quality designation systems is that the right to use a product name is granted to the producers who made the original application for registration of the product name, plus any other producers who can meet the requirements of the specification. (Source: Croatian Chamber of Economy) Enforcement of EU quality systems is carried out by Member State authorities, acting within rules laid down at EU level. Member States are obliged to set up the necessary control bodies to ensure compliance with EU rules. (Zjalić et al., 2012)

3.1 Harmonization of the Croatian Food Quality Legislation and Policy with the European Union

As published on the official website of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Croatia, the Act on Protected Designations of Origin, Protected Geographical Indications and Traditional Speciality Guaranteed Indications for Agricultural Products and Foodstuffs was promulgated on 20 April 2012 within the process of accession of the Republic of Croatia to the European Union, i.e. within the scope of harmonization of the legislation related to agriculture, more precisely the quality policy. The Act provides producers of native agricultural and food products in the Republic of Croatia with the same protection as producers in EU member states. This way they are enabled to register the names of their agricultural products and foodstuffs at the EU level, thus increasing the recognition of the products themselves, the region of production and whose name they bear, and lastly the entire Croatia.

Furthermore, it also increases their market competitiveness, which is one of the major goals of the agricultural policy.

The European institutions responsible for food safety are the European Commission (Directorate General for Health and Consumer Protection), the European Parliament (Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection Committee is in charge of food safety issues), and the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) with the official seat in Parma, Italy, which is the keystone of the European food safety network. EFSA provides scientific advice and timely information on existing and emerging risks in the food and feed sectors. The Agency's objectives are the development of risk assessment, data collection and analysis, communication and early warning system. Dutour Sikirić et al. (2006) said about EFSA that it is the central European organization for risk assessment regarding food and feed safety. It was established in 2002 as a response to a series of food incidents (mad cow disease, dioxins) in order to regain the trust of consumers in the safety of the food production chain. The Croatian Food Agency (CFA) is the Croatian version of EFSA. It was established in line with the Food Act and it started its activities on 3 January 2005. CFA's official seat is in Osijek.

3.2 Laws of the Republic of Croatia on the protection of food products

The protection of food products stimulates their producers to pool and jointly approach the market, and after carrying out the protection process at the national level, there is a possibility to protect such products at the EU level. The Act on Protected Designations of Origin, Protected Geographical Indications and Traditional Speciality Guaranteed Indications for Agricultural Products and Foodstuffs was passed within the process of accession of the Republic of Croatia to the European Union, i.e. within the scope of harmonization of the legislation related to agriculture, more precisely the quality policy. Moreover, some by-laws were passed, namely the Regulation on Protected Designations of Origin and Protected Geographical Indications for Agricultural Products and Foodstuffs, the Regulation on Traditional Speciality Guaranteed Indications for Agricultural Products and Foodstuffs, and the Regulation on the Appearance and the Use of the PDO, PGI and TSG Logos for Agricultural Products and Foodstuffs (Source: Ministry of Agriculture; Croatian Center for Agricultural Marketing).

The Act on Protected Designations of Origin, Protected Geographical Indications and Traditional Speciality Guaranteed Indications for Agricultural Products and Foodstuffs regulates the procedure for the protection of PDOs, PGIs and TSGs in the territory of the Republic of Croatia, the procedure for filing an application for the registration and filing objections for PDOs, PGIs and TSGs at the EU level, the official inspection procedure and the procedure to verify conformity with the product specifications. In the spirit of the above Act, the „Protected Designation of Origin“ means the name of a region, a specific place or, in exceptional cases, a country, used to describe an agricultural product or a foodstuff originating in that region, specific place or country, and possessing quality or characteristics which are essentially or exclusively due to a particular geographical environment with its inherent natural and human factors, and the production, processing and preparation of which take place entirely in the defined geographical area. The „Protected Geographical Indication“ means the name of a region, a specific place or, in exceptional cases, a country, used to describe an agricultural product or a foodstuff originating in that region, specific place or country, which possesses a specific quality or reputation or other characteristics attributable to that geographical origin, and the production and/or processing and/or preparation of which take place in the defined geographical area. Certain geographical indications shall be treated as designations of origin where the raw materials for the products concerned come from a geographical area larger than, or different from, the processing area, provided that the production area of the raw materials is defined, special conditions for the production of the raw materials exist, and there are inspection arrangements to ensure that the special conditions for the production of the raw materials are adhered to.

4 Issue of the Protection of Food Products in the Republic of Croatia

According to the research conducted by GfK, kulen salami and Bajadera are considered the typical Croatian products by most Croats, on the third place there is Vegeta, followed by the tie, a bottle of domestic wine, olive oil, licitarsko srce (gingerbread heart), brandy, pršut (smoked i.e. air-dried ham), and Pag cheese. The choice of the „typical“ Croatian product varies depending on regional affiliation of respondents. Nearly a half of Slavonians consider kulen to be the typical Croatian product, the inhabitants of Zagreb Bajadera and licitarsko srce, and the inhabitants of North Croatia Vegeta. For the inhabitants of Lika, the typical Croatian products are domestic wine and pršut, the number one for Istrians is olive oil, and for Dalmatians it is also olive oil and Bajadera (Source: www.gfk.hr).

According to the legislation which regulates the field of Protected Designations of Origin and Protected Geographical Indications, there are in total 13 protected products in the Republic of Croatia, namely four smoked i.e. air-dried hams - Istrian, Dalmatian, Drniš and Krk, the Lika potato, the Virovitica pepper, the Varaždin cabbage, the Ogulin prickled cabbage, Cres extra virgin olive oil, Zagorje turkey meat, the Poljica soparnik pie, the Dalmatian maraška (marasca sour cherry), and the Baranja kulen.

4.1 Registration Procedure for a Food Product

According to Jug-Dujaković et al. (2008), the application for registration of the designations for a particular food product can be filed only by a group of producers and/or processors of the product concerned, regardless of the legal status of such association. Other interested parties can also be included in the group, while, in exceptional cases, the application can be filed by legal or natural persons. The authority in charge of the registration of the designations is the Ministry of Agriculture, i.e. its Committee for the Registration. The first step in the registration process is the establishment of an association of producers and/or processors involved in the production of the food product for which the registration of one of the designations is applied for. In order for the process of the preparation of the application for registration to begin, it is necessary that all, or at least the majority, of producers of the food product concerned organize themselves to be able to participate in the preparation of the documents required for the registration. This would assure as less as possible subsequent objections to the registration application, thus allowing for the registration procedure to be ended as soon as possible. The next step is to draw up the specifications of the food product for which the registration is requested. Only after that, the application is filed with the Ministry of Agriculture.

Furthermore, Mikšić et al. (2007) stated that it is essential for the registration of the designations that they meet the requirement of the link to the relevant geographical area and the actual material link. The choice of the designation to be registered depends on the intensity and the scope of the link of these two categories. According to the documents of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Croatia, the products bearing the Protected Designation of Origin in Croatia are: Cres extra virgin olive oil, the Ogulin pickled cabbage, the Varaždin cabbage, Istrian smoked ham, and the Dalmatian maraška sour cherry.

Bearer of the Protected Geographical Indication are: the Virovitica pepper, the Baranja kulen, Dalmatian smoked ham, Drniš smoked ham, Krk smoked ham, the Lika potato, Zagorje turkey meat, and the Poljica soparnik pie. The Neretva mandarin and the Slavonian kulen are still in the registration process.

5 Characteristics of Drniš Smoked Ham

The Croatian term PRŠUT comes from the Italian word prosciutto, which means a salted and dried ham. According to the specification of Drniš ham, it is produced using a traditional manufacturing method including ham processing, dry-salting, pressing, rinsing, smoking, air-drying and ripening. All phases in the ham production are done manually. The ham processing is carried out in such a way that the fresh ham intended for the production of Drniš ham is processed without the foot, the sacrum and the pelvic bone, and the caudal vertebrae. The ham then contains only the thigh bone and the lower leg bone with patella, the ingrown part of the ischium and, depending on the height of the cut to remove the foot, the remains of the tarsal bones. The ham processed for salting is characterized by the absence of the removed part of the skin and fat tissue on the inner side of the leg up to the knee joint and the part of the musculature which is semicircularly removed together and at the same level with the fat tissue, so that the bottom edge of the ham is between 5 cm and 8 cm from the head of the femur. The processed ham must be without any damage and hematoma, unevenness or protruding parts, and the meat must be of normal quality. With regard to dry-salting, the ham is salted manually with coarse sea salt after massaging and squeezing out the blood left over in the ham. The quantity of salt is adapted to the weight of the ham. The salted hams are piled horizontally on top of each other and re-salted after 7 days. The hams are salted in cold conditions (0 – 5 °C) and the length of salting depends on the weight of the hams.

After salting, the hams are pressed in cold conditions for 7 to 10 days, with one rearrangement in the middle of the duration of the pressing stage (the ones on the top of the pile are laid on the bottom and vice versa). Upon completion of the pressing stage, the excess salt is rinsed off the hams with a jet of cold water from the water supply system, tied up with a cord in the area of the ankle joint and hung to drain. The smoking stage takes place in elevated drying and smoking facilities positioned vertically to the direction of the dominant winds. It is carried out with the traditional way of smoke production in a metal fireplace using beech and hornbeam chunks logs. According to the tradition, local vegetation is also added to the fire, e.g. dry spruce-wood, almond wood and shells, and dry immortelle which give the smoke a special aroma. The smoking schedule depends on the weather conditions and the cold smoking method is applied (<25 °C). In the middle of the smoking process, hams are once again kept pressed for additional 4 to 5 days in order to achieve the final shape. The smoking stage lasts 30 to 45 days. After the end of smoking, hams are left in the same premises exposed to natural air currents. Frequent winds in this part of the year (November – March), especially bura, a cold and dry north-easterly wind that blows from the massif of the Dinara Mountain, allow a continuous ham drying process. In the beginning of warmer days, i.e. in April or beginning of May, hams are transferred to ground floor or basement premises for the ripening stage. Ripening takes place in dark microclimatically stable rooms with the air temperature ranging between 12 and 18°C and the relative air humidity between 60 and 75%. The ripeness of the ham is achieved after 12 to 18 months following the salting.

In terms of administration, the production area of Drniš ham is limited to the territory of the City of Drniš and the neighboring municipalities Promina, Ružić, Unešić and Biskupija, situated in the Šibenik-Knin County in the Adriatic Croatia region. All stages of the Drniš ham production process must be carried out in this area, except for breeding, fattening, slaughter and slaughterhouse processing of hogs intended for the production of pršut. This means that the raw material for the production of Drniš ham may origin from a wider geographical area than the one described above. Every producer of Drniš ham that meets the prescribed requirements regarding the production area must ensure production traceability with physical marking of the legs and hams, production records and supporting documents. Before the salting process, each leg is marked with a reference number written on a metal or plastic tag which stays attached to the leg until the completion of ripening i.e. until the ham is placed on the market. Based on the reference number, it is possible to find out the date

of salting, the series, and the origin of the pršut ham from the production files that have to be kept by all producers. Ripe pršut hams produced according to the specification, which satisfy all quality requirements, are hot-branded with the brand mark for “Drniški pršut” and the common identifier before being placed on the market.

According to the said specifications, the territorial link of Drniš ham with Drniš area originates primarily from the existence of extremely favorable natural conditions for meat salting and drying in the area of Petrovo polje, Miljevački plato and Drniška zagora. The specificity of this area is given by specific weather conditions featuring the characteristics of warm Mediterranean and cold continental climate. Hence in winter, due to the vicinity of the warm Adriatic Sea, there are no extremely low temperatures, while the air is dried and cooled by frequent winds. Air temperatures in Drniš area in the winter months are optimal for the implementation of the dry salting and ham pressing phases. Favorable temperature conditions are joined by the relative air humidity whose standard values in winter and early spring enable the natural meat drying process. These conditions are supported by low amount of precipitation, absence of fog, and very frequent winds that are the main feature of the weather conditions in winter. The creation of favorable conditions for the production of smoked and cured meat products is especially contributed to by the exchange of bura – a cold and dry north-easterly wind that blows from the massif of the Dinara Mountain and the surrounding mountains towards the sea, and jugo – a south-easterly wind that brings warmth and humidity from the sea. Increase in air temperature in April and May overlaps with the beginning of the ripening stage when hams are transferred to basement premises i.e. ripening chambers, thus preventing an increase and large temperature fluctuations. The amount of precipitation and the relative humidity further decrease in that period, which optimally favors the natural ham drying and ripening process. The link of Drniš ham to its geographical environment, apart from favorable weather conditions, stems from a long tradition of production and the high reputation of smoked ham from Drniš area. The rich tradition of ham production has been created by many generations of local population who have been skillfully exploiting the „God-given“ natural conditions, which is why the area of the City of Drniš and its wider surroundings have long been renowned for its smoked ham. It is well known that Drniš ham was served in royal courts and the ham from the ham production plant in Drniš was the commercially most important and best-known ham brand in the domestic market until the war. Drniš ham has kept its high reputation up to the present day and it is well known not only in the countries of former Yugoslavia, but also elsewhere.

Unlike Drniš ham, Krk ham, which is also protected with a Protected Geographical Indication, is processed using a technological method very much similar to the one used for Drniš ham (with subcutaneous fat tissue and sin, and without the pelvic bone), but it is air-dried without being smoked. The only Croatian ham protected with the Protected Designation of Origin is the Istrian ham characterized by the technological processing with the pelvic bone, without skin and subcutaneous fat tissue. It is air-dried without being smoked. Pork legs for Istrian air-dried ham may not be acquired anywhere; they may only be acquired from counties within the Republic of Croatia, as indicated in the designation.

Seven years after the Homeland War, in the year 2002, a group of entrepreneurs from Drniš, realizing that a good path towards a better future passes through the history of their own native region, founded the Association of Drniš Ham Producers and engaged in the process for the protection and recognition of Drniš ham as a native Croatian product. At the beginning, the Association counted 12 members, but some of them have not managed to survive because the path to international recognition of Drniš ham as a protected Croatian product has been long and hard. Today, the Association of Drniš Ham Producers has 11 members and the product name „Drniš ham“ was registered in 2012 as a Protected Geographical Indication.

6 Research Results

The objective of this research was to determine if there is an interest in protecting and branding Drniš ham, and to establish what benefits are expected from such protecting and branding. The main hypothesis of the research was that if Drniš ham gets branded, its branding and protection would produce multiplier effects for its manufacturers, the tourism and the development of recognition of Drniš area. As the main method for collecting data, the authors used the survey method via a survey questionnaire. The data were collected in June 2013 with the questioning method using a survey questionnaire on an intentional sample of experts/connoisseurs including 20 respondents. The research covered manufacturers of Drniš ham with the Protected Geographical Indication designation, representatives of the City of Drniš and the pertinent municipalities, the Tourist Board, Šibenik-Knin County and the Croatian Chamber of Economy.

The first question in the survey questionnaire was to evaluate the importance of Drniš ham branding on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 stand for Not at all important, 2 Unimportant, 3 Neither important nor unimportant, 4 Important, and 5 Very important. Respondents agreed that the ham branding is significant – 5 respondents (i.e. 25%) evaluated the importance of branding with the value 4 (important), and 15 of them (75%) with the value 5 (very important). Not one of the respondents evaluated the importance of Drniš ham branding with a value below 4.

One of the questions referred to the evaluation of the potential outcomes of Drniš ham branding. Respondents were offered six possible outcomes which they had to evaluate from 1 to 5, where 1 stands for It will certainly not happen, 2 I don't think it will happen, 3 It might happen or not, 4 – I think it will happen, and 5 I am sure it will happen.

Table 1: Evaluation of possible outcomes of Drniš ham branding

	1	2	3	4	5
Price of the ham will rise		2	5	4	9
It will contribute to the recognition of Drniš ham			1	8	11
It will create an added value for Drniš area				7	13
It will contribute to the tourism development in Drniš area			5	4	11
It will improve the conditions and increase earnings for producers		1	2	9	8
It will help avoiding problems that occurred with <i>prošek</i> and <i>teran</i>	2		1	5	12

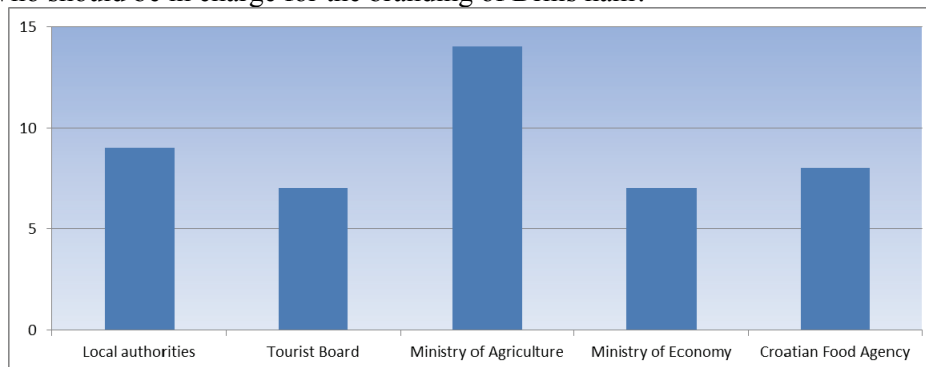
Source: Based on research

As shown in Table 1, most respondents are sure that the indicated outcomes will take place, whereas the only item that was not agreed by all respondents is that Drniš ham branding will automatically result in an increase in earnings for producers.

Respondents were asked whether they expect some other positive or negative outcomes of the ham branding, and their answers showed that they expect an increase in pig breeding in the wider Drniš area, opening of pig breeding farms, and avoiding the situation that any other products can be branded with the name 'Drniški pršut'.

The question „Who should be in charge for the branding of Drniš ham? “ was answered by respondents as follows:

Figure 1: Who should be in charge for the branding of Drniš ham?



Source: Based on research

As seen in Figure 1, most respondents believe that the Ministry of Agriculture should be responsible for the branding of Drniš ham, followed by the local authorities, and finally the Croatian Food Agency. The Ministry of Economy and the Tourist Board have the same percentage. Within the scope of the question, respondents were offered to specify another entity, if they think that some other entity should be in charge of the branding and is not indicated in the list. They mostly indicated the Association of Drniš Ham Producers (45%) and the Croatian Chamber of Economy (20%). Respondents also indicated the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Croatian Chamber of Trades and Crafts, and „an independent branding organization“ (each 5%).

Within the scope of the question what steps should be taken for the Product from Drniš to become a brand, respondents agreed that it is necessary to standardize and control the manufacturing process, increase the production, stimulate pig breeding in the wider Drniš area, bring back the ham fair to Drniš, provide high quality promotion, and present Drniš ham at fairs throughout Europe. 10% of respondents stated that Drniš ham is already a brand.

With regard to the creation of a special team of experts for the implementation of branding, as many as 95% of respondents answered they think that the creation of such a team is necessary, and only 5% do not consider it necessary. Respondents also pointed out that there are already experts for the production, and they should be joined by marketing and PR experts.

The question “What are the biggest barriers to branding?” according to respondents’ opinion was a multiple choice question and they were offered the possibility to add barriers which are not indicated and they consider it important. The answers showed that 70% of respondents believe that the biggest barrier to branding is the fact that a lot of time and work have to be dedicated to the branding process. 30% of respondents think that high expenses are the biggest barrier, and 25% that it is the fact that there are too little interested people. Respondents believe that these reasons are interconnected, i.e. there are too little people (sufficiently) interested in the branding of Drniš ham who would be willing to commit their time and energy; and even if there was a group interested in the branding, they believe that problems would rise due to high expenses and the decision as to who is responsible for bearing such expenses. As other barriers to Drniš ham branding, respondents indicated foreign production, different quality of raw materials, wrong policy, and certain clauses that favor particular producers.

Lastly, respondents were asked who, in their opinion, would benefit most from the ham branding and why. The common opinion of the respondents was that producers of pršut and the local community in general would mostly benefit from it. They believe it would increase the price of pršut, thus leading to an increase in earnings for the producers and subsequently to the creation of new jobs and the welfare of the whole community. In their opinion, it would also increase the number of pig breeders. Likewise, they believe that the branding would contribute to the tourism development and the promotion of

Drniš area, and it would create added value for Drniš and improve the image of the city, the county, but also the region Dalmatia, as well as entire Croatia.

7 Conclusion

The protection of food products is important, because it protects the product from misleading statements about its origin, as well as from imitation. Geographical indications and designations of origin are names identifying a product as originating in a given territory, and testifying to a link between a given quality, reputation or characteristic of the product and its geographical origin. With regard to the protection and branding of Drniš ham, the product name „Drniški pršut“ was registered as an Protected Geographical Indication on 28 March 2012. The main hypothesis was proved in the paper. Only 13 products in the Republic of Croatia are protected with geographical indications and designations of origin. The current examples of teran, prošek and the Kranj sausage and the related problems are also a proof that native products are insufficiently protected in the Republic of Croatia. The research conducted within the scope of this paper revealed that the biggest barriers to the protection and branding are the fact that it requires a lot of time and effort, as well as high expenses and too little interested parties. The sub-hypothesis of the research was that, if Drniš ham is branded, its branding and protection would produce multiplier effects for its manufacturers, the tourism and the development of recognition of Drniš area. Based on the results obtained from the conducted survey, the posited hypothesis was confirmed. Namely, as many as 75% of respondents evaluated the importance of Drniš ham branding as „very important“, and the remaining 25% as „important“. Moreover, it is the common opinion of the respondents that producers of pršut and the local community in general would mostly benefit from Drniš ham branding. They believe it would lead to the creation of new jobs, an increase in the price of pršut and the number of pig breeders, and that it would contribute to the tourism development, the promotion and the creation of good image for Drniš and the entire Drniš area. According to the research, the Ministry of Agriculture should be responsible for the branding of Drniš ham, followed by the local authorities, the Croatian Food Agency, the Association of Drniš Ham Producers, the Croatian Chamber of Economy, the Ministry of Economy, and finally the Tourist Board. According to the respondents, the barriers to branding are the fact that it requires a lot of time and effort, high expenses and too little interested parties. The authors' position is that efforts should be made to have as many as possible products protected with geographical indications and designations of origin in order for the products to become well-known as high-quality regional products and to avoid the situations that occurred in the case of prošek and teran. Furthermore, the authors believe that further research is needed to determine the extent of the interest in branding of Drniš ham (but also other pršut hams in the Republic of Croatia) at national level. Moreover, they think it is necessary to encourage better collaboration between the Association of the producers, the local authorities, the Croatian Chamber of Economy, the Ministry of Agriculture, and the Tourist Board.

References

- Becker, T., Staus, A. 2008. 'European food quality policy: the importance of geographical indications, organic certification and food quality insurances chemes in European countries.' 12th EAAE Congress „People, Food and Environments: Global Trends and European Strategies“, Genk, <available on: <http://ageconsearch.umn.edu/bitstream/44455/2/431.pdf>>.
- Dutour Sikirić, M., et. al. 2006. 'Laboratoriji za kontrolu kakvoće hrane za životinje u Europskim integracijama.' *Krmiva*, Vol. 48 (5), <available on: <http://hrcak.srce.hr/26490>>.
- Gaurina, D. 2010. 'Drniški pršut.' Znanstveni skup: Zagora između stočarsko-ratarske tradicije te procesa litoralizacije i globalizacije.' Gulan d.o.o. Sisak, Zadar.

- Golijanin, D. 2010. 'Marketing u trgovini.' Univerzitet Singidunum, Beograd, <available on: <http://www.singipedia.com/content/1756-Marketing-u-trgovini>>.
- Grewal, D., Levy, M., Lehmann, D.R. 2004. 'Retail Branding and Customer Loyalty: an overview.' Journal of Retailing, Vol. 80, <available on: <http://connection.ebscohost.com/c/editorials/15829207/retail-branding-customer-loyalty-overview>>.
- Jug-Dujaković, M., Gavrilović, A., Jug-Dujaković, J. 2008. 'Mogući oblici zaštite i identifikacije stonske kamenice na tržištu.' Naše more, Vol. 55 (5-6), <available on: <http://hrcak.srce.hr/32223>>.
- Keller, K. L., et. al. 2012. 'The impact of food branding on children's eating behavior and obesity.' Physiology & Behavior, Vol. 106 (3), <available on: <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0031938412001163#>>.
- Kosor, I. 2002. 'Tehnologija drniškog pršuta.' Diplomski rad, Agronomski fakultet, Sveučilište u Zagrebu.
- Lisac Marušić, A. 2013. 'Izvorni tradicijski proizvodi: Hrvatska hrana – dio tradicije Europe.' <available on: www.progressive.com.hr>.
- Mesić, Ž., et. al. 2012. 'Protection of geographical indications of origin in Croatia.' Agronomski glasnik, Vol. 73 (6), <available on: http://hrcak.srce.hr/index.php?show=clanak&id_clanak_jezik=122855>.
- Mikoš, O., et. al. 2011. 'Smjernice zajedničke poljoprivredne politike Europske unije nakon 2013. godine.' Agronomski glasnik, Vol. 72 (6), <available on: <http://hrcak.srce.hr/69009>>.
- Mikšić, M., et.al. 2007. 'Katalog kalkulacija tradicijskih poljoprivredno-prehrambenih proizvoda.' Hrvatski zavod za poljoprivrednu savjetodavnu službu, Odjel za agronomiku, Zagreb, <available on: <http://www.agroklub.com/dokumenti/katalog-kalkulacija-tradicijskih-poljoprivredno-prehrambenih-proizvoda/803/>>
- Peričić, Š. 2000. 'Prinos poznavanju gospodarskih prilika Drniškog kraja u XIX. stoljeću.' Radovi Zavoda za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Zadru, (42), <available on: http://hrcak.srce.hr/index.php?show=clanak&id_clanak_jezik=18797>.
- Popesku, J., Gajić, J. 2010. 'Nove tendencije u marketingu – brendiranje gradova.' Singidunum revija, Vol. 6, (1), <available on: <http://www.singipedia.com/content/236-Nove-tendencije-u-marketingu-Brendiranje-gradova>>.
- Premović, M., Damjanović, V. 2010. 'Strateški pristup brendiranja nacije.' Singidunum revija, Vol. 6, (2), <available on: <http://www.singipedia.com/content/191-Strateki-pristup-brendiranja-nacije>>.
- Zjalić, et.al. 2012. 'Geographic indications of animal products and farm animal biodiversity: case of twelve Northern and five Mediterranean Member States of the EU.' Zbornik radova Animal farming and environmental interactions in the Mediterranean region, Wageningen Academia, Nizozemska.

Other literature

- Anonymus, 2013. Tipičan hrvatski proizvod, <available on: www.gfk.hr>.
- Dossier – Poduzetnički project drniški pršut, 2010. Šibenik Tim, br.2, <available on: <http://mok.hr/sibenik/portal/%C5%A1ibenik-tim>>
- Hrvatski centar za poljoprivredni marketing, <available on: <http://hcpm.agr.hr/>>
- Hrvatska gospodarska komora, <available on: <http://www.hgk.hr/>>
- Ministarstvo poduzetništva i obrta Republike Hrvatske, <available on: <http://www.minpo.hr/>>
- Ministarstvo poljoprivrede Republike Hrvatske, <available on: <http://www.mps.hr/>>
- Ministarstvo poljoprivrede – Specifikacija proizvoda Drniški pršut, <available on: http://www.mps.hr/UserDocsImages/HRANA/DRNISKI%20PRSUT/Specifikacija%20Drniski%20prsut_OZP_20_12_2011_.pdf>

Narodne novine 50/12, Zakon o oznakama izvornosti, oznakama zemljopisnog podrijetla i oznakama tradicionalnog ugleda poljoprivrednih i prehrambenih proizvoda, <available on: <http://narodne-novine.nn.hr/>>

Udruga proizvođača Driškog pršuta, <available on: <http://dalmatinsko.com/udruga-i-zadruga/153-udruga-proizvodaca-drniskog-prsuta.html>>

Vinopedia, 2008. Prošek, <available on: <http://vinopedia.hr/>>

Vinistra, (n.d.), Teran, <available on: <http://vinistra.com/>>