

**DIRECTIVE CONCERNING  
SLICING AND PACKAGING OPERATIONS  
OF PARMA HAM**

**CHAPTER 1**

**GENERAL RULES**

Article 1

Definitions

1. Pursuant to this Directive, the following expressions are used with the meaning specified herein below:

- "Specifications", the specifications for the production of Parma Ham;
- "Protection Law", Law no. 26 dated 13 February 1990 (Protection of the 'Parma Ham' designation of origin);
- "Implementing Regulation", the regulation implementing the Protection Law, approved by Ministerial Decree no. 253 dated 15 February 1993;
- "IPQ", the Certification Body called *Istituto Parma Qualità*;
- "Certification brand", the Consorzio del Prosciutto di Parma identification and quality mark applied on the Parma Hams complying with art. 1 of the Law and whose symbol was finally approved by Ministerial Decree dated 23 August 1994, Annex 3;
- "Packaging operations", all the operations relating to the slicing and packaging of Parma Ham, including operations for ascertaining the authenticity of bone-in hams, de-boning and boxing operations;
- "brick", the de-boned ham that is duly shaped to be sliced.

Article 2

Legislative references

1. Packaging operations are governed by the Protection Law, the Implementing Regulation and this Directive, issued pursuant to art. 12, paragraph 1 of the same law.
2. This Directive, which is the "provision governing the packaging of Parma Ham", is approved by the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry Policies and is part of the specifications for the production of Parma Ham.
3. Possible changes may be introduced according to the same procedure; in the event mandatory rules are implemented, changes shall be introduced without formalities.

4. Also the legislation in force and relevant procedures that may be requested by importing foreign Countries are deemed to be mandatory.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **AUTHORISATION OF THE PACKAGING PLANT**

#### Article 3

##### Location of the packaging plants

1. The slicing and packaging operations of Parma Ham are carried out in plants located in the typical area specified in art. 2, paragraph 1 of the Law, equipped in a specific way and accredited in advance by the IPQ.

#### Article 4

##### Authorisation application

1. Any company that is willing to slice and package Parma Ham shall submit the relevant application to the IPQ specifying:
  - a) registration with the Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Artisan Crafts and Agriculture of Parma;
  - b) company name, registered office of the company and particulars of the legal representatives;
  - c) location of the packaging plant;
  - d) details of the public health authorisation and description of premises and equipment;
  - e) indicative production capacity and volumes;
  - f) company name and registered office of the suppliers of packs, without prejudice to the provisions of art. 9 below;
2. Together with the above application, the company undertakes to notify the IPQ about any change in the data already provided, to comply with all the legal provisions and directives issued on the slicing and packaging of Parma Ham.

#### Article 5

##### Authorisation requirements

1. To be considered fit for packaging Parma Ham according to the phases and procedures specified in the Regulation and in this Directive, every plant shall possess the health authorisation proving compliance with the hygiene and structural requirements envisaged by Community legislation, in particular with Directive 77/99/EEC as amended.
2. To be fit, a plant must be equipped at least with:
  - a) room for pre-cleaning and de-boning;
  - b) refrigerated room for storing "bricks";
  - c) room for preparing, slicing and packaging the product;
  - d) refrigerated room for the storage of packaged Parma Ham;
  - e) room for boxing and shipping.

3. The plant shall be equipped with separate changing rooms for the staff in charge of slicing and shall be such to prevent staff from going directly from the slicing and pre-packaging room to that for storing the product ready for boxing.
4. Parma Ham shall be sliced separately from other products and after accurate cleaning of equipment.
5. Should the de-boning operations take place in rooms that are not part of the slicing plant or production site, these rooms shall comply with the hygiene and structural requirements envisaged by the Community legislation and be anyway located inside the typical production area as defined in Art. 2, paragraph 1 of the Law.

#### Article 6

##### Authorisation procedures

1. Once all the checks deemed necessary have been carried out, the IPQ provides for the authorisation of the plant and the assignment of a specific identification number.
2. The checks described in the previous paragraph are carried out by a specific Board of Experts made up of a member from the IPQ, one of the health officials in charge for the area and a specialist from the "Stazione Sperimentale per l'Industria delle Conserve Alimentari" (Experimental Station for the Food Preserving Industry) of Parma who decide jointly.

#### Article 7

##### Revocation of authorisation

1. Irrespective of the judicial remedies envisaged by the legislation in force, authorisation can be revoked by the IPQ in case of violation of the Specifications, breach of the implementation directives, as well as in case of revocation of the required health authorisation.
2. In specific circumstances, authorisation can be revoked as a precautionary measure whilst awaiting the decision of the judicial authorities.

#### Article 8

##### Register of packaging plants

1. The IPQ sets up and holds the Register of the plants deemed fit for packaging Parma Ham.

### **CHAPTER 3**

### **PACK MANUFACTURERS**

#### Article 9

##### Authorisation and revocation

1. The companies owning the authorised packaging plants shall notify to the IPQ the company name and registered office of the supplier of the packaging materials and/or packs when submitting the application set forth in art. 4 above or at a later stage, but anyway in due time.
2. With a specific formal measure, the IPQ acknowledges the manufacturers of packaging materials and/or packs authorising them to reproduce the Consorzio del Prosciutto di Parma certification mark on the same.
3. The manufacturers of packaging materials and/or packs undertake to comply with the provisions set forth by the IPQ and, in particular, to accept to undergo any type of inspection regarding the

manufacturing of packs intended for Parma Ham, including checks of the correspondence between packs in stock, original amount of packs and number of packs used.

4. Irrespective of the judicial remedies envisaged by the legislation in force, the authorisation to reproduce the Consorzio del Prosciutto di Parma certification brand can be revoked by the IPQ including without specific formalities in case of violations of the Specifications and/or breaches of the provisions in force.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **PARMA HAM PACK**

#### Article 10

##### Pack technology

1. Parma Ham can be packed in a protective atmosphere or vacuum-packed or it can be packed using other systems that may be identified in the light of the progress of production technology.
2. The materials used to manufacture the pack shall have excellent technological performances and be fit to provide all the necessary guarantees for perfect product conservation and, in any case, they shall be conforming with the national and Community rules in force.
3. Packs can have varying sizes, shapes and weights.
4. The use of an interleaving is mandatory when the conditions specified in paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of article 12 apply. Packaging without interleaving is instead admitted in case the conditions specified in paragraph 4 of article 12 apply.

#### Article 11

##### Approval of pack graphics

1. The graphic layout and wording written on the pack shall comply with the provisions envisaged by the Protection law, the Implementing regulation and this Directive as well as any other mandatory rules that may have become effective.
2. The packaging company shall send in advance the graphic layout and wording written on the packs to the IPQ, which formalises their approval or orders possible changes and/or additions stating the grounds thereof.
3. In any case, the approval of the pack graphics cannot be formalised before adopting the measure set forth in art. 9 paragraph 2.
4. The packaging company undertakes to send the IPQ a copy of the administrative papers relating to the order and collection of packs.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **PRODUCT CHARACTERISTICS**

#### Article 12

##### Pre-sliced and packaged Parma Ham

1. For slicing and packaging Parma Ham, the hams to be used shall have a moisture percentage below 60% and the activity of water shall not exceed 0.91.
2. To identify the minimum slicing requirements, hams are subdivided into two weight classes for each of which the minimum maturation times and Date of Minimum Durability (DMD) are identified. This latter element varies depending on maturation period and packaging method (protective atmosphere with interleaving, protective atmosphere without interleaving or vacuum packaging).
3. The above conditions are given in the following table:

Weight product	Maturation	DMD protective atmosphere interleaving	DMD protective atmosphere interleaving	DMD vacuum-packed	
I	Up to 9.5 kg	13 months	90 days	60 days	150 days
f	Up to 9.5 kg	15 months	120 days	90 days	150 days
P					
a	More than 9.5 kg	16 months	90 days	60 days	150 days
M	More than 9.5 kg	18 months	120 days	90 days	150 days

a  
Ham is packaged without interleaving, it shall be exclusively in a protective atmosphere.

4. For the storage and transportation of Parma Ham packaged in compliance with this Directive, the standards envisaged by national and Community legislation in force, especially with regard to storage temperatures and specific transport vehicle equipment shall be complied with.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **STANDARDS FOR PACK APPEARANCE AND LABELLING**

#### Article 13

##### Pack graphics

1. The pack of Parma Ham, being it of any shape, size and weight, shall have a common part - covering 25% of the pack top surface - consisting of a triangle placed on the top left corner of the pack, with black background, the certification brand and the legal wording: "Prosciutto di Parma" - denominazione di origine protetta ai sensi della legge 13 febbraio '90 n° 26 e del Reg. CE n. 1107/96 - confezionato sotto il controllo dell'Istituto Parma Qualità ("Parma Ham" - Protected Designation of Origin pursuant to Law no. 26 dated 13 February 1990 and EC Regulation no. 1107/96 - packaged under the supervision of *Istituto Parma Qualità*). The pack graphics corresponds to the one shown in the graphic design enclosed to this Directive, of which it is an integral part. The remaining parts fall within the company's competence and are used at the discretion of the company concerned in compliance with the regulations on labelling on protected dry-cured ham.

2. In the Ducal Crown certification mark present on the packs of sliced and pre-packaged product, the producer's identification code located under the same trademark is replaced by a code identifying the company carrying out the slicing and packaging operations, which is different from that of the producer.
3. In the event the pack of sliced and pre-packaged ham is presented for sale after folding the pack into two or more parts and the reference field of vision for consumers is only a portion of the overall pack, to arrange the graphics dealt with in this article, the reference surface shall not be the whole pack, but the portion thereof that is visible to consumers when the pack is presented for sale. These packs shall be folded and sealed with labels bearing the legal wording, which does not enable the packs to be opened without damaging them so that, once opened, they are no longer suitable to be placed on the market.
4. Should the Parma Ham pack be realised in compliance with all the provisions established in paragraph 5 below, the above mentioned common part of the pack consists of a triangle with a clear bottom placed on the top left corner of the pack and covering 18% of the surface of the top part of the same, whose vertex has a part with black background on which the Community PDO logo is located. The pack graphics corresponds to the one shown in the graphic design enclosed to this Directive, of which it is an integral part.
5. The conditions referred to in paragraph 3 are the following:
  - a. the product is packaged in a protective atmosphere and without interleaving;
  - b. the DMD does not exceed 25 days (starting from the packaging date);
  - c. packs shall only have variable weight, with a minimum weight of 110 grams;
  - d. the minimum maturation of the hams used shall be 16 months;
  - e. both the front and the back of the pack shall be clear;
  - f. departing from the provisions of paragraph 2, no other graphic mark, trademark or wording is present on the pack except for the content of the above mentioned triangle and the technical label (which can be located both on the front and on the back of the pack);
  - g. the surface area of the technical label cannot exceed 13% of the pack front or back surface;
  - h. the technical label shall necessarily bear the legal wording (including the inscription "Garantito dal Ministero delle politiche agricole alimentari e forestali ai sensi dell'art. 10 del reg. CE 510/06", i.e. Guaranteed by the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry Policies pursuant to article 10 of EC regulation 510/06), the name of the company producing Parma Ham ("curing company") that matured the product and sold it, or the name of the packer that sliced the product; all this without prejudice to the possibility of indicating the name of the holding, subsidiary or associated company next to the name of the packaging company separated by a hyphen or written in parenthesis. The minimum size of the characters used for the company's name shall be 2.6mm; the character font is of free choice. The company's name shall be located right under the designation "Parma Ham" as shown by the graphic design enclosed herewith;
  - i. for the producing company, the company's name can be preceded solely by the wordings "produced by" or "produced and packaged by" (in Italian or other language); whereas the packer that is not a producing company shall necessarily have the company's name preceded by the wording "packaged by" (in Italian or other language);
  - j. the obligation envisaged in points h. and i. can be complied with also indicating the company's name on the front of the pack, under the clear triangle, according to the procedures and provisions set for the classical pack, without prejudice to the different character size.
6. The graphic characteristics and the dimensions of the wordings and brands in the Consorzio del Prosciutto di Parma triangle as per paragraphs 1 and 3 are given in the graphic designs enclosed with this Directive, of which they are an integral part.

7. Should the irregular shape of the packs prevent an appropriate placement of the triangle on the top left corner (for both versions of the above paragraphs), the latter shall be adjusted to the pack shape as shown, by way of example, in the graphic designs enclosed with this Directive.

#### Article 14

##### Name of the producer-packer

1. The Parma Ham packs as per paragraph 1 of article 13 shall bear the name of the company producing Parma Ham ("curing company") that matured the product or sold it, or the name of the packer that sliced the product; such name shall be written in a linear way in the part next to the triangle and written on a clear-satin bottom, as shown in the graphic designs enclosed with this article, which are an integral part of this Directive.
2. The name of the company as per the previous paragraph shall have black characters with minimum size of 4.5mm; the character font is of free choice.
3. This obligation remains also if the name or the brand of the producing company that has matured or sold the product, or of the packer are present on the same pack in a different way.
4. In compliance with the provisions of paragraph 1 above, it is allowed to indicate only one of the names of the three above mentioned subjects (producer or producer that sold the product or packer) with the exception of additional references to other subjects, all this without prejudice to the possibility of indicating the name of the holding, subsidiary or associated company next to the name of the company concerned separated by a hyphen or written in parenthesis.
5. The name of the producing company written on the pack can be preceded solely by the wordings "produced by" or "produced and packaged by" (in Italian or other language), in the event the company has carried out such activities and has not limited itself solely to the product's sale;
6. Otherwise, the packer that is not a producing company shall always have the company's name preceded by the indication "packaged by" (in Italian or other language).

#### Article 15

##### Labelling

1. In any case, in addition to the indications given at point 1 letter a) of the previous article, the following information shall be written on the packs of Parma Ham:
  - a) name or company's name or registered trademark of the producer, packer or seller;
  - b) location of the packaging plant;
  - c) production date (beginning of maturation indicated as month and year);
  - d) date of minimum durability;
  - e) storage procedure (at a temperature not exceeding 10° C);
  - f) net weight;
  - g) ingredients.

## CHAPTER 7

### CONTROLS

#### Article 16

##### Control operations

1. All packaging, as well as related operations are carried out without prejudice to the case dealt with in art. 17 paragraph 3 below – and limited to de-boning operations - subject to the permanent control of the IPQ, which also verifies the compliance of the product with the product characteristics defined in this Directive; this is performed also by taking samples and carrying out the technical tests deemed appropriate.

In the event samples are taken, the standards established by Law no. 283 dated 30 April 1962 and relevant Implementation Regulation approved with Presidential Decree No. 327 of 26 March 1980 shall apply.

#### Article 17

##### Control procedures

1. The inspectors of the IPQ, whilst supervising the packaging operations, shall:
  - a) identify the batch/es intended for slicing obtaining the necessary information from the producer's register or, if the slicing plant is not part of a recognised production plant, from a transport document issued by the producer bearing the reference information concerned;
  - b) ascertain the number and weight of the hams bearing the brand, of which the inspectors authorise the removal prior to slicing after having checked the compliance with the eligibility requirements set forth by the Law for affixing the certification brand;
  - c) ascertain the number and weight of hams deemed unfit.
2. Should the preparation of ham bricks take place prior to the removal of the certification brands, the inspectors of the IPQ shall identify such bricks using own stamps to be applied onto the "pre-package"; in this case, these stamps shall be checked again when opening the pre-packages.
3. Alternatively to the procedures envisaged by the previous paragraphs of this article and subject to a specific prior agreement with the IPQ's offices, the following procedure is allowed:

the inspectors of the IPQ shall:

- a) identify the batch/es intended for slicing on the producer's premises obtaining the necessary information from the producer's register;
- b) ascertain the number and weight of the hams intended for slicing after checking the compliance with the eligibility requirements set forth by the Law for affixing the certification brand, following the procedures set forth in art. 20 of Ministerial Decree no. 253 dated 15 February 1995;
- c) ascertain the number and weight of hams that do not comply with the eligibility requirements, and adopt the appropriate measures with reference thereto;
- d) affix their identification stamp next to one of the certification brands on the hams deemed eligible, drawing up a specific report of the operations performed.



4. Irrespective of the method followed in the previous phases, prior to slicing the inspectors of the IPQ check if the certification brand has been removed and/or is present on the bricks; if the certification brand has been removed, they check for the presence of the stamp affixed for the purpose of paragraph 3 above; if the certification brand has not been removed, the inspectors shall supervise its final removal; subsequently, the inspectors shall also check:
  - a) the number and overall weight of the hams from which the certification brand has been removed;
  - b) the execution of slicing and the overall net weight of ham sliced to be packaged;
  - c) the number of packs on which the certification brand has been affixed.
5. For the hams and packs subject to complaints, the procedures envisaged by art. 22 of the Implementing Regulation shall apply.
6. The operations carried out are recorded on the appropriate report drawn up by the inspector of the IPQ, of which a copy is given to the company concerned.
7. After completing the operations specified in points 1, 2 and 3 of this article, the bricks shall be sliced in the intended plant written on the report, irrespective of possible transfers of title to the products.

#### Article 18

##### Parties subject to supervision

1. All the parties involved in the chain consisting of production of packages, de-boning, preparation, slicing and packaging of Parma Ham are subject to supervisory activities by the Consorzio del Prosciutto di Parma.
2. The controls of compliance with the general hygiene and safety standards, as well as those set forth in this Directive are performed by the relevant local health authorities.

#### Article 19

##### Packer's register

1. The accredited packaging plant shall keep an appropriate register where, for each operation, the following information shall be given:
  - a) progressive order number and recording date;
  - b) number identifying the outgoing product batch recorded on the producer's register and, if the authorised plant is not part of an authorised production plant, the details of the relevant transport document;
  - c) number and overall weight of the hams bearing the certification brand;
  - d) number and overall weight of the hams from which the certification brand has been removed prior to packaging;
  - e) overall net weight of sliced ham;
  - f) number of packs produced and packaging date.

Article 20

Activity planning

1. The packaging company shall agree an operating plan concerning the packaging of Parma Ham with the IPQ with the purpose of planning a routine and systematic development of controls.

**CHAPTER 8**

**RULES AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING BREACHES AND DISPUTES**

Article 21

1. Should the fact not constitute a crime, the non compliance with the rules governing the packaging of Parma Ham, including the ones set forth in this Directive, constitutes a breach of the rule envisaged by art. 20 of the Protection law.
2. The documentation proving breaches that may lead to the revocation of the authorisations provided for in articles 7 and 9 above is forwarded to the relevant authority for acknowledgement and application of possible sanctions.

**CHAPTER 9**

**TEMPORARY AND FINAL PROVISIONS**

Article 22

Keeping and updating of register and documentation

1. The register set forth in art. 19 shall be provided, authenticated on each page, by the IPQ, upon request and at the expenses of the company concerned, and it shall be kept at least until 31 December of the third year following the one during which the last entry was made.  
All entries shall be made without erasures and blanks by and no later than the day following the one to which operations refer.
2. Every authorised plant shall have its own register.
3. Each specimen or copy of the reports, drawn up according to the provisions of the Regulation and this Directive, as well as any other compulsory document, shall be kept at least until 31 December of the third year following the one during which the report or document was drawn-up.

Article 23

Expenses

1. The expenses deriving from the control activities and related charges shall be in line with the fees set by art. 12, paragraph 3, of the Protection law according to the criteria and procedures defined by the IPQ and anyway proportionate to the cost of the services provided.
2. The failure to pay the fees dealt with in the previous paragraph causes the interruption in the provision of the services by the IPQ until the outstanding amounts are settled.