

The Bísaro Pig and the Portuguese Sausage-making

ANCSUB - ASSOCIAÇÃO NACIONAL DE CRIADORES DE SUÍNOS DE RAÇA BÍSARA

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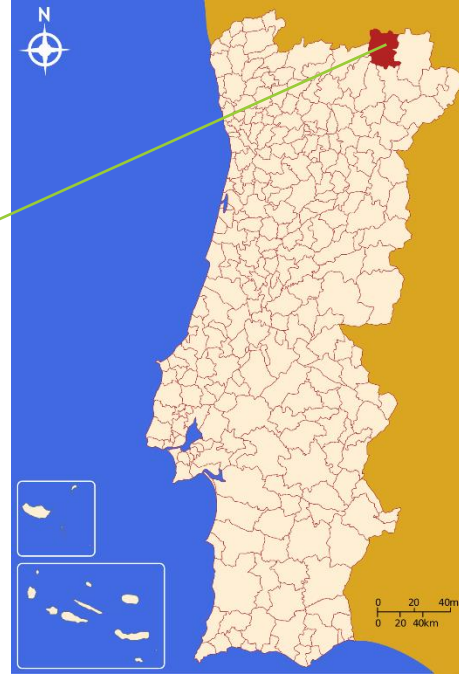
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History

Vinhais – Bragança - Portugal



In the second half of the last century, industrialization of the livestock production has changed meat consumption patterns, and the Bísara breed has declined to be replaced by more productive breeds originating from the centre and north of Europe and Asia. In the 1990s, this breed was practically extinct and reduced to only about 100 breeding stock in small farmers in the North of Portugal. The first conservation and recovery programme for the Bísaro breed was approved and supported by the Portuguese government in the 1990s. From here, and following the establishment of the National Association for Bísaro Pig Breeders (ANCSUB) in 1994, the Bísaro pigs increased in number once again.



History

Some old pictures wich testify the importance of bísaro pig for the local communities



Bísaro Pig

Portuguese native breed belonging to the Celtic line—sus Celtics—that was maintained in its primitive state throughout the North of Portugal until the mid-twentieth century.

Presents a slow growth, unfavourable carcass conformation and medium fat and has always been recognized for its high prolificacy, excellent sensorial quality of meat and aptitude for processing typical products

Bísaro has a very calm and docile temperament and the sows have an extremely care with the piglets. They have a very strong maternal instinct.



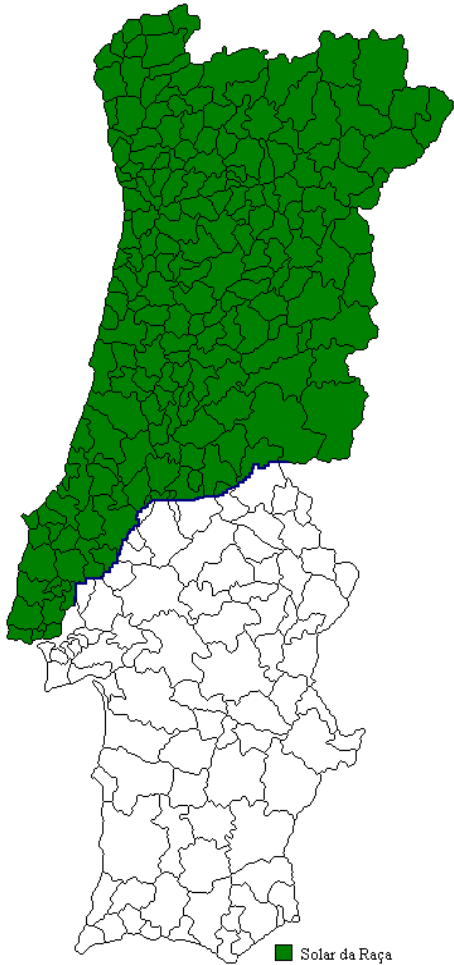
Exterior Phenotypic Characteristics



The Bísaro pig breed has a large body and long legs, with flat sides, strong shoulders and a big head. They have very long and floppy ears covering the eyes, a long and concave snout and a convex back. This local pig breed has several varieties of skin colour; they can be grey or black and white or spotted. The Bísaro has a docile temperament, is slow and somewhat clumsy and is characterized by a convex back and large drooping ears.

The average live weight of adult Bísaro pigs varies between 180 kg in males and 150 kg in females; the values of the height at withers vary between 97 and 89 cm, respectively

Geographical Location



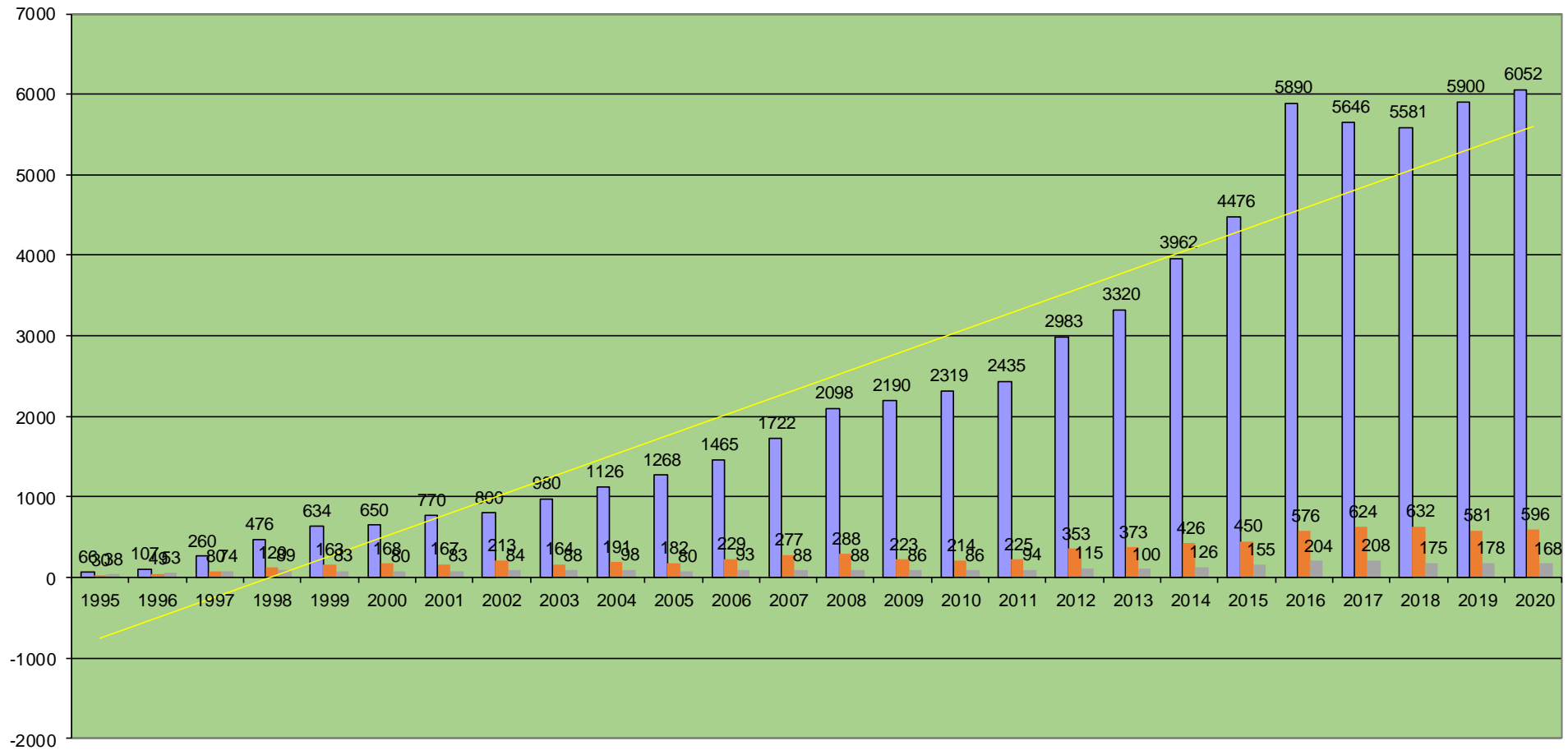
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The Bísara breed is scattered throughout the northern of Portugal, from the Tagus River to the border with Galicia (in Spain), but the highest concentration of farms and animals can be observed over the Douro River (Trás-os-Montes and Minho regions).

- 6052 Sows
- 168 Farms
- average of 35 sows / farm

Bísaro Pig Herdbook Evolution

Evolução Efectivo Reprodutor



Production Systems



Traditionally, Bísaro pigs were kept in very small family farms (3-5 sows per farm) where the pig is often considered an economic supplement for self-consumption and/or for processing artisanal products, sold directly to consumers and/or in small regional fairs (short supply chains).

Production Systems

Bísaro pig is reared in a variety of production systems, mainly in small family farms or in medium-sized outdoor or semi-extensive farms.

All the farms have free range parks, where the pigs can exercise, have contact with the soil and pasture.



Production Systems

The housing systems combine housed (confined) and outdoor rearing systems according to the different physiological stage of the animals. Normally, lactating sows and piglets are confined (housed) in maternities, while pregnant sows are reared outdoors or in semi-confinement.



Production Systems



Growers and finishing pigs can be reared in mixed systems where animals are confined in an open-air park or in an enclosed stable with access to grazing areas of various sizes, depending on the availability of pastures and clumps.

The growing-finishing phase can be classified as intensive, semi-extensive or extensive depending on the available pasture area and the stocking rate.

Feeding System



Diets based on a mixture of cereals (corn, wheat, barley, bran, triticale, others) and a large variety of forage foods, such as tubers (potatoes, turnips, beets), vegetables (cabbages, pumpkins, carrots), fruits and grazing areas, where pigs can pasture different kinds of herbs and wild fruits (chestnuts and acorns).

They are supplemented with concentrate feed only in the lactation, weaning and initial growing phases

Reproductive Traits

Prolificacy

Piglets born-alive (average)

10,2

mín. 5

máx. 20

Weaning piglets (average)

7,6

Piglets dead born (average)

0,8

Interval between parturitions (média)

198,6 days

First parturition

9-12 months

Age at weaning

between 28 to 60 days

(depending of the production system)



Productive Performance

Typically, fattening of Bísaro pigs to obtain high-quality meat products includes two growing phases: first, a fast to moderate growth up to 70–75 kg live weight and, second, a fattening-finishing phase until 120–180 kg



Productive Performance

In the traditional farms, Bísaro pigs are fed with local agricultural crops, usually produced on farm. The feed regime for fattening animals is closely linked to the products and by-products of plants and forages of each region which is dependent on the annual cycles and harvests. Generally, in traditional system Bísaro pigs are fattened slowly and slaughtered between 1 and 2 years of age, reaching a high but variable slaughter weight (between 120 and 180 kg), which is scheduled for the coldest months of the year (between November and February).



Qualified Products PDO



- Reg. CEE nº 944/ 2008 de 25 de Setembro de 2008
- Carne de Bísaro Transmontano D.O.P



Qualified Products- PDO

Carne de Bísaro Transmontano



Description: The Carne de Bísaro Transmontano / Carne de Porco Transmontano PDO meat comes from piglets (slaughtered no older than 45 days) or castrated males or females (slaughtered no younger than 8 months) of the Bísaro breed, raised traditionally. Piglets have a carcass weight of up to 12 kg, pigs have a carcass weight of at least 80 kg. Commercially it can be presented in carcasses or hemi carcasses, or in whole pieces or cuts packaged in vacuum.

Production method: The pigs are raised in a traditional semi extensive system, based on products and by-products of local agriculture. The farms must have enough area either to produce feed or for the animals to graze and recreate themselves. The stalling occurs only during the winter. In October and November the farmers take their animals to chestnut groves, taking advantage of the fallen chestnuts left on the ground. Feeding is diversified, depending on the annual crops produced and based on a mixture of cereals (normally wheat, maize, rye, oats) supplemented with vegetables, fruits, green cereals, chestnuts, etc.

Special features: When grilled, the Carne de Bísaro Transmontano / Carne de Porco Transmontano PDO meat has very distinctive flavor, inherent to the way the animals are raised and fed.



Carne de Bísaro Transmontano PDO

Characteristics

This meat presents a pale red color and pink fat. Is very juicy and tender with a firm texture.

When grilled, the Carne de Bísaro Transmontano / Carne de Porco Transmontano PDO meat has very distinctive flavor, inherent to the way the animals are raised and fed.



Carne de Bísaro Transmontano POD - Piglet

Presents ideal
characteristics for oven
roasting

Good lenght,

Muscle mass poor
development,

Back fat thickness,

Very juicy and tender
meat wich presente a
firm texture.



Portuguese Sausage-making



Bísaro pig
smoked
products
valorization



PGI – Qualified Products Legislation



- **Reg. CE n.º 1265/1998 de 18 de Junho de 1998**
 - Chouriça de Carne de Vinhais ou Linguiça de Vinhais P.G.I.
 - Salpicão de Vinhais P.G.I.

- **Reg. CE n.º 676/2008 de 16 de Julho de 2008**
 - Alheira de Vinhais P.G.I.
 - Presunto Bísaro de Vinhais ou Presunto de Vinhais P.G.I.

- **Reg. CE n.º 723/2008 de 25 de Julho de 2008**
 - Butelo de Vinhais P.G.I.
 - Chouriça Doce de Vinhais P.G.I.

- **Reg. CE n.º 944/ 2008 de 25 de Setembro de 2008**
 - Chouriço Azedo de Vinhais P.G.I.

- **Reg. CE n.º 590/2015 de 31 de Março de 2015**
 - Chouriça de Carne de Melgaço P.G.I.

- **Reg. CE n.º 591/2015 de 31 de Março de 2015**
 - Presunto de Melgaço P.G.I.

- **Reg. CE n.º 292/2016 de 19 de Fevereiro de 2016**
 - Alheira de Mirandela P.G.I.



Salpicão de Vinhais PGI

Description: The Salpicão de Vinhais PGI is a traditional smoked sausage made from the meat of Bísaro breed pigs. It is a 15-20 cm long sausage, with a cylindrical shape and a diameter of 5 to 8 cm. It has a dark chestnut external colour, the interior being bright red and white. It has a smoky flavor, with hints of wine.

Production method: The pig is slaughtered at an age of 9 to 18 months and minimum weight of 100 kg. The loin used for the production of this sausage is cut into small cubes (ca. 5 cm), seasoned with wine, salt, garlic, bay leaves and sweet or hot paprika, and left to marinate for four days. The resulting mixture is stuffed into natural intestine casings and smoked over oak and chestnut wood fires for at least 40 days.

Special features: The distinct flavor of Salpicão de Vinhais PGI derives mainly from the way local populations rear the Bísara breed pigs, particularly the way they are fed. These traditional methods are clearly reflected in the quality achieved by the products obtained from the meat of these animals.



Chouriça de Carne de Vinhais PGI

Description: The Chouriça de Carne de Vinhais PGI is a 30 to 35 cm long horse-shoe shaped smoked sausage, made from meat and fat of pure or cross breed Bísaro pigs, suitably seasoned with salt, wine, water, garlic, paprika and/or chili powder and bay leaf. The sausage has a cylindrical section of 2 to 3 cm in diameter and a reddish-brown in colour. When sliced, the sausage forms a coherent mass and is uneven in colour, varying from bright red to white.

Production method: The pig is slaughtered at an age of 9 to 18 months and minimum weight of 100 kg. The meat is cut into small cubes (ca. 3 cm), seasoned and left to marinate for four days. It is then stuffed into natural intestine casings and smoked over oak and chestnut wood fires for at least 35 days.

Special features: The meat used in the preparation of Chouriça de Carne de Vinhais PGI has a distinctive flavor deriving from the chestnuts from the woods of the region, on which the Bísaro pigs are mostly fed.



Butelo de Vinhais PGI

Description: The Butelo de Vinhais PGI is a smoked sausage produced with the meat, fat, bone and cartilage from the ribs and spine of pure or cross bred Bísaro pigs. The meat is seasoned with garlic, paprika, bay leaves, wine, water and salt. The colour of Butelo de Vinhais PGI varies from yellow to reddish or dark brown. It may be round, oval or cylindrical. Its weight can vary from 1 to 2 kg and its diameter from 10 to 15 cm. It has a pleasant and distinct taste and a persistent smoky aroma.

Production method: The meat, bones and cartilage are chopped into small pieces and seasoned. This mixture (called 'adoba') marinates one to three days, after that being stuffed into a gut, intestine, stomach or bladder casing. The ensemble is tied and then slowly smoked with oak or chestnut wood for at least 15 days. It's then left to cure in a cool place.

Special features: There are several factors influencing the quality and unique flavor of Butelo de Vinhais PGI, such as the way the pigs are fed, its traditional production method, the slow smoking process which seals in the aroma or the curing in a cool and dry environment.



Alheira de Vinhais

PGI

Description: The Alheira de Vinhais PGI is a yellow-brownish, horseshoe-shaped smoked sausage, approximately 30 cm long, with a diameter of 2 cm and weighing 170 to 200 g. Its ingredients are: meat of pure or cross breed Bísaro pigs, poultry meat (used only in the gravy), regional wheat bread and Trás-os-Montes olive oil, seasoned with salt, garlic and paprika. The paste looks homogeneous when cut, presenting nonetheless some shredded meat.

Production method: The pork and poultry meats are cut and cooked in salted water. The bread is cut into thin slices (with crust), and softened in the hot cooking gravy. Garlic, paprika, olive oil and shredded pork meat are added to the paste. The seasoning is corrected. The skins are stuffed with this paste and tied with knots. The sausages are then smoked over low heat, the fire being made from regional wood (like oak or chestnut), and later cured or stabilized for at least eight days. The Alheira de Vinhais IGP is then packed in the region, appearing in the market in whole pieces (its texture not allowing it to be presented cut or sliced).

Special features: The particular climate of the region, the traditional experience of the local population in pig breeding and the specific smoking process used in the production of Alheira de Vinhais PGI are responsible for the uniqueness of this sausage.



Chouriço Azedo de Vinhais PGI

Description: The Chouriço Azedo de Vinhais PGI is a smoked sausage made of meat from pure or cross breed Bísaro pigs, regional bread, olive oil from Trás-os-Montes, paprika and garlic. It has a length of ca. 20-25 cm and a diameter of 7-10 cm. It has a yellow to brown color and weights ca. 300 g.

Production method: The meat is chopped and cooked in salted water and minced while it is still hot. The bread is finely sliced and mixed with the stock from the cooked meat and made into a paste. The coarsely minced meat, olive oil, paprika, garlic and seasoning are then added and thoroughly mixed together. The resulting mixture is then stuffed into a natural intestine casing. The sausage is smoked slowly for at least four weeks over a slow burning oak or chestnut wood fire.

Special features: The climatic conditions of the area, the expertise of local populations in rearing pigs, the ingredients used and the particular method of smoking these sausages over a slow burning wood fire make Chouriço Azedo de Vinhais PGI a one-of-a-kind product.



Chouriça Doce de Vinhais IGP

Description: The Chouriça Doce de Vinhais PGI is a horseshoe shaped smoked sausage, made of meat from pure or cross breed Bísaro pigs, regional bread, olive oil from Trás-os-Montes, pig's blood, honey and walnuts or almonds. It has a length of ca. 20-25 cm and a diameter of 2-3 cm. It has a non-homogeneous black colour, with lighter areas denoting the frayed meat and nuts. It weights ca. 150 g.

Production method: The meat is chopped and cooked in salted water. Once the meat cooked, the bread is finely sliced and added to the stock produced by the meat to make a paste. Olive oil, pig's blood honey and almonds or walnuts are then added to the meat. The resulting mixture is stuffed into a natural casing and smoked over a slow burning oak or chestnut wood fire. The sausage is then left to cure or stabilize for at least 15 days.

Special features: The climatic conditions of the area, the expertise of local populations in rearing pigs, the high quality of their feed and the particular method of smoking these sausages over a slow burning wood fire make Chouriça Doce de Vinhais PGI a one-of-a-kind product.



Presunto de Vinhais ou Presunto Bísaro de Vinhais IGP

Description: The Presunto de Vinhais PGI is a smoked ham made from the lower end of the back legs of the Bísaro breed of pig.

Production method: The fresh meat, which must weigh at least 8Kg is left to marinate for 24 hours and then massaged to remove internal liquids. The pieces of meat are then covered in salt for about 30 hours at 6 °C and 80% to 90% humidity. Excess salt is then washed away and the meat is hung to dry. It is covered with paprika, Trás-os-Montes olive oil and pork lard and smoked over a low fire of dried oak or chestnut wood. Finally the ham is cured in caves or curing rooms at a low temperature and low humidity. The entire process takes at least 12 months.

Distinctive features: The factors influencing the particular qualities of this ham are many, such as the feeding of the native breed of pig on local production, the suitability of the climate and the geography, the skill of the local people in the preparation of the hams and the slow smoking process, which seals in the aroma, plus the curing of the hams in this cold dry climate. All these factors add up to make Presunto de Vinhais ou Presunto Bísaro de Vinhais PGI a unique product of its kind.



40 years of Vinhais Traditional Smoked Sausages Market Fair



Thank you very
much for your
attention!

