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**Food quality contest “The Baltic Taste Award”**

**REGULATION**

Organisers of “The Baltic Taste Award” are the association “Pavāru klubs” and the International Exhibition Company BT 1 (SIA “BT 1”). The contest will be held in the international food industry exhibition “Riga Food” in Ķīpsala, Latvia.

“The Baltic Taste Award” is a product quality contest for all food manufacturers in the Baltic states. Participants must be officially registered food manufacturers and the submitted products must be available for consumers’ purchase.

**Products for the contest can be submitted in 10 categories:**

1. milk and dairy products (incl. goat and sheep milk products);
2. meat products (incl. raw);
3. fish products (incl. fresh fish);
4. berry, fruit, and vegetable products;
5. bread and farinaceous products;
6. honey;
7. non-alcoholic beverages (incl. water, juice);
8. fermented beverages (beer, wine, fortified wine, cider);
9. spirit drinks;
10. vegan products.

 **1. General conditions for participation in the contest:**

1.1. Participant has registered their economic activity and the participant is registered in the Food and Veterinary Service.

1.2. Company’s operations conform with the applicable legislation.

1.3. Participant conducts business activities in one of the Baltic states.

1.4. To participate in the contest, at least 50% of the company’s products (in terms of both volume and quantity) comply with the rules of the competition.

1.5. Company’s products are freely available for purchase.

1.6. Ingredients of the product submitted to the competition are identical to those of the product in the market.

**2. Ingredients of the contest products**

2.1. The main or taste-composing raw material must be of a local origin, manufactured in the Baltic states. Raw materials of a local origin are to be understood as those grown or produced as close as possible to the processing place.

2.2. Spices, nuts, or other additives must be natural and without artificial additives and preservatives, but they can be imported as well.

**3. Manufacturing of the contest products**

3.1. Food manufacturers work according to traditional production methods. While the manufacturing process is not fully mechanised, it does not exclude innovations. Overall, the manufacturing process complies with the security conditions of food manufacturing laid down by the laws and regulations.

**4. Implementation of the contest**

4.1. For a category to be assessed, each of the categories requires at least one registered submission. If a category contains no product submissions on the last day of the registration, then it is cancelled.

4.2. Each participant can submit no more than three products per category. Each of the categories will comprise no more than 50 products. If the number of registered products within a category exceeds 50, they are accepted sequentially based on the date and time of submission for the application of registration. In cases where the manufacturer has included additional instructions about the serving of the product (e.g., a specific serving temperature, heating up before serving etc.), the jury will be informed about them and will therefore determine whether the instructions will be considered or not. The contest products must meet the food business requirements laid down by the Food and Veterinary Service.

4.3. Winners will be awarded at the award ceremony on 9 September. The location and time of the award ceremony will be clarified a month before the contest.

**5. Submission of products for the contest**

5.1. Products must be submitted in-person on 6 September 2023 at the third gate of the International Exhibition Centre in Ķīpsala (address: 8 Ķīpsalas street, Kurzeme district, Riga, LV-1048) from 9:30 to 18:00. If the manufacturer has not planned to attend the contest and if the product type allows for it, their products can be sent by courier or carrier. See point 6.

5.2. All products must be submitted in full and unopened packaging, except for large cheeses [1]. Packages and bottles must be full and unopened. If the products are very small or the packaging contains very few of them, several of the packaging must be submitted for the assessment. It must be considered that the jury has up to five people and each juror must perform a proper assessment and taste test.

5.3. Products submitted for the contest cannot contain manufacturer markings or other such indications about their producer. The category in which a product participates must be specified for each product.

5.4. A filled in accompanying document, which you will receive in the confirmation email for the registration of participation, must be included in the consignment of the products submitted to the contest. A duplicate of the product in its original wrapping and label must also be included. This does not apply to large products, e.g., large cheeses (see above).

5.5. Products not registered in the contest submission will not be accepted.

5.6. A photo of the product must accompany the application form for its use by the organisers of the contest for its marketing, including social network and promotional materials. **By signing the application form, the manufacturer agrees to the publication of the product photo.**

**6. Transport of products of the contest**

6.1. If the manufacturer or the contestant has no possibility of consigning the product on the day of the contest, it can be consigned early by courier (if allowed by the storage conditions of the product), post or parcel machine. If allowed by the storage period and conditions, the products can be consigned as of 2 September.

6.2. All information about the delivery address, notification of shipping, the accompanying document which must be filled in, and the directions about the marking of the consignment will be given in the confirmation message sent by the organisers of the contest.

6.3. Products are assessed in the condition in which they arrive at the organisers of the contest. There is a possibility of submitting products for the contest together with other contestants of the closest region. Specialists of the association “Pavāru klubs” can assist in coordination or the delivery of products, as well as in the consultation of the contestants in the region. The list of consultants can be found at [www.chef.lv](http://www.chef.lv).

**7. Jury and assessment of the contest**

7.1. The products submitted for the contest are assessed by a jury of experts – professionally-recognised chefs and food technologists.

7.2. The jury assesses products of the contest according to predetermined uniform criteria. In essence, appearance, texture, aroma, and taste are evaluated.

7.3. The product can gain between 1-6 points in each criterion. The average point count given by the jurors is counted for each product, regardless of how many products are submitted within each category as they are not compared with one another. The best assessed products are awarded these prizes following such a system:

7.3.1. Gold: 24–21 point (maximum number of points);

7.3.2. Silver: 20–17 points;

7.3.3. Bronze: 16–13 points.

7.4. If the number of points is lower, a diploma for the participation in the contest is awarded.

7.6. The place for specific comments by the jury is indicated in the contest evaluation table wherein the answers to three questions are given (1 sentence per question):

7.6.1. What can I (as a juror) suggest changing or improving in the preparation or manufacturing of the product?

7.6.2. How can I use this product in my work?

7.6.3. What is this product compatible with?

7.7. No comparison between products within a category is conducted; instead, each product is assessed separately.

7.8. Assessment occurs in silence without seeing the packaging and the sales appearance of the product, therefore the overall appearance and design of the product is not assessed.

7.9. The jury’s decision is not open to being challenged.

**8. Contest participation price and the submission of the registration application**

8.1. The participation price for one product is **EUR 90** (incl. VAT) until **23 June 2023**, and **from 24 June to 15 August – 130 EUR** (incl. VAT).

8.2. The invoice for the participation price will be sent out through email after the receiving of the application for the confirmation of registration. Participation price must be paid until 31 August 2023 (included).

8.3. The application of registration is filled in and submitted electronically through email: baltictasteaward@gmail.com until 15 August at 23:59.

**9. Contest procedure:**

9.1. The assessment of the contest will take place on 7 September 2023 at the International Exhibition Centre Hall in Ķīpsala from 10:00 to 17:00.

9.2. The jurors' assessment will occur on a product-by-product basis with no discussion among themselves; the assessment of a singular product will take no more than five minutes.

9.3. The products submitted to the contest will be placed on display at the lobby of the "Riga Food" exhibition on September 8 to September 9.

**10. Best assessed products and prizes of the contest**

10.1. Best assessed products of each category are awarded a prize, a diploma, and a model (the gold medal of "The Baltic Taste Award 2023") which can be used as a marking element on the packaging of the product. Second- and third-prize winners are given diplomas, as well as models of silver and bronze medals respectively. Additionally, a digital image of the label, which will be available for the marketing of the product, will be available to the prize winners. Information about the usage of the labels can be found at [www.chef.lv](http://www.chef.lv).

10.2 The winning products of the contest will be published on the website of the "Riga Food" exhibition at [www.rigafood.lv](http://www.rigafood.lv) and on the website of the association "Pavāru klubs" at <https://chef.lv/>.

10.3. The list of the best participants (the top three winning products) along with the comments of the jury will be sent to the participants, as well as published on the website of the "Riga Food" exhibition at [www.rigafood.lv](http://www.rigafood.lv) and on the website of the association "Pavāru klubs" at <https://chef.lv/>.

10.4. The best assessed products of the contest will be exposed at a publicity-facilitating media tasting event in which media representatives will be introduced with the winning products of the contest.

**11. Results of the contest assessment**

11.1. All participants of the contest will receive the jury's complete contest assessment (a review) with points and a structured assessment regarding the options for the further development and improvement of the product. The review will be sent to the participants within one month of the completion of the contest.

**12. Exposure of the products assessed in the contest**

12.1.All originals of the participating products will be placed on display at the lobby of the "Riga Food" exhibition on September 8 to September 9. Every attendee of the exhibition, including media representatives and professionals, will be able to view them.

**13. Contact information**

Additional information about the contest is available at the organisers of the contest which can be requested by writing to the official email: baltictasteaward@gmail.com.

**14. Making of amendments**

The organiser of the contest is entitled to make changes in the regulation of the contest by informing the participants of the contest through websites and social networks of the contest and information placed on [www.chef.lv](http://www.chef.lv).

**15. Information about the completion**

15.1. Information given in the application forms is withheld from third parties and is solely used to ensure the registration of and the communication with the participants. The contact information of the contest participants and the information about the products will be used for the promotion of the contest and its participants after the completion of the contest.

15.2. By participating in the contest, the participants agree, without any separate explicit consent, to the use of the photos which have been consigned to the contest for the purposes of advertising the product and its manufacturer.

[1] For cheeses: Whole cheese round 2–4 kg – half round cheese (1–2 kg), cheeses exceeding 4 kg – one quarter (> 1 kg is assessed)