



Original article

Portuguese traditional sausages: different types, nutritional composition, and novel trends

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ABSTRACT

Traditional sausages—smoked, fermented or dried—are meat products that are part of the traditional daily diet in rural Portugal, and also highly valued in major cities with an increasing demand. These ethnic meat products are manufactured mainly by small-scale industries or artisanal producers according to and/or inspired by traditional processes. They are present in a wide variety of types, many recognized for their quality (38 certified products). Presently, cure technologies used are important for the potential they represent in transformation and diversification. Additionally, they add flavors and colors to meat that are much appreciated, surpassing meat preservation proposes. A review on the types and manufacturing technological aspects associated to Portuguese traditional sausages (PTS) is provided in this article. Additionally, nutritional composition of the products is presented. Future developments foreseen in the field, in the light of current knowledge and market trends, are finally addressed.

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1. Introduction

Mediterranean sausages may be classified as dry fermented meat products. They are made predominantly with pure pork products and involve long ripening periods, up to several months, often without clear separation between fermentation and drying. These may be considered low-acidic meat products (final pH > 5). Shelf life is mainly determined by drying and lowered water activity [1,2].

Raw fermented sausages, in general, can be defined as products made by selecting, chopping, and mincing meat and fat, with or without offal, mixed with seasoning, spices, and authorized additives, that are then ripened and dried (cured) and, sometimes, smoked (for example, in Portugal curing is usually associated to smoking) [3]. However, regional traditions, environmental variations, family recipes, and other factors have given rise to a wide range of fermented sausages, and it can be said that there are almost as many types of sausages as there are geographical regions or ultimately manufacturers, although their production processes always require the combination of fermentation and dehydration and/or smoking [2,4]. In the specific case of Mediterranean

countries, including Portugal, air-dried sausages made with spices are the most common type, with relatively long ripening periods compared to central and northern European countries [5], where fermentation is usually accompanied by a smoking process or a less intense drying process. In both categories of sausages, industrial development in general, also includes the use of starter cultures to standardize and control production, with some exceptions. Concerning the latter, in Portugal most of the manufacturers do not add any starters to the meat mixtures for sausages [6,7]. These traditional/ethnic sausages are very different from those found for instance in the American market, where the most commonly found fermented sausages are semi cured, fermented rapidly at relatively high temperatures, with a short drying period leading, therefore, to very different organoleptic characteristics [8–10]. In this paper, authors review the main types of traditional meat sausages produced in the different regions of Portugal, addressing three main issues—production, nutritional composition, and future trends.

2. Manufacturing technological aspects associated to Portuguese traditional sausages

2.1. Types of products

There is a wide variety of sausages produced in Portugal, and albeit being produced all over the country, they are predominantly

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manufactured in the North region (namely in the districts of Vila Real and Bragança, generally defined as Trás-os-Montes) and in the Southern region of the country (Alentejo, comprising the districts of Évora, Beja, and Portalegre).

In 2001, an inventory accomplished by the Portuguese Ministry of Agriculture (Ministério da Agricultura, do Desenvolvimento Rural e das Pescas) was published listing and characterizing main traditional products from Portugal, including meat products [11].

Table 1

Current and classified traditional sausages, bagged hams, and other traditional meat products from Portugal.

Type	Name	Name/protected geographical status
Alheira	Alheira de Boticas Alheira de Chaves Alheira de Mirandela Alheira Terras da Alfândega	Alheira de Barroso Montalegre PGI Alheira de Vinhais PGI
Assadura	Assadura de Boticas	
Bucheira	Bucheira de Boticas	
Bucho	Bucho da Sertã Bucho de carne de Pinhel	
Butelo	Butelo de Bragança	Butelo de Vinhais PGI Butelo Terras da Alfândega PGI
Cabeça de xara		
Cacholeira branca		Cacholeira branca de Portalegre PGI
Catalão	Catalão de Barrancos	
Chouriça	Chouriça de bofe da Guarda Chouriça de carne da Guarda Chouriça de carne de Pinhel	Chouriça de carne de Barroso-Montalegre PGI Chouriça de carne de Vinhais PGI Chouriça doce de Vinhais PGI
Chouriço	Chouriço de carne Chouriço de carne Terras da Alfândega Chouriço doce Terras da Alfândega Chouriço azedo de Farinha de Boticas Chouriço azedo Terras da Alfândega Chouriço de abóbora de Boticas Chouriço de Barrancos Chouriço de carne da Serra de Monchique Chouriço Mouro dos Açores Chouriço raiano	Chouriço azedo de Vinhais PGI Chouriço de abóbora de Barroso-Montalegre PGI Chouriço de carne de Estremoz e Borba PGI Chouriço de Portalegre PGI Chouriço grosso de Estremoz e Borba PGI Chouriço Mouro de Portalegre PGI
Farinheira	Farinheira da Guarda Farinheira de milho de Monchique Farinheira raiana	Farinheira de Estremoz e Borba PGI Farinheira de Portalegre PGI
Farinhota	Farinhota de Boticas	
Linguiça	Linguiça de Boticas Linguiça de Chaves	Linguiça de Portalegre PGI Linguiça do Baixo Alentejo PGI Linguiça de Vinhais PGI
Lombo		Lombo branco de Portalegre PGI Lombo enguitado de Portalegre PGI
Maranhos	Maranhos da Sertã	
Molhos	Molhos de Monchique	
Morceia	Morceia da Guarda Morceia de Pinhel Morceia doce de Jarmelo Morceia de carne de Monchique Morcelas de S. Miguel	Morceia de assar de Portalegre PGI Morceia de cozer de Portalegre PGI Morceia de Estremoz e Borba PGI
Morcilha	Morcilha de Barrancos	
Moura	Moura de Vila Real	
Paia		Paia de lombo de Estremoz e Borba PGI Paia de toucinho de Estremoz e Borba PGI
Painho		Painho de Portalegre PGI
Paio	Paio branco Paio de Barrancos Paio de lombinho Paio de lombo de Barrancos Paio raiano	Paio de Beja PGI Paio de Estremoz e Borba PGI
Presunto	Presunto Terras da Alfândega Presunto de Lamego Presunto do Marão-Padrela Presuntos de Fiães e de Castro Laboreiro – Melgaço	Presunto de Barrancos PDO Presunto e Paleta do Alentejo PDO Presunto e Paleta de Campo Maior e Elvas PGI Presunto e de Santana da Serra PGI Presunto de Barroso PGI Presunto de Vinhais PGI
Salpicão	Salpicão de Boticas Salpicão de Chaves Salpicão de Terras da Alfândega	Salpicão de Barroso-Montalegre PGI Salpicão de Vinhais PGI
Salsichão	Salsichão de Barrancos	
Sanguieira	Sanguieira de Boticas	Sanguieira de Barroso-Montalegre PGI

Note. Based on information from Direcção-Geral de Desenvolvimento Rural (DGDRural), 2001 and Qualifica, 2011.

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