

RACHULI LORI

NUMBER OF REGISTRATION: 33

DATE OF REGISTRATION: 01/08/2025

NAME OF PRODUCT FOR WHICH REGISTRATION OF: Lori (ham)

NAME AND ADDRESS OF APPLICANT: Ministry of Environmental Protection and
Agriculture of Georgia;

6, Marshal Gelovani Ave., 0159, Tbilisi, Georgia

1. Name of Product

Rachuli Lori.

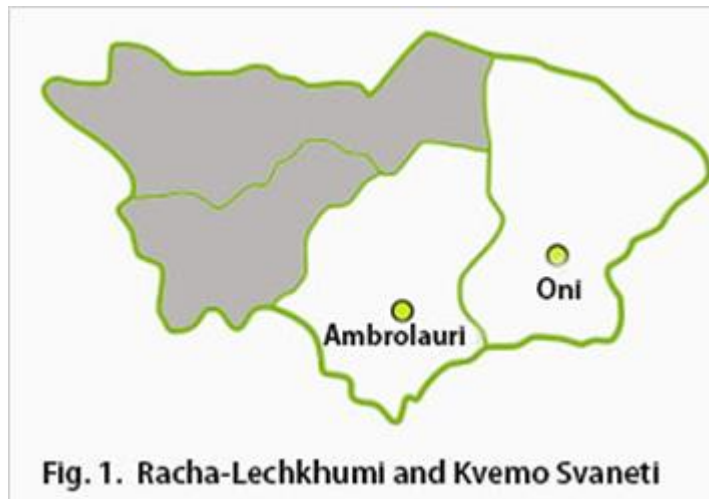
2. Product Description

Rachuli Lori is salted, smoked, dry product produced with a pork of endemic or local^[1] forest-fed (fattened) pig by using traditional methods having crust from one side. Organoleptic characteristics thereof are determined by morphological, morphometric, and climatic features of terrain.

Rachuli Lori has uniform color, it is characterized with dense consistency, and can be hard or medium-hard, depending on the amount of muscle mass and drying. Middle part of large muscle mass may be less tender. It has characteristic smoky smell and aroma, spicy taste, and purple-dark red muscle tissue. Color variation is determined with the species of trees and plants used during smoking. It is moderately salty, and table salt content varies within 10g in 100 g of product. This amount of salt not only contributes to the formation of specific flavor, but also speeds up dehydration process. Rachuli Lori is characterized with having pleasant sharp taste the white or pinkish fat inclusions mostly located between meat and skin layers, however, inside the layers of meat, as well. The layers of fat and muscle mass should be visible. The cut is dry and does not exude moisture when pressed. The texture is fibrous at touch.

3. Production Area

Rachuli Lori production area includes Ambrolauri and Oni municipalities located correspondingly in Racha-Lechkhumi and Kvemo Svaneti regions.



4. Raw Materials for Production

Rachuli Lori is produced with fresh, unfrozen half carcass so called "peliki" of freshly slaughtered pork of endemic or local, forest-fed (fattened) pig. The pigs are fed in the forest for at least 90 days from June to November, unless the state restricts on fed pigs in the forest. Feeding the pigs with premixes and concentrates is prohibited. Racha is surrounded with forested mountain slopes, and raising and keeping of local, forest-fed pigs for the production of Rachuli Lori is long-time tradition.

Endemic breed or local, forest-fed (fattened) pig is characterized with adaptability to living conditions and reproducibility in various conditions, it is distinguished with its endurance, and able to absorb natural food sources that is enable for other animals.

The pigs feed on forest fruits of: oak, beech, chestnut, walnut, crabapple, medlar, cornel, blackberry, hawthorn, barberry, and etc. The weight of pig of endemic breed or local, fed (fatted) in the forest mainly is 80-120 kg. It is characterized with frequent shedding, black, brown, reddish or grey in color, can be spotted or striped, has a long muzzle, and gives birth to 5-8 piglets. According to Prof. I. Shubitidze, "local pig populations in Georgia (Kakhetian,

Rachan, Imeretian, Megrelian, Abkhazian, Svanetian) were formed as a result of direct domestication of wild boar (Caucasian form) in ancient times." "Pork of endemic pig, which does not differ significantly from its wild forms was used for Rachuli Lori preparation. Due to its convenient size, keeping and arranging shelter is not a big problem. It is well adapted to plant and animal feed, kitchen and dairy waste. It is characterized with better fattening ability and higher meat yield. It is a meat-oriented breed".[\[2\]](#)

The live weight of pig used to make Rachuli Lori should be at least 35-40 kg, and 50-80 kg is the best.

Salting

Coarsely ground "table salt" is used for salting, which is a crystalline product, and mainly consists of sodium chloride (at least 97%). Its granulometric composition ranges from 2.5 mm to 4 mm – it is the so-called "khorkhosh" (thick seed) salt. In the case of iodized salt, the salt must be deiodized, wherefore the salt must be spread out into thin layer (no more than 1 cm) under direct sunlight, it should be stirred periodically for several days (2-3), for this purpose to preheat the salt by stirring is also possible. To use any other ingredient to make Rachuli Lori is not permissible.

5. Stages of Production

Stage I – Pig Butchering

Pig butchering for the production of Rachuli Lori is allowed in Racha from October 15 to March 1. Live weight of pig must be at least 35-40 kg.

Stage II – Cleaning

After stunning/butchering and bleeding of animal, the pork is boiled, deboned, and scraped, wherefor it is rubbed with wheat bran or cornmeal and thoroughly washed with hot water. Processing is executed without peeling. After this process gutting begins. First, the head is cut off, then – outer part of anus. Gutting is executed on a table or in hang

position, an incision is executed along abdominal line, the bladder is removed, then – the intestines along with the stomach, then – the liver. The gallbladder is removed carefully. Internal organs are stripped of fat, the diaphragm is opened, and the heart and lungs are removed. The inside of carcass is cleaned. After this procedure, the carcass is cut into two equal parts, along the spine, half of carcass is called "Peliki". It is necessary to remove the spine without damaging the bone marrow and upper three ribs are removed, as well.

Stage III– Salting of "Peliki" (Marinading)

Salting (marinading) process removes excess liquid from the pork. Salting is done on freshly slaughtered, still warm pork, in some cases even cooled pork is salted, although in this case warm salt is used. For salting, the bones of "Peliki" are opened, as well as all joints, the pork is pounded, the thick part thereof should be pounded especially deeply, it is pounded along the ribs, as well, after that it is dry-salted. Salt is carefully rubbed in manually all over, especially in the thickest parts of pork. Use of heated salt is permissible. Approximately 50-80g of salt is used for 1 kg of pork. Salted "Pelikis" are stacked on each other, with the surface (skin) facing up, and left on wooden or stainless-steel large bowl/tray, so called "Gobi", for about 15 days under natural ventilation. During this period, the sequence of "Pelikis" is changed, rotated, top "Peliki" is placed at the bottom, this process is called "Damtsnileba" – marinading in Racha. For this purpose, it is permissible to use a bowl/tray or table made of wood (not coniferous plants) or a material intended for contact with food.

Stage IV – Drying of "Peliki"

Drying takes place in wooden storage room for five to seven days, during that time the "Pelikis" are hung up, in some cases, wood-fired oven is used to speed up drying process. When the surface of "Peliki" is covered with a "flake" of salt, it is dry and ready to be smoked.

Stage V – Smoking

After drying the "Peliki" smoking process begins. Traditionally, smoking chamber is a building made of wooden planks, or a combination of wood and stone, approximately of 3-

4.5 m height. However, in modern conditions, it is permissible to use block material instead of stone in combination with wood. In order to preserve traditional method of smoking, at least 60% of construction shall be made of wood. Smoking significantly improves the flavor of pork and extends its shelf life. Half carcass is smoked for at least 25 days and nights.

Middle-fire is lit in storage room, wherefor deciduous trees and plants of the Racha region are used: beech, hornbeam, chestnut, alder, apple, pear, cherry plum, and quince. Coniferous plants are not used for this purpose. The best result is obtained with fennel plants, as they are distinguished with less heat and give the pork pleasant, purple color. The "Pelikis" are hung around middle-fire, 1.0-2.5 m apart, to prevent melting the fat under heating. The wood should burn without a flame, it should emit a lot of smoke. The pork should be processed only with smoke. The "Pelikis" are periodically rotated so that become smoked completely and uniformly.

The fire requires systematic attention. The heat is reduced with water. Sometimes smoking process stops at night and resumes in the morning. In family conditions, smoking in this manner lasts 25-45 days.

Stage VI – Storage

When smoking process is complete the finished Rachuli Lori is stored in cool place. As a rule, during the winter it is stored in clean, dry place, and from spring, when air temperature rises and reaches more than 16°C the product should be stored in a refrigerator or cool storage/room at the temperature of 5-15°C.

6. Geographical Area and Human Factors

Organoleptic characteristics and taste properties of Rachuli Lori, and production technology, as well, are determined with geographical area and climatic conditions, wherein the product is produced using traditional methods.

Racha is mountainous region of Georgia, located in the North-Eastern part of Western Georgia, in the valley of the River Rioni and its tributaries. It is bordered with Caucasus Watershed Range from the North, separated from Kvemo Svaneti by the River Askistskali and Tavshavi Range from the Northwest, by latitudinal Rioni Gorge – from the South, by Jejori Gorge up to the Ugvir Range – from the East, from Shida Kartli, and by Lechkumi – from the West.

Historically and geographically, Racha was divided into three parts: Mountain Racha, Zeda Racha, and Kveda Racha. The area of Racha is 2818 km².

The territory of Racha is characterized with highly fragmented relief in most parts. Two high ridges are sharply distinguished here – the Main is Caucasus (height from 2829 m - Mamisoni Pass) and Lechkumi (Mountain Chanchakhi – up to 4462 m).

Mountainous, highly dissected relief of Racha determines the vertical zonation of climate and wide spread of microclimatic processes. It is located in humid subtropical zone of Western Georgia – morphological and morphometric features of relief, and considerable distance from sea level, as well, determine the characteristics of climate. The climate here is transitional from humid subtropical to continental.

There are 5 zones:

1. Moderately humid with cold winters and long, warm summers – this zone extends from 300-600 m to 1100-1500 m;

2. Humid with cold winters and long summers – widespread on the slopes of mountains adjacent to Rioni Valley, at an altitude of approximately 1800 m;

3. Humid with cold winters and short summers – located above the second zone, up to 2100 m altitude;

4. High-mountainous, humid with permanent snow and glaciers – widespread in the Caucasus Range, above 2900-3000 m altitude;

5. Humid, without true summer, with long and heavy snow cover – This zone includes the slopes of the Main Caucasus and Lechkumi ranges (>3200 m).

Duration of sunlight and the intensity of solar radiation are determined by moderate cloudiness in all seasons of year. The average annual air temperature ranges from 11.4°C to 2.4°C. The coldest month is January (0.2-12°C), and the warmest is August (23-28°C), with 19°C in the highlands. Snow can fall in the lowlands from November to April, and above 1000 m from October to May.

Most of Racha forest massifs are covered with deciduous forests with fruit-bearing trees and plants, wherein – oak, beech, chestnut are prevailing. Beech forests extend up to 1400-1500 m. Lime, elm, hornbeam, maple are also found, and the undergrowth is represented with cherry laurel, rhododendron, hazel, and boxwood.

That is why, depending on natural and climatic conditions, the technology of keeping pigs is various, as well. Nomadic pig farming is characteristic. Prominent Georgian geographer, historian, and cartographer Vakhushti Batonishvili wrote about Racha back in the 17th century: "and there are mountains high and wide with treeless peaks and forested slopes, and in winter with heavy snow, where horses cannot walk, and in summer snowless, with springs, grass and flowers," "the weather is pleasant, cool in summer, warm and windless in winter, fruitful, rice and cotton, all kinds of grains, vineyards, fruits, and gardens are blossom. Both sides of the River Rioni, in particular, here and there, and all of Racha blossoms. All livestock, except camels, exist, but not many. The sheeps – thin tailed, and pigs – are their life".[\[3\]](#)

Vakhushti Batonishvili, describing Racha, wrote: "to divide Dghnori up into Tsminda Giorgi, then Nakerala, Velevi, Saghore, Garjila, Najikhurevi, Satsalike and Ketsebi. From the West from Saghore Mountain to Dghnori we described several mountains, and there is Guelis Tavi Mountain, as well".[\[4\]](#)

"Saghore Mountain" should not be accidental, as let boar go into the forest and return with an increment was common occurrence in the life of Rachvelians. This is confirmed by Prof. I. Shubitidze – "Rachan endemic pig breeding was mainly carried out using natural feed and fodder, as a result whereof, accordingly, the productivity was formed. If there weren't local pig populations the fruit-bearing, deciduous forests would remain virtually unexploited, because only local pig can exploit steep mountain slopes and river valleys, where fallen fruits of oak, beech, maple, apple, pear, etc. gather, and produce delicious pork on the properties whereof the beech fruit is affected particularly positively".[\[5\]](#)

The pig was one of the main agricultural animals for Racha population. It is known from the literature that "the people still preserve ancient customs illustrating that how Georgians diligently tried to breed pigs. Each family cuts a stick into small, colorful and beautiful pieces in Racha, on the day before "Bosloba"[\[6\]](#) (festive – kidding in cattle shed or piggery), at sunset, so that the piglets will be colorful and beautiful, as well. They prepared 10-15 pieces for each newly birth piglet. At this time, they also baked "Ganatekhi" (some kind of traditional festive baking) by using pork fat[\[7\]](#). It is also noted that "antient custom was in Racha on "Piglet Thursday", when at "Aznauri" (noble) wedding, people would enter in the middle of feast, and a servant would bring in so-called "Mukhlis Kveri" consisted of large loaf of bread, fat piglet whose head was decorated with flowers, fruits, and lit holy candles,

no less than six." "In Racha, next day of wedding bride's family would bring gifts - "gift of grace" including cooked pig or piglet."[\[8\]](#). According to tradition, next day of "Bosloba", i.e. the Friday before carnival was called "Pig Friday" – "Fine Friday", in Kvemo Racha. On the day of "Bosloba" the piece of bread, eggs, candle, wine, and pork fat were brought to cattle-shed or piggery.

Salting of pork is ancient tradition of Rachans, as evidenced by the fact that in ancient times, "salt Salore" (for hum) was a kind of tax for the Rachan peasants. After salting, the pork was smoked and stored for the winter. This was called "Lori" (same as hum).

Historically, the majority of Rachans was peasants who lived in households. Each household was the property of nobles, church, or royal government. Their obligations were quite heavy, and all taxes fell on that household. According to a note-book dated 1621, "Grzeslidze Naskida from the population of village Bari had to pay 4 kodi (wooden vessel for keeping seeds having 8-10 l capacity) of bread, 1 kodi of barley, 4 barrels of wine, 3 chickens, 6 eggs, melted butter, cottage cheese and salt for hum, and Ninia and Gochia Giorgobiani - 3 kodi of bread, 1 kodi of barley, 3 ones from cattle, 6 chickens, 12 eggs, cottage cheese, melted butter and salt for hum".[\[9\]](#)

"Salore pig" were specially cared for and fattened. The fact that "Salore pig" was sacrificial animal is given in "Testimonial of Donation" – ancient document stating that "For Sori Monastery – Sori Crucifixion Church, Paata Kalmakhelidze had to donate four kodi of bread, four barrels of wine, fattened boar, one small slaughtered animal, one sheep and eight chickens for each year, Nikolaishvili – five kodi of bread, barley and mchadi, five barrels of wine, fattened donkey, one sheep and eight chickens, Katsitadze Giorgi – six barrels of wine, three kodi of bread, one kodi of barley, a fattened donkey, one sheep, four chickens, nine loaves of bread."[\[10\]](#)

According to ethnographer Levan Pruidze, "breed female pigs were fed with great care and kept for their breeding ability. They chose well-fed castrate boars to butcher, they were fattened adult. Fattening should be started in late autumn – on the eve of winter, at first frost. This determined the time for the beginning of fattening.

This determined the time for the beginning of fattening. In addition, when the Lori (ham) is pulled out the Christmas fast begins, because pork is not eaten during the fast, so slaughtered pork is salted, and was hung in front of fireplace. In late autumn, when the pigs had mastered the forest pre-selected boars were no longer allowed to graze and were tied first in blind alley, and then in the piggery. The food for pigs was made from leftover human food. Fattened pig was fed three times per day up to satiety: in the morning and in the evening with special food for pigs, and in the afternoon with grain. A pig fed in this way does

not have separate lean and fat, but rather layers in the tissue, and such pork is more delicious."[\[11\]](#)

Georgian historian and public figure Ivane Javakhishvili wrote: "In Kvemo Racha people know how to salt meat and they call this process "Dashashkhva". Salted meat was dried over a fire and so the "Shashkhi" was made. The "Lori" is same "Shashkhi", but made only with pork. The boars intended for making "Lori" are especially fattened[\[12\]](#), and this begins three months before butchering in advance and food amount is gradually increased, so that in the last two weeks the boars going outside is not allowed, at all, and food is more than enough. Mostly the boars (male pigs) are fattened. The "Lori" made with "Nezvi" – male piglet is not so quality, shrinks and becomes smaller when cooked. [\[13\]](#)

Here he describes the process of boar butchering and pork salting – "fattened boar is killed with a long knife. The knife is inserted into its neck, as they say here, the sword must hit the heart, and at that moment the boar dies. The neck is not cut. One man inserts the knife, while the other holds its legs. At this time, a large pot with boiling water is already prepared. Carcass of killed boar is put down and water is poured thereon with special vessel, and at the same time wooden stick is "scratch" on the bristles. When all the bristle is falling off the rest is removed manually, and then the boar is peeled with the knife. The carcass is placed on long table, gutted, and then turned upside down, cut from the tail and remove the spine, and then cut into two pieces - "Peliki" on the left and right sides separately, and placed on two plates. Each therefrom is cut in half (cut in half at the joints) and salt is added. The "Pelikis" are stacked on top of each other and covered with a sack. In three days, as they say here, it will absorb the salt (the salt will soak into the pork) and become firm (lose its moisture). Then the "Pelikis" are individually tied to the end of bar and hung on a hook. After two weeks, it is removed from the hook and hung high under ceiling to keep them away from the fire. The smoke reaches the pork and "Shashkhi" same "Lori" turns black of smoke. "Lori" made from big piglet (from 3 months to one year old) is delicious, but not suitable for storage in the summer.[\[14\]](#)

Here is a story narrated by ethnographer Nikoloz Rekhviashili, in 1935, about "Lori" making by 70-year-old Iliko Khidasheli, a resident of village of Khidashi-Sakao – "we butchered a boar in JiroI-Gobsi, fluff therein boiling water, first we peeled its skin from bristle and fluff again, we clean it with knives, gut it, and remove the insides. Then we turn it upside down,[\[15\]](#) and hung, then we cut and remove the spine, and divide carcass in two equal pieces, each wherefrom is called "Peliki". There are two "Pelikis" from one boar carcass, wherefrom the spine, insides, head and feet are removed. The fat inside nearby kidneys is called "Rtsmela".[\[16\]](#) We heat the salt in the middle of bowl and put the "Pelikis" in salting

pork from outside and in cuts, and storing in warm place (it is cold then). We leave it like this for five days, then take it out and hung it in smoky house, and there it will come out like crystal. This is the "Lori".^[17]

"Rachuli Lori" was "year-round food" of population, and was indispensable accompaniment for Racha residents who went to work. Georgian Soviet Encyclopedia notes that "pig growing and keeping had special place for Rachians, which especially took care of "Salore" (intended to make "Lori") pigs. They smoked salted pork and produced "Rachuli Lori", which is famous throughout Georgia."^[18]

These materials undoubtedly confirm the fact that "fattening pigs, salting and smoking pork, and storing therefor long period without refrigeration is ancient tradition for Rachians".^[19]

7. Packing and Labeling

"Rachuli Lori" can be supplied to the consumer packaged or unpackaged. When indicating the name of the product on the label, the following is used:

In Georgian – „რაჭული ლორი“

With Latin Script – "Rachuli Lori"

"Rachuli Lori" made from endemic breed pork by using of traditional methods in accordance with these specifications shall have the notice – **"Made from endemic breed pork" indicated on the label, directly next to the name of food**".

The label shall contain traceability mark specified in accordance with the Law of Georgia on Appellations of Origin and Geographical Indications of Goods.

The label shall include the logo – "Rachuli Lori".



Relevant official symbol shall be placed on front of label – "Rachuli Lori" placed on the market and marketed with registered Geographical Indication. Registered Geographical Indication of Good shall be placed in same field of vision. The label may also contain the words "Registered Geographical Indication".

Protected Geographical Indication – Information about "Rachuli Lori" as food product shall be provided to consumers in accordance with Georgian Legislation "On the Provision of Food Information to Consumers" and by taking into account the requirements of the Law "On Protection of Appellations of Origin and Geographical Indications".

8. Control Bodies

"Rachuli Lori" produced by using traditional methods, and according specifications is traditional, artisan product protected under protecting system of Geographical Indication. Accordingly, the requirements established by Resolution No.173 of the Government of Georgia – Technical Regulation "Simplified Rules for Food/Animal Feed Hygiene" are applied.

In accordance with the requirements specified by Georgian Legislation, "Rachuli Lori" state control is provided by the competent body of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia – the National Food Agency or Control body – legal entity delegated by the Ministry to perform the specific task related to state control, and accredited by the

relevant authority of Georgia or member country of the European Union and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

In accordance with the Law of Georgia "On Appellations of Origin and Geographical Indications of Goods", in order to provide the quality, reputation and authenticity of "Rachuli Lori", within the scope of its authority, "Rachuli Lori" Producers Association shall monitor the use of name of marketed goods, and take other actions specified in this Law and Georgian Legislation.

[1] Non-imported, non-intensive farm-raised pigs, not raised in a cage-free environment.

[2] Racha, Past, Present and Future, Georgian National Academy of Sciences, Tbilisi, 2012, 238-247.

[3] Life of Kartli, Volume IV, Description of Kingdom of Georgia, 1973, 770.

[4] Life of Kartli, Volume IV, Description of the Kingdom of Georgia, 1973, 770.

[5] Racha, Past, Present and Future, Georgian National Academy of Sciences, Commission for the Comprehensive Study of Mountain Problems of Georgian National Academy of Sciences, Tbilisi, 2012, 238-247.

[6] Bosloba (Svan. Boslob, Bemghu, Lighmesari) – movable folk holiday (celebrated in January or February) associated with the cult of Boseli, the god of fertility and reproduction, in Western Georgia. In ancient times, it must have been widespread in all corners of Georgia. The purpose of performing Bosloba ritual was to increase the fertility of cattle and poultry, increase the grain and wine harvest, and protect fields and vineyards from bad weather and agricultural pests. The main act of Bosloba was performed in the Boseli – cattle shed or piggery.

[7] R. Mitichashvili, Sh. Potskhveria, G. Bochorishvili, L. Ujmajuridze, "Kakhetian Pig", Tbilisi, 2020, 26.

[8] R. Mitichashvili, Sh. Potskhveria, G. Bochorishvili, L. Ujmajuridze, "Kakhetian Pig", Tbilisi, 2020, 21.

[9] Tamaz Beradze, "Racha" 1983, 139.

[10] Tamaz Beradze, "Racha" 1983, 114.

[11] Levan Pruidze, Racha with View of Ethnographer, 1986.

[12] To fatten.

[13] Materials for the History of Georgian Home Industry and Small Crafts. Edited by Acad. Iv. Javakhishvili, 5 volumes, Tbilisi, 1986. Volume III, Part II, "Food and Drink", 185.

[14] Materials for the History of Georgian Home Industry and Small Crafts. Edited by Acad. Iv. Javakhishvili, 5 volumes, Tbilisi, 1986. Volume III, Part II, "Food and Drink", 186.

[15] "Khartavisabeli" – A yoke (string) used to tie horns of bull.

[16] "Rtsmela" – thick layer of fat, located in abdominal cavity, taken only from pigs.

[17] Materials for the History of Georgian Home Industry and Small Crafts. Edited by Acad. Iv. Javakhishvili, 5 volumes,

Tbilisi, 1986. Volume III, Part II, "Food and Drink", 187.

[18] Georgian Soviet Encyclopedia, Volume 8, 312.

[19] I. Shubitidze – Pig farming and pork production technology, 2009.