



Production Area

Norway

Region of Møre og Romsdal

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The **Slow Food international** organization involving more than 100,000 people from 153 countries on five continents-promotes taste education, fights for the preservation of agricultural biodiversity, organizes events and publishes books and magazines.

Slow Food **Presidia** are local projects that work to protect small-scale producers and to safeguard quality artisan products. Their objective is to guarantee a viable future for local communities by organizing producers, searching out new economic outlets and raising the profiles of tastes and regions.

The **Slow Food Foundation for Biodiversity** promotes and coordinates over 300 Presidia in the world.

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Baccala from Møre og Romsdal

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Slow Food Foundation
for Biodiversity

A Norwegian heritage

The production of klippfish (baccalà) boasts long traditions in Norway. The very first klippfish production started near Kristiansund in 1691. However, by mid 18th century it had spread to the whole barren coastal Møre og Romsdal region in Western Norway. Here there were historically rich cod fisheries, natural coastal rocks and cliffs for drying and a dry, cool climate with long periods of good, stable, windy spring weather April to May. *The cliffs were cleaned for earth and residues, and salt rubbed before use. Historic photographs show a landscape of these rocks covered with drying fish and the town's women and children tending the drying process.*

There is still today some "traditional quality" klippfish production in Kristiansund and along the Western coast of Norway, but it has decreased considerably. The few remaining small-scale producers obtain skrei (*Gadus morhua* cod), coming from the relatively sustainable Northeast arctic cod stocks. Coastal fishermen on small fishing boats using special cod fishing nets and long lines and hooks, sustainable fishing techniques, catch the fish



The Presidium

The Presidium was created to protect the craftsman production of high quality baccala, produced only from skrei caught by fishermen on small fishing vessels using traditional fishing methods that maintain the quality of the fish and extremely reduce any by-catch. *The aims of the project are thus to ensure the survival of small baccala producers and small coastal fishermen as well as their traditional techniques, to ensure the baccala crafts production and to ensure a fair price to the fishermen and producers.* The Presidium will bring together a group of the few remaining small producers to develop a detailed Production Protocol that sets strict standards for the fishing and production. Another goal is to increase the local awareness of the production, hopefully through the development of a klippfish working museum in Kristiansund.



from January to April and deliver them fresh to the producer for salting and then for drying. Thus begins the four-month or more crafts production process of dry salting, drying, quality sorting and further salting and drying. Since late 1880's the klippfish have been dried in wind tunnels that simulate the exterior Kristiansund climate. *Still, the constant monitoring and repositioning of the klippfish within the tunnels for optimal drying and quality is a human endeavor and depends on the skills of the baccala craftsmen.*

The production of quality traditional baccala is at an extreme low level and almost non-existent today. Most baccala found on the market is produced from fish caught by trawlers or large boats with mechanized long lines operating 24-hours a day during season. Catches are frozen and delivered to large-scale producers who use mechanized production processes. Local culture and craftsmanship are lost in modern baccala production.

