### Main characteristics/features

Hậu Lộc shrimp paste (or acetes japonicas) has a very special smooth, sweet taste. Its colour is a mixture of dark pink/purple and grey and it has a distinctive aroma, which is not fishy or stale. Its distinctive savoury, non-intense and non-acrid taste derives from the raw material used.

### Production/processing

To make this product, fresh or salted fresh saltwater shrimps are used (10-15 % salt or 8-9 kg shrimp/1 kg salt). No additives or preservatives are used only shrimps and salt. The shrimps are ground up, stirred once and left to ferment for a day or two in covered barrels. The paste is left to dry in the sun for a few days, stored away again and stirred occasionally over 5 to 6 months until the shell content eventually decomposes and the product becomes a semi-liquid paste.

### Geographical area

The Hậu Lộc shrimp paste production areas are located in the Da Loc, Ngu Loc, Minh Loc, Hung Loc, Hai Loc and Hoa Loc coastal communes, Hau Loc district, Thanh Hoa province.

### Link between product and territory

The sea water of the two seaports the shrimps are captured at has a low salt content of 22-28 %, this is because the sea is diluted by freshwater. This gives place to the unique Hau Loc shrimps with thin shells, firm bodies with long narrow muscular tails, long whiskers and slender legs. These tiny shrimps have a low level of water content in their flesh and measure around 11-22 mm. The locals use methods and know-how passed on from generation to generation to make Hậu Lộc shrimp paste. They know how to select the raw material, vary the quantity of salt depending on the quality of the shrimps, and carefully monitor all the processing stages. All these factors make Hậu Lộc shrimp paste unique with its attractive aroma, strong-sweet taste and purple-grey colour.