

Publication of an application pursuant to Article 6(2) of Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin for agricultural products and foodstuffs

(2006/C 321/05)

This publication confers the right to object to the application pursuant to Article 7 of Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006. Statements of objection must reach the Commission within six months from the date of this publication.

SUMMARY

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006

Application for registration according to Article 5 and Article 17(2)

'CASTAGNA CUNEO'

EC No: IT/PGI/005/0342/20.04.2004

PDO () PGI (X)

This summary has been drawn up for information only. For full details, interested parties are invited to consult the full version of the product specification obtainable from the national authorities indicated in section 1 or from the European Commission ⁽¹⁾.

1. *Responsible department in the Member State:*

Name: Ministero delle politiche agricole e forestali
Address: Via XX Settembre, n. 20
I-00187 Roma
Tel.: (39-06) 481 99 68
Fax: (39-06) 42 01 31 26
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2. *Applicant group*

Name: Società Asprofrut Società Consortile Cooperativa a r.l.
Address: Via Caraglio, 16
I-12100 Cuneo
Tel.: (39-0175) 28 23 11
Fax: —
e-mail: —
Composition: Producers/processors (X) Other ()

3. *Type of product:*

Group 1.6: Fresh or processed fruit and vegetables

4. *Specification (summary of requirements under Article 4(2))*

4.1 Name: 'Castagna Cuneo'

⁽¹⁾ European Commission, Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development, Agricultural Product Quality Policy, B-1049 Brussels.

- 4.2 Description: The PGI '*Castagna Cuneo*' may be used to denote only the following varieties of chestnut of the species '*Castanea sativa*', excluding interspecific hybrids: Ciapastra, Tempuriva, Bracalla, Contessa, Pugnante, Sarvai d'Oca, Sarvai di Gurg, Sarvaschina, Siria, Rubiera, Marrubia, Gentile, Verdesa, Castagna della Madonna, Frattona, Gabiana, Rossastra, Crou, Garrone Rosso, Garrone Nero, Marrone di Chiusa Pesio and Spina Lunga.

It does not cover products obtained from coppices, mixed coppices or from high-growing coppices of old trees, even of the above species.

'*Castagna Cuneo*' PGI is characterised by its sweet, delicate flavour and the crunchiness of the epicarp, which makes it particularly well-suited for consumption either fresh or processed.

Fresh chestnuts have the following features when they are suitable for sale: pale to dark brown colour of the chestnut outer pericarp; a hazel-colour hilum of variable size, that never protrudes over the lateral edges; star-shaped streaks; yellow to pale brown epicarp with a crunchy consistency; white to cream-coloured seed; sweet and delicate flavour; size: maximum number of achenes per Kg = 110.

Produce must not display any internal or external defects (broken nuts, worm damage or presence, mould) in more than 10 % of nuts.

Dry, shelled chestnuts must be intact, healthy and pale straw-coloured. No more than 10 % of the nuts may have defects (traces of worms, deformations, breaks, traces of pericarp, etc.).

The water content in intact nuts thus obtained may not exceed 15 %.

- 4.3 Geographical area: The production area of the '*Castagna Cuneo*' PGI comprises about 110 municipalities in the Province of Cuneo, as defined in the product specification.

- 4.4 Proof of origin: Every stage in the production process must be monitored and a record made of the inputs and outputs at each stage. This, along with the compilation of specific lists managed by the inspection body of the facilities for producing *Castagna Cuneo* PGI and of producers and packagers, the maintenance of production and packaging lists and notification to the inspection body of the quantities and all batches of products packaged and labelled before sale ensures product traceability throughout the production chain. All natural and legal persons recorded in the lists may be subject to checks by the monitoring body, according to the terms of the production specification and the corresponding monitoring plan.

- 4.5 Method of production: The product specification stipulates, inter alia, that chestnut trees are to be located in sunny areas and sheltered from the wind. The use of fertilisers and synthetic plant health care products is prohibited except for those products authorised for organic farming (Regulation (EC) No 2092/1991 and successive regulations).

The density of trees in production may not exceed 150 trees per hectare.

The land must be kept clear of excessive weed and bush growth by mowing the grass every year and removing bushes, ferns and dead plants before the harvest to ensure the chestnut harvest can be done properly. Regular pruning of the trees to keep them clear of parasites is allowed.

The harvest may be done manually or mechanically (using harvest machines) provided they protect the integrity of the product.

The harvest period begins in early September and ends in November.

Fresh produce can be conserved by treating with hot water in accordance with the correct method traditionally practised.

The 'curing' technique of immersing the nut in water at room temperature for 7-9 days is permitted. This technique produces slight lactic fermentation which creates a practically sterile environment without using additives since it blocks the development of pathogenic fungi. Conservation by peeling and freezing is also permitted in accordance with the provisions for frozen produce.

The product *Castagna Cuneo — Secca* must be obtained using the traditional drying technique over a low and constant heat in drying chambers made of masonry, mainly by locals. The chestnuts are placed in these chambers on a grill shelf over a fire or heat exchanger. Waste and by-products of wood processing using chemically-treated wood may not be used as fuel. The process takes on average 30 days.

Sorting, sizing, treating and conserving the nuts must be carried out within the geographical area defined in Article 3 of the product specification.

- 4.6 Link: The application to register the PGI is based on the undoubted reputation of the product that has made the production area its natural habitat ever since antiquity. In the Province of Cuneo, the first references to chestnuts date back to towards the end of the 12th century, as attested by correspondence from the Certosa di Pesio (a local church) regarding land acquisition, which show that between 1173 and 1277, chestnut trees accounted for one fifth of agricultural land. The farming landscape of the Province of Cuneo in the early 1800s had vast areas of chestnut trees bordering on cultivated land that represented the majority of high-growing trees. In the 1800s, as in previous centuries, chestnut trees remained at the heart of organised farming life. Chestnuts were one of the few commercial opportunities in the mountains. In the autumn, farmers would descend from Alpine and Apennine villages with bags of chestnuts. The main market was in Cuneo, where one of the key events was St Martin's Day on 11 November, when chestnuts fetched the price of the most prized grapes. Cuneo has had a bustling market ever since the 1500s, and over the years has spread its influence throughout Europe. Domestic and foreign sales consistently grew thanks to a constant increase in demand for Cuneo chestnuts. The reputation of the PGI is not limited to the European market, especially strong in France, Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Britain, but is also highly acclaimed in other countries such as the United States and Argentina.

In addition, further proof of the reputation of *Castagna di Cuneo* is found in several festivals and meetings organised to celebrate the quality of the PGI, such as the 'Settimana del Castagno' (chestnut week) organised in Cuneo during which the top tradesmen in the sector discuss the various issues concerning this crop. In the past, the 'Sagra del Marrone' (chestnut festival) in Chiusa di Pesio was a key event that was closely followed even by the local papers, which always published detailed reports on the event. Such was the success of this festival that soon it was transferred to Cuneo, where the festivities had real flair and offered a wide range of attractions, with the chestnut stands playing a major role. However the oldest and most famous autumn festival is still the 'Fiera fredda di San Dalmazzo', the last one before the winter sets in. Now 430 years old, this festival has always represented the unquestionable link between the area of origin, the population and chestnuts.

The extensive recipe collection of Cuneo cookery, where *castagna di cuneo* is the undisputed champion, is the clearest evidence that chestnut growing is a tradition in the area of origin. As well as simply eating them fresh, chestnuts are used in a great many dishes, from the most simple traditional farmer's fare to highly refined recipes. Along with boiled or roasted chestnuts and 'mundaj' (pan-roasted chestnuts), which are a symbol of festivity and joy at gatherings, there are also 'marrons glacés', balls of chocolate-coated chestnuts, or savoury dishes such as roast pork or venison with chestnuts.

4.7 Inspection body:

Name: Istituto Nord-Ovest Qualità Soc. Coop. a r.l.

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Moretta (CN)

Tel.: (39-0172) 91 13 23

Fax: (39-0172) 91 13 20

e-mail: inoq@isiline.it

4.8 Labelling: The following packaging may be used to sell fresh 'Castagna Cuneo' PGI:

- bags made of various materials weighing between 0.10 and 30 Kg, mainly bags of 0.10, 0.25, 0.5, 1, 2.5, 5, 10, 25, or 30 Kg;
- wood or plastic crates sized 30 × 50 or 40 × 60;
- jute bags weighing between 5 and 100 Kg (5, 10, 25, 30, 50 and 100);

Selling '*Castagna Cuneo*' PGI — dry nuts: when released for consumption the following packaging may be used:

— bags made of various materials weighing between 0.10 and 30 Kg, mainly: 0.10, 0.25, 0.5, 1, 2.5, 5, 10, 25, or 30 Kg.

In any case, produce may only be sold pre-packaged or packaged upon sale.

The label to be affixed to packaging must bear the Protected Geographical Indication '*Castagna Cuneo*' in clear and indelible characters, easily distinguishable from any other wording and immediately followed by the wording 'Protected Geographical Indication'.

Specifically, the packaging must contain the words '*Castagna Cuneo*' or '*Castagna Cuneo* — *Secca*' in print of the same size, immediately followed by the wording 'Protected Geographical Indication'.

The name, company name and address of the packager and the original gross weight must also figure in the same visual field.

The wording 'Protected Geographical Indication' or the abbreviation 'PGI' may be repeated in another area of the container or label.

Together with the Protected Geographical Indication, indications and/or images referring to company names or logos of consortia or individual companies may be used provided they do not have promotional content and are not likely to mislead the consumer.

Description of the logo

The images comprising the logo are an outline of a chestnut slightly tilted to the right. The left side of the chestnut is outlined by the wording '*castagna*' using an exclusive calligraphy and the right side is made up of a hand-written mark imitating a swift, decisive brush stroke. The logo is completed by a chestnut leaf placed at the base of the nut with the wording '*Cuneo*' on the inside in white, again in exclusive calligraphy. At the bottom left-hand side is the wording PGI in 'Frutiger light' font.

Products prepared using PGI '*Castagna Cuneo*', even after further production or processing methods, may be released for consumption in packaging bearing a reference to this protected geographical indication without including the EU logo, provided that the protected designation product certified as such is the sole component of the product group concerned; users of the protected designation product are authorised by the holders of the intellectual property right concerned, grouped together in a syndicate and assigned a supervisory role by the Ministry for Agricultural and Forestry Policy. The syndicate will be responsible for registering them and keeping watch on correct use of the protected designation.

In the absence of a supervisory syndicate, these functions shall be carried out by the Ministry for Agricultural and Forestry Policy, as the national authority responsible for implementing Regulation (EC) No 510/2006.

4.9 National requirements: —
