

## OTHER ACTS

## EUROPEAN COMMISSION

**Publication of an amendment 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**

(2012/C 242/11)

This publication confers the right to object to the application pursuant to Article 7 of Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 <sup>(1)</sup>. Statements of objection must reach the Commission within six months of the date of this publication.

## AMENDMENT APPLICATION

## COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006

## AMENDMENT APPLICATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE 9

## 'MÂCHE NANTAISE'

EC No: FR-PGI-0105-0072-26.10.2011

PGI ( X ) PDO ( )

**1. Heading in the specification affected by the amendment:**

- Name of product
- Description of product
- Geographical area
- Proof of origin
- Method of production
- Link
- Labelling
- National requirements
- Other

**2. Type of amendment(s):**

- Amendment to single document or summary sheet
- Amendment to specification of registered PDO or PGI for which neither the single document nor summary sheet has been published
- Amendment to specification that requires no amendment to the published single document (Article 9(3) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006)

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 93, 31.3.2006, p. 12.

- Temporary amendment to specification resulting from imposition of obligatory sanitary or phytosanitary measures by public authorities (Article 9(4) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006)

### 3. Amendment(s):

The description of the product has been amended to include the selection criteria established by market gardeners and to clarify the conditions that new varieties must meet in order to be used as PGIs.

The geographical area has not been amended. It is pointed out that the packaging takes place in the geographical area. This stage makes it possible to guarantee the freshness of the product (delivery the same day) and apply the know-how and technical expertise (number of washing boxes, temperature, approval benchmark) developed by local workshops, which are essential in order to obtain a quality product.

The proof of origin has been amended to include the latest improvements to the registration documents designed for the professionals involved (parcel sheet, crop sheet, etc.).

The chapter on the method of production contains the most amendments. They make it possible to modernise and adapt the production and preparation process of 'Mâche nantaise'. The technical developments since the 'Mâche nantaise' PGI was registered in 1999 have been integrated in order to update the specification. The amendments are as follows:

- a clarification concerning the location of the parcels in the geographical area,
- the addition of a list of the varieties currently used, including their characteristics, which is necessary for the introduction of new varieties,
- a rewording of the requirements concerning seed density,
- clarifications concerning the characterisation of the sand used (introduction of a grading envelope, the roundness of the grains and the chemical neutrality of the sand),
- a maximum period of 48 hours between the analysis of the quality of the 'mâché' carried out before harvest and the harvest itself,
- clarifications concerning the harvesting method and the schedule of delivery to the workshop,
- a maximum period of 24 hours between the harvest and the de-sanding of the 'mâche' presented in trays and of 48 hours between harvest and dispatching,
- a maximum period of 24 hours between the harvesting and the washing of the 'mâche' presented in tubs and the ready-to-use 'mâche' (this provision is stricter if the temperature at the beginning of the harvest is above 12 °C; in this case washing must take place on the harvesting day),
- clarifications concerning the washing of the 'mâche' presented in tubs and the ready-to-use 'mâche' (water temperature, the possibility of automatic sorting),
- a reference to a maximum temperature for the packaging premises,
- a rewording of the checks to be carried out before marketing.

The link with the product's origin has been amended to include the technical developments that have taken place since the registration of the 'Mâche nantaise' PGI in 1999 but also to enhance the product's reputation by highlighting certain well-known practices such as using a specific grading envelope in the production of 'Mâche nantaise'.

The labelling has been modified to remove the national requirements, which are no longer relevant, and to replace the words 'Protected Geographical Indication' by the systematic use of the European Union's PGI logo.

## SINGLE DOCUMENT

## COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006

## 'MÂCHE NANTAISE'

EC No: FR-PGI-0105-0072-26.10.2011

PGI ( X ) PDO ( )

## 1. Name:

'Mâche nantaise'

## 2. Member State or third country:

France

## 3. Description of the agricultural product or foodstuff:

## 3.1. Type of product:

Class 1.6. Fruit, vegetables and cereals, fresh or processed

## 3.2. Description of product to which the name in point 1 applies:

A small, fast-growing plant of the Valerians family, of the genus *Valerianella* and the species *olitoria*, designated by the name 'Mâche commune', with radical, elongated, spatulate leaves that have rather pronounced veins and are born in pairs, overlapping each other crosswise and forming a rather dense rosette. The varieties currently used are: Accent — Agathe — Baron — Calarasi RZ — Cirilla — Dione — Elan — Eurion — Fiesta — Gala — Jade — Juvert — Juwallon — Match — Medaillon — Palace — Princess — Pulsar — Rodion — Trophy — Valentin — Vertes de Cambrai. The producer group bases itself on the following characteristics when introducing new varieties: they must be of the green or shell type, with a phenotype making it possible to harvest and package the entire plant, be entered in the French national catalogue or the Community catalogue and meet professional phytosanitary standards and professional standards concerning germination capacity. After each amendment, the list of varieties is distributed to producers and to the inspection body and the competent supervisory authorities.

'Mâche nantaise', which cannot be marketed as such straight from the field, must undergo a specific preparation before being packaged and presented in a tray, in a tub or, in the case of the ready-to-use product, in a bag. These are the three types of packaging used for this PGI.

## 3.3. Raw materials (for processed products only):

Not applicable.

## 3.4. Feed (for products of animal origin only):

Not applicable.

## 3.5. Specific steps in production that must take place in the defined geographical area:

All of the steps in production (cultivation, washing, packaging) must take place in the geographical area.

The preparation of 'Mâche nantaise', which is a particularly fragile fresh product, is a complex procedure consisting of various successive processing phases. Preparation requires close contact between the workshops and the producers and a short distance between the workshops and the parcels so that the product's quality can be assessed continually in order to control the production conditions of the final product and offer a product that is guaranteed to be fresh and keep well.

This is possible, in particular, by using a common quality benchmark established in the region to counter the lack of official standards. It is applied in the field, at the entrance to the workshop (approval of non-washed product) and to the final product.

### 3.6. *Specific rules concerning slicing, grating, packaging, etc.:*

The packaging, too, must take place in the geographical area to guarantee the freshness of the product (delivery the same day) and apply the know-how and technical expertise (number of washing boxes, temperature, approval benchmarks) developed by local workshops, which are essential in order to obtain a quality product.

As it is in direct contact with the producers, the workshop is able to adapt itself continually and very rapidly to the harvesting and climate conditions and to requirements concerning the keeping of the product in order to optimise the quality of 'Mâche nantaise'.

Owing to this complementary relationship, the production and preparation (including packaging) of 'Mâche nantaise' are both located in the heart of the natural Nantes basin. This gives rise to the specificity of 'Mâche nantaise' and guarantees its reputation. All the procedures are registered using traceability tools.

The three types of packaging are the following:

'mâche' in a tray: large-leaved 'mâche' (weight of 100 feet > 200 g), selected, arranged, de-sanded and put in a tray;

'mâche' in a tub: selected, de-sanded, washed, sorted, put in a cling-film-covered tub or similar;

ready-to-use 'mâche': selected, de-sanded, washed, sorted, put in a sealed bag or package, ready to use and placed in the cold chain.

### 3.7. *Specific rules on labelling:*

In addition to the compulsory and packager-specific information, the labelling of products corresponding to the specification of 'Mâche nantaise' in its entirety must include the following:

— name of the PGI: 'Mâche nantaise',

— the European Union's PGI logo.

## 4. **Concise definition of the geographical area:**

33 cantons in the département de la Loire-Atlantique:

Aigrefeuille-sur-Maine — Ancenis — Bouaye — Bourgneuf-en-Retz — Carquefou — La Chapelle-sur-Erdre — Clisson — Le Croisic — La Baule-Escoublac — Guérande — Herbignac — Legé — Ligné — Le Loroux-Bottereau — Machecoul — Montoir-de-Bretagne — Nantes — Nort-sur-Erdre — Orvault — Paimboeuf — Le Pellerin — Pontchâteau — Pornic — Rezé — Saint-Étienne-de-Montluc — Saint-Herblain — Saint-Nazaire — Saint-Père-en-Retz — Saint-Philbert-de-Grand-Lieu — Savenay — Vallet — Vertou — Vertou-Vignoble

8 cantons in Vendée (6 of which share a border with Loire-Atlantique):

Beauvoir-sur-Mer — Challans — Le Poiré-sur-Vie — Montaigu — Palluau — Rocheservière — Saint-Gilles-Croix-de-Vie — Saint Jean-de-Monts

2 cantons in Maine-et-Loire (share a border with Loire-Atlantique):

Champtoceaux — Montrevault

## 5. **Link with the geographical area:**

### 5.1. *Specificity of the geographical area:*

#### Natural factors

The temperate oceanic climate is perfectly suited to the production of 'mâche'. It is characterised by cold winter temperatures, which are ideal for 'Mâche nantaise', without there nonetheless being extended periods of frost. This climate reigns throughout the basin and limits excessive or brutal temperature fluctuations, making it possible to obtain an optimal and specific quality the whole year round.

Traditionally, the soils most suited to the cultivation of early-season vegetables, including 'mâche', were composed of sandy, and therefore permeable, alluvial deposits. They were close to the city of Nantes, which at the time offered markets for the products, and close to the Loire, which provided water and large quantities of the sand used in the sector.

During many generations, the sand used for growing 'mâche' came from the natural deposits of the Loire. In 1994, the authorities decided to prohibit the extraction of sand from the Loire owing to the damage cause to a number of structures in the Loire region (bridges, riverbanks, etc.). As a result, market gardeners turned to other sources of sand having the same characteristics.

#### Human factors

Market gardening in the Nantes region began in the mid-19th century in an area to the west of Nantes. Vegetables were produced to supply the region and provision ships. Market gardening in and around Nantes did not truly take off until 1919-20, when most of the big market gardeners abandoned local markets and started sending their produce directly to Paris and the major provincial towns.

The professional organisation of market gardeners, which had started at the end of the 19th century, continued between the wars and became more firmly established. It promoted development with, for example, the creation of the Fédération des Groupements de Producteurs Maraîchers Nantais on 7 July 1928.

Market gardening under movable frames ('châssis') was introduced at the beginning of the 20th century. These structures started being called 'Châssis nantais', a name that became generalised between the wars. Parcels were subdivided into beds corresponding to the width of the frames and separated from each other by board crossings about 40 centimetres wide. The beds were earthed up in order to facilitate the drying of the soils, which is key to the early maturity and quality of 'Mâche nantaise'. The division into beds meant that sowing and harvesting could be done without damaging the soil in the autumn and the winter, owing to the natural stabilisation of the crossings during the summer.

This is fundamental to understanding the development of 'mâche' in the Nantes region. Combined with the possibility to use sand and the favourable climate, sowing in beds under frames allowed producers to obtain an early-maturing, very high-quality product that no other region was able to produce at that particular time of the year.

In the 1950s, Nantes gained a dominant position on the French and European markets. Starting in the 1960s and especially in the 1970s, traditional frames were replaced by small plastic tunnels, although sowing in beds was maintained.

From 1975-1983 to the present, the production of 'Mâche nantaise' increased from 3 000 tonnes to 12 000 tonnes annually in the Nantes region alone. This was possible thanks to the mechanisation of harvesting and new forms of packaging (tubs, bags, etc.).

The present average annual production rate of 30 000 tonnes of 'mâche' in the Nantes basin consolidates its leading position in France and Europe. Approximately half of the production is intended for export, in particular to Germany.

#### Specific expertise

The market gardeners of the Nantes region inherited a solid specific expertise:

- they developed sowing in beds, a technique enabling strip cropping and an increase in the number of rotations. Sowing in beds is important to the quality of the product: combined with the use of sand, the alternation of elevated, earthed-up beds and of board crossings facilitates the drying of soils and prevents the stagnation of water. This limits the risk of diseases,
- they have developed a method of growing crops under cover: in the production of 'Mâche nantaise' it has always been necessary to cover the crops. Over the years, the market gardeners have developed covers that provide permanent protection for the plants,

- they use a specific type of sand: together with sowing in beds, sand is essential to the production of 'Mâche nantaise'. This sand is characterised by the roundness of its grains (to avoid harming the seedling), its chemical neutrality (to improve the physical structure of the soils without changing their chemical nature) and compliance with a precise grading envelope defined in the 2000s following a consultation with professional market gardeners. The sand is applied in a fine, 0,5-1 cm thick layer and constitutes an ideal seed bed, helping heat the soil and aiding germination. Furthermore, it prevents the development of mosses, which very often appear on seeds sown when the days are short. Therefore, sand creates an environment favourable to the growth of 'Mâche nantaise',
- they have conceived tools suited to harvesting. Besides, the sand layer leaves sufficient space for a cutting blade right at the base of the taproot. This layer of sand, on which a blade glides smoothly, also promoted the mechanisation of harvesting, as the 'mâche' could be picked and placed directly into the wooden crates where the product is washed,
- they have developed suitable tools and know-how related to the preparation of 'mâche' after harvesting: the de-sanding and washing of the 'mâche', carried out very soon after harvesting, affect its final quality. The first continuous washing system, consisting of automatic washers, was invented and developed in Nantes. It allows rapid and efficient de-sanding of 'mâche' that has already been arranged in boxes. 'Mâche nantaise' is typically presented in this way, thoroughly cleaned and neatly arranged. It is also a recognised element of the know-how of market gardeners in the Nantes region,
- they have perfected a control system that ensures that the quality of 'Mâche nantaise' is monitored at each preparation stage: a common quality benchmark has been adopted for 'Mâche commune' that guarantees a highly uniform quality.

#### 5.2. Specificity of the product:

Sowing in beds, using sand and tools suited to the preparation of the final product, and a common quality benchmark for 'mâche' are all elements that affect the quality and specificity of the product. The product consists of the entire plant, without roots, sand or traces of soil, where the frequency of stem elongation and the number of yellowed or blackened cotyledons, yellowed leaves and bacterial spots are reduced.

The product is typically presented in traditional trays. The mechanisation of harvesting and modern packaging methods (bags for ready-to-use 'mâche' as well as tubs) make it possible to present a product without sand, sandiness formerly being one of its principal disadvantages.

#### 5.3. Causal link between the geographical area and the quality or characteristics of the product (for PDO) or a specific quality, the reputation or other characteristic of the product (for PGI):

The cultivation of early-season vegetables was promoted by the market gardening traditions of the Nantes region. Market gardening developed in the Nantes region thanks to well-adapted soils composed of sandy, and therefore permeable, alluvial deposits, the city of Nantes, which offered a market for the product, and the Loire, which provided the necessary water and a suitable type of sand.

The oceanic climate in the geographical area is characterised by cold winter temperatures, which are ideal for 'Mâche nantaise', without there nonetheless being extended periods of frost. Consequently, temperature variations are relatively small, and this is particularly beneficial for the cultivation of 'Mâche nantaise'.

The climate as well as the use of established expertise (using a specific type of round-grained and chemically neutral sand of a given particle size, sowing in beds, preparation of the product after harvesting) are the essential components guaranteeing the quality of 'Mâche nantaise'.

The origin of 'mâche' is well-known to consumers and distributors, who appreciate the unparalleled know-how behind its production.

The Nantes basin, with its geographical specificity, is one of the building blocks of the ancestral tradition of market gardening in the Nantes region and its flagship product: 'Mâche nantaise'.

'Mâche nantaise' is cited in an inventory of France's culinary heritage produced by the Conseil National des Arts culinaires.

For the past 25 years, 'Mâche nantaise' has been backed by major collective promotion efforts: poster campaigns in Parisian subways and buses, advertising spots on the radio and television in France but also abroad.

Since the mid-1980s, 'Mâche nantaise' has been the subject of articles and recipes (*Ouest France, Le Figaro, Le Monde*, etc.).

The correlation of these three parameters (climate, know-how and historical and current reputation of 'Mâche nantaise') in the geographical area confer on the 'Mâche nantaise' PGI genuine legitimacy, both through the quality obtained and the technical means employed.

**Reference to publication of the specification:**

(Article 5(7) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006)

<https://www.inao.gouv.fr/fichier/CDCMachenantaise31012012.pdf>

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