Publication of an application for registration pursuant to Article 6(2) of Regulation (EEC) No 2081/92 on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin

(2005/C 151/04)

This publication confers the right to object to the application pursuant to Articles 7 and 12d of the above-mentioned Regulation. Any objection to this application must be submitted via the competent authority in a Member State, in a WTO member country or in a third country recognized in accordance with Article 12(3) within a time limit of six months from the date of this publication. The arguments for publication are set out below, in particular under 4.6, and are considered to justify the application within the meaning of Regulation (EEC) No 2081/92.

SUMMARY

COUNCIL REGULATION (EEC) No 2081/92

‘MONTES DE GRANADA’

EC No: ES/00169/08.11.2000

PDO ( X ) PGI ( )

This summary has been drawn up for information purposes only. For full details, in particular the producers of the PDO concerned, please consult the complete version of the product specification obtainable at national level or from the European Commission (1).

1. Responsible department in the Member State:

   Name: Subdirección General de Sistemas de Calidad Diferenciada — Dirección General de Alimentación — Secretaría General de Agricultura y Alimentación del Ministerio de Agricultura, Pesca y Alimentación de España

   Address: Infanta Isabel, 1, E-28071 Madrid
   Tel: (34-91) 347 53 94
   Fax: (34-91) 347 54 10

2. Group:

   2.1 Name: Asociación para la Calidad del Aceite de Oliva Virgen de los Montes de Granada

   2.2 Address: c/Doctor López Font, Bajo 7, 18004 Granada, Spain
   Tel: (958) 52 26 16
   Fax: (958) 53 52 45

   2.3 Composition: producers/processors (X) other ( )

3. Type of product:

   Extra virgin olive oil. Group 1.5 — Oils and fats.

(1) European Commission, Directorate-General for Agriculture, Agricultural product quality policy, B-1049 Brussels.
4. **Specification:**

(summary of requirements under Article 4(2))

4.1. **Name:** ‘Montes de Granada’

4.2. **Description:**

Extra virgin olive oil obtained from healthy and ripe olives of the olive tree (Olea Europaea) belonging to the principal varieties (Picual, Lucio and Loaime) and secondary varieties (Escarabajuelo, Negrillo de Iznalloz, Hojiblanca and Gordal de Granada) grown in the defined area.

The oils obtained are the result of the joint pressing of principal and secondary varieties. They therefore consist of several varieties and are enriched by the characteristics peculiar to each of those varieties. Among the oil’s organoleptic characteristics, the strong flavour of the dominant Picual variety stands out (its green colour, medium to intense bitter flavour and fruity aromas) but this is diluted by the Lucio and Loaime and secondary varieties, which introduce fresh aromas, reminiscent of fruits, and a sweet flavour and more golden tinges.

The extra virgin olive oils produced in the area have a fruity aroma and a flavour that is reminiscent of green or ripe recently pressed olives, slightly bitter and full-bodied, whose intensity varies with the degree of maturity of the pressed olive. The acidity level is low and in colour all the different shades of green are present, from a deep green to a greenish yellow.

The lipid composition is marked by a high content in oleic acid which is usually above 80 %, sometimes reaching 83 %. The monounsaturates/polyunsaturates ratio is high (12:20) which means the nutritional properties are excellent. The chemical stability of the oils is high, a quality largely attributable to the components causing the bitter flavour, making them, in contrast to other virgin olive oils, more resistant to oxidation.

4.3. **Geographical area:**

It coincides with the natural region of the Montes de Granada, is situated in the Province of Granada and includes the following municipalities: Alamedilla, Alfácar, Alcón de Ortega, Benahúa de las Villas, Calicasas, Campotéjar, Cogollos Vega, Colomera, Darro, Dehesas de Guadix, Deifontes, Diezma, Fonelas, Gobernador, Guadahortuna, Güevéjar, Huélago, Iznalloz, the northern part of the Municipality of La Peza to the River Fardes, Montejícar, Montillana, Morelabor, Nívar, Pedro Martínez, Píchar, Torrecardela and Villanueva de las Torres, the eastern part of the Municipality of Moctín to the natural boundary formed by the River Velillos and the northern part of the Municipality of Albolote y Atarfe formed by the Rivers Cubillas and Colomera up to the point where they meet.

4.4. **Proof of origin:**

**Registration with the Consejo Regulador (Regulating Board)**

The olives come from the groves in the defined geographical area that are listed in the Regulating Board’s olive grove register. The oil is obtained in the mills in the defined geographical area that are listed in the Regulating Board’s oil mill register. Equally, the oils are packaged in the plants situated in the defined geographical area that are listed in the Board’s packaging plant register.

*Applications* for registration are optional and may be made by any natural or legal person whose olive groves, oil mills or packaging plants are situated in the defined geographical area. The Regulating Board informs applicants of their rights and obligations and provides them with a detailed description of the requirements and technical specifications.

After examination of the application, an *initial inspection* of the applicant’s olive grove, oil mill or packaging plant takes place to verify compliance with the specifications and the Regulation. The *definitive registration* in the relevant register is approved by the Regulating Board once the application, together with the initial inspection report and the remaining requisite documents, have been presented.
Certification

The olive groves, oil mills and packaging plants listed in the Regulating Board’s registers are subjected to regular inspections for the purpose of monitoring and verifying compliance with the specifications and the Regulation.

The registered oil mills or packaging plants submit an application for the certification of a batch after which the Regulating Board takes samples from the batch, and the stores are sealed until the packaging or sale in bulk of the oil.

A batch is certified only when the administrative, technical and legal requirements set out in the specifications, the Regulation and the quality control manual are complied with. The Regulating Board decides whether or not to certify a batch on the basis of a file submitted showing the inspection dates and the results of analyses, and other documents in its archives.

When a batch has been certified, packaging, to be undertaken under the supervision of the Regulating Board, takes place exclusively in the packaging plants listed in the relevant register and situated in the defined geographical area. The packaging must bear a secondary label with the words ‘Denominación de Origen’ (designation of origin) together with the name ‘Montes de Granada’, the logo and a unique serial number.

4.5. Method of production:

The procedure for producing the virgin olive oil, from the olives in the olive groves to the obtaining of the oil, involves the following stages:

Production of olives

Advantage is taken of the rainy season, stretching from autumn to winter, for planting. The seedlings are placed in 50 cm deep casillas (areas of soil worked with the hoe). The layout of a grove depends on its age, in older groves the spacing between trees is 12 m (square planting) and 8 m (triangular planting), the number of scions per tree being two, three or four. In more recent groves, the spacing is 5 m, with a single scion per tree.

The procedures undertaken each year involve:

— Soil working: the removal of weeds, cracks and surface scaling to prevent moisture loss and compaction. There are also groves with plant cover where the soil is not worked but they are few in number.

— Application of fertilisers and plant protection products: practices vary depending on the type of soil and the incidence of pests and/or diseases brought on by weather conditions.

— Irrigation: there is by and large no practice of irrigation in 95 % of the olive groves in the region. After the recent years of drought (in particular 1995), the system of drip irrigation was introduced in some groves to regulate production; it is applied from March to September, depending on rainfall.

— Pruning: unproductive branches and shoots are removed to control the growth of the olive tree.

— Harvesting and transport: Once the olives have reached the correct degree of ripeness — early to mid-December — picking starts. To dislodge the fruit from the tree canopy without damaging it, the methods of traditional hand pole beating or mechanised vibration are used. The olives on the ground are collected and are transported and processed separately as they are not suitable for producing oil covered by the Designation of Origin. Transport to the oil mill takes place on the day of harvesting and is always undertaken with great care.
Production of virgin olive oil

During the entire production process the olives from the ground and those picked from the trees are processed separately:

— **Intake, cleaning, weighing and washing of the olives**: these operations are carried out for the purpose of classifying the fruits and removing any remnants of leaves, stalks, dust or other particles.

— **Pressing and crushing**: the purpose is to break up the olive so as to enable the oil to be extracted from its cellular structures.

— **Separating the solid matter from the liquid matter and separating the various liquid phases**: the purpose is to separate the oil from the remaining components of the olive.

— **Storage of the oil in cellars**: once the oil has been extracted it is stored under controlled conditions of light and temperature in cellars in stainless steel containers until it is packaged.

— **Packing**: The oil must be packed at the point of production. This requirement is intended to protect the quality and the authenticity of the product and, consequently, the reputation of the Designation of Origin, for which the beneficiaries accept full and collective responsibility. The checks carried out in the production area under the responsibility of the beneficiaries of the Designation of Origin are detailed and systematic and are carried out by professionals with specialised knowledge of the product. It would be difficult effectively to carry out the checks required to guarantee the product outside the production area.

4.6. Link:

**Background**

Local archaeological remains and bibliographical references to the name, the region and the product testify to olive oil being produced in the area over a long period.

The first reference to 'terrenos montuosos' (mountainous terrain) and 'cultivo del olive' (olive growing) in the Montes de Granada region dates back to the 16th century. The document in question deals with land allocation and it is stated ‘…to each neighbourhood a part of the olive grove is also allocated …’. (Peinado Santaella, 1989; La repoblación de la tierra de Granada: Los Montes, Universidad de Granada).

In the 17th century, as narrated by Henriquez de Jorquera in the Granada annals, various factors but essentially the decline in rural population numbers due to the expulsion of the Moors led to a decline in the cultivation of cereals and their replacement by vines and olives. Another bibliographical reference of that time, dating back to 1634, mentions the cultivation of ‘Olivas de Marca’, in reference to trees yielding a rich harvest of high-quality olives (Libro de Apeos de Cogollos Vega, Real Chancillería de Granada). Trees over 500 years old belonging to the Loaime variety, a name of Arab origin, can still be found today (Martínez Robles, 1833; Colmeiro, 1865; PATACT et al., 1954; Ministerio de Agricultura, 1976 b; Barranco y Rallo, 1984).

According to 18th century documents a request was submitted by the province of Granada to the Council of Castile for the clearing of a total of 5 749 hectares. Further, illegal land clearing increased this figure to 14 103 hectares. The cleared land was then devoted for the most part to olive growing, particularly in the Los Montes region, so that in 1799 Granada, with 120 600 quintals, was placed ninth in olive-oil production ratings (Liceras Ruiz, 1993).

An important historical document dating back to the middle of the 19th century (Diccionario Geográfico Estadistico e Histórico, Pascual Madraz, 1845, republished by Bouque Maurel, 1987) praises the olive groves of this district and the exquisite flavour of its oil and explicitly refers to: 'Montes de Granada … and despite the scarcity of drinking water, the waters of the Rivers Cubillas, Benalúa and Moclín are used for irrigating the surrounding land, and all types of cereals, limpid and exquisite oil, wine and seeds of all kinds are produced'.

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These references to the Rivers Benalúa and Moclín and to the nearby region of Colomera show that at that time it was in those areas that olive cultivation and, judging by the still-standing 18th and 19th century mills, virgin olive oil production was the most developed. In Colomera, the Molino de Galenos, with its hand-operated system of presses, still stands, and the Molino de La Puente is driven by water power and the Molino de Las Niñas, on the Ruta del Legado Andalusí, by animals.

Finally, it was the period between 1913 and 1933, the so-called ‘golden age of olive cultivation in Spain’, that saw the biggest increase in olive plantations and improvements in cultivation practices, leading to the production of high-value extra virgin olive oil. In the 20th century the rate of expansion of the olive groves of Montes de Granada was such that it exceeded by far that of the other Andalusian provinces. Hence, during the Spanish civil war, the area devoted to olive cultivation in this district witnessed an increase of 50%, with the result that many of its olive trees are around 40 to 50 years old today. In 1957, a decree was issued declaring the conservation of areas under olives to be a matter of national interest, it being a factor contributing to the conservation of agricultural land. In the sixties, the areas in the province of Granada devoted to olive-growing increased from 62,202 ha to 118,365 ha, in other words they almost doubled, and in the Montes de Granada area olive groves account for 77.5% of total utilised agricultural area.

**Natural conditions**

The extreme and distinctive characteristics of this region: relief, soil, climate and river systems make the olive the plant that is best adapted to the harsh conditions.

The landscapes in this region are mostly typical of low mountain ranges where depressions ranging from some 750 to 900 m in altitude alternate with mountain folds stretching from east to west and reaching maximum altitudes of 1,400 to 2,000 m. Hamlets and villages areas are situated at an average altitude of 900 m above sea level. Landforms are generally more rugged in the limestone massifs, and other reliefs, also dissected by scarpers, consist of low ridges and hills of limestone, marlaced lime and loam. Further east, the landscape becomes more gentle, extending to a high plateau at an elevation of 1,200 m which then descends at the eastern end of the region to the valley of the River Fardes. This river forms the natural boundary of the district to the east and from there the relief changes, becoming more typical of the xeric landscape of southeastern Spain.

In terms of soil structure, the los Montes region has a range of complex soil types which means that pure forms seldom occur and that mixtures of several types are more common. The commonest soils are those that have developed from the decomposition of various lithological varieties of limestone. They are rich in marly limestone materials eroded from the sierra and therefore have a high calcium carbonate content (over 40%). Their structure has been subsequently modified through soil cultivation for agricultural purposes.

The type of climate — Mediterranean continental — is characterised by extremes of temperature, i.e. huge differences between maximum and minimum day and night, and summer and winter temperatures. Average annual rainfall varies between 400 and 600 mm or even less in years of drought. Winters are long and cold, with frequent snowfalls and periods of frost, and summers are long and hot, with extreme temperatures reaching 40° C.

**4.7. Inspection body:**

Name: Consejo Regulador de la Denominación de Origen ‘Montes de Granada’.
Address: Plaza de la Constitución, 4, E-18550 Iznalloz, Granada
Tel: (958) 39 70 07
Fax: (958) 39 70 07

The Regulating Board of the ‘Montes de Granada’ Designation of Origin is able to fulfil the requirements laid down in standard EN-45011.

**4.8. Labelling:**

The words ‘Denominación de Origen Montes de Granada’ must appear on the label. The label must be approved by the Regulating Board. Each package must be provided with a numbered secondary label supplied by the Regulating Board.
4.9. National requirements:
   — Order of 25 January 1994 specifying the correlation between Spanish law and Regulation (EEC) No 2081/92 as regards designations of origin and geographical indications for agricultural products and foodstuffs.
   — Royal Decree No 1643/1999 of 22 October 1999 on the procedure governing applications for entry into the Community register of protected designations of origin and protected geographical indications.